Congressional Progressive Caucus

72 Strong and Growing: Open to New and Different Ideas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BI-PARTISAN GROUP OF 70 HOUSE MEMBERS
PUTS PRESIDENT BUSH ON NOTICE OVER UPCOMING IRAQ APPROPRIATIONS

- Members pledge to use appropriations process to fully fund redeployment from Iraq -

Washington, DC - As public frustration with President Bush’s failed Iraq policy continues to mount, a bi-partisan group of 70 members of Congress asserted their power to use the appropriations process to change the policy in Iraq, directly challenging the President’s claim that Congress’ only power with regard to the conflict is to fund the policy he has set.

Led by Progressive, and Out of Iraq Caucus Chairs Reps. Lynn Woolsey (D-CA), Barbara Lee (D-CA), and Maxine Waters (D-CA), 70 House Members today delivered a letter to President Bush putting him on notice that when the Congress takes up the FY ’08 funding for military operations in Iraq in September they will only support appropriating funding for military operations in Iraq that are used to fully fund the safe and orderly redeployment of US troops from Iraq. In their letter, the broad collection of members cited the skyrocketing human and financial costs of the President’s failed Iraq policy and warned that the occupation’s costs will be felt for generations to come:

“We are writing to inform you that we will only support appropriating additional funds for U.S. military operations in Iraq during Fiscal Year 2008 and beyond for the protection and safe redeployment of all our troops out of Iraq before you leave office […]"
“We agree with a clear and growing majority of the American people who are opposed to continued, open-ended U.S. military operations in Iraq, and believe it is unwise and unacceptable for you to continue to unilaterally impose these staggering costs and the soaring debt on Americans currently and for generations to come,” they wrote.

The full text of the letter is below:

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to inform you that we will only support appropriating additional funds for U.S. military operations in Iraq during Fiscal Year 2008 and beyond for the protection and safe redeployment of all our troops out of Iraq before you leave office.

More than 3,600 of our brave soldiers have died in Iraq. More than 26,000 have been seriously wounded. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have been killed or injured in the hostilities and more than 4 million have been displaced from their homes. Furthermore, this conflict has degenerated into a sectarian civil war and U.S. taxpayers have paid more than $500 billion, despite assurances that you and your key advisors gave our nation at the time you ordered the invasion in March, 2003 that this military intervention would cost far less and be paid from Iraqi oil revenues.

We agree with a clear and growing majority of the American people who are opposed to continued, open-ended U.S. military operations in Iraq, and believe it is unwise and unacceptable for you to continue to unilaterally impose these staggering costs and the soaring debt on Americans currently and for generations to come.

Sincerely

Rep. Keith Ellison (MN); Rep. Tammy Baldwin (WI); Rep. Donna Christensen (USVI); Rep. David Scott (GA); Rep. Luis Gutierrez (IL); Lois Capps (CA); Steve Rothman (NJ); Elijah Cummings (MD); and Rep. Ron Paul (R-TX).

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