

Murphy Votes to Begin Responsible Redeployment from Iraq

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WASHINGTON, DC – On the same day the White House released a report announcing that Iraq has met none of the benchmarks set for its progress to date, Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) voted to require a responsible redeployment of U.S. troops from Iraq beginning within 120 days and ending by April 1, 2008.

"We all want a stable, independent Iraq. What I can't understand is how anyone can still believe that our continued, open ended military involvement there will lead to a stable nation. Not another American soldier should die for this unworkable strategy," said Murphy.

In January, President Bush endorsed key benchmarks that Iraq would be required to meet by mid-July. These benchmarks included the need to amend their constitution, change the law so that millions of former members of the Baath Party could obtain government jobs, pass an equitable oil sharing law, and hold provincial elections. In the report released today, the Administration is conceding that, while violence continues in Iraq, the Iraqi government has failed to meet these key benchmarks and political reconciliation is non-existent.

"So long as we are the military bodyguard for every major Iraqi political group, so long as we are subsidizing the political decisions of Iraqi political leaders, they will never make the difficult political concessions necessary to create a stable society," said Murphy.

Earlier this week, a new Congressional Research Service (CRS) released a report concluding that the increase in troop levels in Iraq has increased the cost of the war there from \$8 billion a month to \$10 billion a month, higher than the Pentagon's estimates. The CRS report notes that the war in Iraq has already cost \$450 billion.

"As someone older and wiser than me has said, the Iraqis are paying wholesale, rather than retail, for their political decisions today," said Murphy.

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