

(October 2, 2007) Lipinski Helps Pass Bill Requiring President to Plan for Troop Redeployment

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for Troop Redeployment from Iraq

[Washington, DC] Today, Congressman Dan Lipinski helped pass a bill in the House of Representatives requiring the President - in coordination with the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and senior military leaders - to develop a comprehensive plan for the redeployment of U.S. Armed Forces from Iraq. Today's vote represents the first time that significant legislation dealing with future strategy in Iraq has passed the House with a large bipartisan majority.

"This year I have helped Democratic majorities pass legislation opposing the President's troop surge, establishing firm benchmarks for the Iraqi government, and setting a date for U.S. troop withdrawal," said Lipinski. "But as I predicted seven months ago, all of these measures failed to change the status quo in Iraq because Democrats did not work with Congressional Republicans to secure the support needed to force a change in the President's failed policy."

Also scheduled for a vote this week is H.R. 2740, legislation that would bring all contractors in Iraq under jurisdiction of U.S. federal courts and reverse the Administration's 2005 decision to grant immunity from prosecution to contractors operating in Iraq. The need for this legislation, which is expected to pass with bipartisan support, was highlighted by a recent incident involving contractors in which a number of Iraqi civilians were shot and killed.

"This week's bipartisan votes on Iraq are good steps towards finally forcing the President to change course in Iraq," said Rep. Lipinski. "It is imperative that we build on these votes to find a solution that will lead to the responsible and safe redeployment of U.S. troops."

The leadership in the House of Representatives has indicated that other bipartisan pieces of Iraq legislation may soon be considered by the House. One prominent option is H.R. 2574, a bill that Rep. Lipinski helped to introduce, which would implement the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group. Among other things, these recommendations include implementing a diplomatic surge, establishing firm benchmarks for the Iraqi government, shifting the mission of U.S. Armed Forces in Iraq to counterterrorism and training, and setting a goal for completing the redeployment of American forces. Also under consideration by the House Leadership is H.Res. 152, a resolution introduced by Rep. Lipinski in February, which calls on the President to convene a peace conference for Iraq's political, ethnic, and religious leaders in order to develop a plan for political reconciliation.

"The Iraq Study Group legislation has attracted over 60 cosponsors, including over 30 Republicans, and is further evidence that Congress can force a significant change in the President's Iraq policy," said Rep. Lipinski. "I believe that both the Iraq Study Group legislation and H.Res. 152 can bring stability to Iraq while drawing down our military involvement in that country."