

Congressman Chris Murphy Statement on Iraq War Resolution

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Washington, DC -- Last evening, Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) spoke on the floor of the House of Representatives in support of a bipartisan resolution that supports our troops and opposes the President's plan to add 21,500 more combat troops in Iraq. You can watch his remarks by going to www.chrismurphy.house.gov. Below is his prepared speech:

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank Speaker Pelosi and Leader Hoyer for allowing each of us the opportunity to speak on this critical issue, and the co-sponsors of this resolution for their leadership.

The question before this chamber today is a simple one: Do we agree with the nation's military establishment, the country's foreign policy community, and popular opinion, and reject the President's wrongheaded plan to send 21,000 more troops into Iraq? Or, do we remain silent, like past Congresses, and allow this potentially disastrous escalation to move forward? I think the question answers itself, and I am proud to rise today to register my strong opposition to escalating the war in Iraq.

I am joined on the floor this hour by several of my younger colleagues in the House of Representatives. Our unity is significant and should remind other Members of the House that we are discussing the fates of many young men and women – my classmates and friends – that are at this hour fighting and dying in a country halfway around the world. As younger members, we also serve as reminders that our duty here is to set policies that secure the safety of our country, not just in the coming months and years, but in the coming decades.

Mr. Speaker, I have never fought in a war. I have never shot another man on a battlefield, nor have I been wounded myself. I have been allowed the privilege of representing my constituents in this body because of the selfless bravery of the men and women of our Armed Services who have volunteered to go overseas and fight. And therefore it is my duty to thank them for their service, and to be their advocate here tonight.

The President is asking a cadre of our bravest men and women to go house to house in Baghdad to root out an insurgency, while he does virtually nothing to address the systemic causes of that insurgency. 100,000 troops may not be enough to do the job that the President is asking 21,000 to do – troop escalation in Baghdad hasn't worked in the past, and it won't work here. Through his actions, the President is putting our soldiers' lives at an unnecessary and unconscionable risk. There is a resolution in Iraq, but it is a political, not military resolution. We owe it to our soldiers, who have done everything we have asked them to do, to stand up to a President who has asked them to do a job that they cannot, and should not, do.

And beyond the duty we owe to the current generation of troops on the ground in Iraq, our responsibility also lies with the generations to come. I decided to seek a seat in this House at a young age because I know that the decisions being made within this chamber will have dramatic consequences in the world in which my future children and grandchildren will live. I came here to begin a conversation that acknowledges that what will make my future grandchildren safe is not a nation built on bullying – not a strategy based on scattershot military intervention – but a comprehensive foreign policy that combines American might with American humility.

We live in a world in which our own supposed allies foster extremism and violence among the most marginalized members of their society. At the same time, this Administration strangely views cultural and political global detachment as a virtue, rather than a weakness. This combination causes those that speak different tongues and worship different gods to look upon our great nation with undeserved derision.

This must change. We do that in three parts. First, we must pass this resolution. Second, in the coming days and months, we must redeploy our troops to home and to fights that are central to the war on terror such as Afghanistan. And lastly, we must begin to renew the multilateral spirit that once made this country great by proving ourselves to be both a strong America and a humble America.

Mr. Speaker, I stand in support of this resolution today.