

05/14/2007

Dear Friend,

Last week the House of Representatives again took up legislation pertaining to the Iraq War. One of the bills debated was H.R. 2237, introduced by Representative James McGovern (MA), that would begin the redeployment of U.S. troops and contractors from Iraq within 90 days after enactment, with total redeployment completed within 180 days. The legislation would allow for a limited number of U.S. soldiers to remain in Iraq to combat terrorism and train Iraqi security forces. While I supported passage of this legislation, unfortunately it failed by a vote of 171-255.

Although this legislation did not pass, my colleagues and I are continuing our efforts to bring the Iraq war to a close. President Bush already has vetoed one effort, which was a supplemental funding bill for the Iraq War that Congress sent him on May 1, 2007. That bill took the benchmarks outlined by President Bush in his January 10, 2007 address to the nation, and put them into law. It would have held the Iraqi Government accountable while imposing a timetable for the redeployment of U.S. troops in Iraq. Despite the fact that the bill provided more funding for equipment, training and support services for our troops than the Bush administration's request, the President refused to sign it, utilizing his veto power for only the second time in his six years in the White House.

As you may know, I opposed authorizing the President's use of force against Iraq more than four years ago. However, while the men and women of our armed services are fighting in Iraq, it is imperative that we provide them the best possible equipment and training in order to help them safely return home as quickly as possible. Considering their tremendous sacrifices, I also believe they are entitled to the best possible care once they return home. For our troops currently in Iraq, I believe the best way to show our support for them is to begin their redeployment, rather than put them in the position of having to police a sectarian conflict that has them caught in the crossfire.

I have seen first-hand the human toll exacted by the Iraq War, and as I witnessed on my trip to Iraq last year, the situation can now only be solved politically, not militarily. As Congress moves quickly to send the President a new supplemental war funding bill, please be assured that I and a growing number of my colleagues are utilizing all of our legislative means to bring our soldiers home as quickly as possible.

Very Truly Yours,

*Tom Udall*  
Member of Congress