

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 319

Recognizing March 19, 2008, as the fifth anniversary of the Iraq war and urging President George W. Bush to begin an immediate and safe redeployment of United States Armed Forces from Iraq.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 14, 2008

Mr. WEXLER submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Recognizing March 19, 2008, as the fifth anniversary of the Iraq war and urging President George W. Bush to begin an immediate and safe redeployment of United States Armed Forces from Iraq.

Whereas the Iraq war began on March 19, 2003, when President George W. Bush announced before the entire Nation that “American and coalition forces are in the early stages of military operations to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world from grave danger.”;

Whereas March 19, 2008, marks the fifth year of the Iraq war, one of the biggest foreign policy disasters in American history;

Whereas during March 2008, all Americans, including families of members of the United States Armed Forces maimed or killed in Iraq, will reflect, mourn, pray, and hold vigils;

Whereas countless numbers of Americans have been permanently scarred and their lives shattered because of the Iraq war;

Whereas as of January 2, 2008, according to Department of Defense, the United States had 155,846 troops stationed in Iraq—137,709 members of the regular components of the Armed Forces and 18,137 members of the National Guard or Reserves;

Whereas as of March 11, 2008, 3,983 members of the United States Armed Forces have died since the beginning of the Iraq war, according to the Iraq Coalition Casualty Count;

Whereas of March 1, 2008, over 39,000 members of the United States Armed Forces have been permanently maimed or injured, according to the United States Department of Defense;

Whereas Nobel Prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz, along with co-author Harvard professor Linda Bilmes, concludes in his book “The Three Trillion Dollar War: The True Cost of the Iraq Conflict” that the Iraq war will cost American taxpayers at least three trillion dollars;

Whereas, according to Mr. Stiglitz and Ms. Bilmes, “U.S. military operations in Iraq already have exceeded the cost of the 12-year war in Vietnam and is more than double the cost of the Korean Conflict.”;

Whereas, according to the Iraq Body Count (IBC), approximately 89,300 Iraqi civilians have been killed since the

beginning of the Iraq war, although some independent estimates suggest Iraq civilian deaths to be in the hundreds of thousands;

Whereas, according to the United Nations Refugee Agency and the International Organization for Migration, in 2007 almost 5 million Iraqis had been displaced by violence in their country, the vast majority of whom have fled since 2003;

Whereas March 19, 2008, marks the fifth anniversary of the Iraq war which has no end in sight under the failed leadership of President Bush;

Whereas the Iraq war has severely compromised United States efforts to effectively fight the war on terrorism and irreparably damaged our Nation's credibility globally;

Whereas the Iraq war has left Americans less safe, has cost over \$500 billion, and has embroiled our brave troops in an unwinnable and deadly sectarian war;

Whereas thousands of members of the United States Armed Forces who were sent into Iraq without adequate body armor or armored vehicles for five years are now on their second or third 15-month rotation;

Whereas 5 years after the start of the Iraq war, too many members of the United States Armed Forces returning home are still not receiving adequate health care or effective psychiatric care;

Whereas President Bush is unwilling to "change course" in Iraq despite the long-term impact of his policies on American national security or the urgent need for America to address a resurgent Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan;

Whereas President Bush and his Administration continue to carelessly spend billions of dollars a month in Iraq, diverting critically needed funding for health care, education, strengthening the Nation's bridges and infrastructure, and assisting Americans coping with an economic recession;

Whereas the coalition of the willing has dwindled in Iraq, millions of Iraqis remain internally and externally displaced, and the Iraqi people have said unequivocally in poll after poll that they want United States troops out of their country;

Whereas the Bush Administration's "surge" policy has failed to bring political stability to Iraq and lasting reconciliation between ethnic groups;

Whereas on March 13, 2008, General David H. Petraeus, the top United States commander in Iraq, when asked in an interview about the success of the "surge" in Iraq, stated "No one feels that there has been sufficient progress by any means in the area of national reconciliation.";

Whereas the Bush Administration is currently negotiating a status of forces agreement with the Iraqi Government that would keep United States Armed Forces in Iraq for the foreseeable future;

Whereas on May 1, 2007, President Bush vetoed the U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007 (H.R. 1591), which would have set a date to begin withdrawing United States Armed Forces from Iraq;

Whereas after 5 disastrous years, it is time for United States troops to immediately and safely redeploy from Iraq; and

Whereas instead of marking another Iraq war anniversary on March 19, 2009, it is time for the United States Congress to end America's involvement in Iraq by withholding additional funding for the war: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That Congress—*

3 (1) recognizes and honors the heroic sacrifice of
4 the brave members of the United States Armed
5 Forces and their families on the fifth anniversary of
6 the Iraq war;

7 (2) urges President George W. Bush not to
8 enter into any long-term United States-Iraq stra-
9 tegic agreement without the approval of Congress;

10 (3) urges President Bush to begin an imme-
11 diate and safe redeployment of United States Armed
12 Forces from Iraq; and

13 (4) urges President Bush to live up to his re-
14 sponsibilities and adequately provide health care as-
15 sistance to United States troops returning from Iraq
16 and Afghanistan.

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