

Vote to Support Our Troops, Oppose the Escalation

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Congressman Rothman Votes to Support Our Troops and Oppose the President's Escalation of the Iraq War

Pictured: Rep. Rothman speaking on the floor in favor of the Resolution against the President's escalation of the Iraq War. February 16, 2007

Washington, DC—Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ) today voted for a resolution (H.Con.Res.63) declaring his support for our troops and opposing the President's plan to escalate the war in Iraq with an additional 21,500 American troops. The Iraq Resolution passed by a bipartisan vote of 246 to 182 after a week of public debate during which every Member of Congress had the opportunity to speak.

"My vote for this Resolution is just the beginning of my efforts to oppose the President's Iraq policy. As a member of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, which makes decisions about spending on the Iraq War and all aspects of America's military preparedness, I will continue to do everything in my power to stop President Bush's escalation of the Iraq War and to begin the U.S. withdrawal from Iraq," said Rothman.

In his speech in favor of the Resolution earlier this morning, Rep. Rothman said that his prayers and all of his efforts as a U.S. Congressman are devoted to ensuring the well-being of our military. He also outlined why it is in our national interest to get all U.S. servicemen and women out of Iraq:

"Mr. Speaker, the only hope that our enemies have to destroy the United States is to have us remain bogged down in the swamp of the Iraqi civil war. Are we smart enough to pull ourselves out of that swamp of the Iraqi civil war? Or are we going to continue to allow our nation to have our soldiers bled, our resources taken away, our equipment destroyed, taking our attention away from the other military threats and realities in this very hostile world.

"I believe that the United States' vital national interests will only be served if we withdraw all of our troops out of Iraq as quickly as possible [with] the safety of our troops being uppermost in our mind… Mr. Speaker, leaving Iraq's civil war will serve America's vital national interests by allowing us to rebuild what is now a depleted U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps…

"We need to refocus on Afghanistan and the resurgence of the Taliban, we need to be prepared militarily for the potential

threats from North Korea, Iran, and yes, even the People's Republic of China. It is also important that we take some of these resources that we have been spending in Iraq not only to rebuild our military, but to spend the money here at home.

"There is al Qaeda in 60 nations in the world. They have pledged to come to America and harm us. Yet, we've spent more money in Iraq since 9/11 than we've spent on our homeland security needs. Believe it or not, Mr. Speaker, that is the truth and that has to change."

In February 2006, Rep. Rothman first called for the redeployment of all U.S. troops out of Iraq and has been a vocal critic of the President's Iraq policy ever since. This year, as a member of the Democratic Majority, Rothman secured a position as one of only 15 members on the House Appropriations Committee's Subcommittee on Defense.

In announcing his new role overseeing defense spending, Rothman said: "No issue is more important to me or my constituents than ending the war in Iraq while continuing to strengthen our military to protect our country. The Defense Appropriations Subcommittee is the place to be in Congress to make sure that happens."

More information about Rep. Rothman's efforts on the Iraq War is online at: http://rothman.house.gov/topic_iraqwar.htm .

You can watch Rep. Rothman's full speech on today's Resolution, as well as speeches from other members of the New Jersey delegation, online at C-SPAN.org.

You can read Rep. Rothman's full remarks, as well as the remainder of his speech after his time had ended, online here.

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