

## February 14, 2007: Iraq War Resolution

The Honorable Loretta Sanchez

### IRAQ WAR RESOLUTION

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Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution and in opposition to the President's decision to send more of our troops to Iraq.

I was against this war from the onset. On October 10, 2002, I was one of the few who voted against the resolution authorizing the President to use military force in Iraq. But the authorization passed, and we went to war. At that point we supported our troops and we wanted to win, and we want win. And I have voted for every appropriation bill to give our troops what they need to achieve their mission.

So here we are, more than 4 years later, and what do we have to show for this war? Violence in Iraq continues to skyrocket. This past December was the deadliest month for Iraqi civilians since the war began.

Over the course of this war, 45,000 to 65,000 Iraqi civilians have lost their lives, maybe more; we really don't know, because nobody is counting here in America. And over 3,000 brave American troops, men and women in our Armed Forces, have lost their lives. My home State of California sends the most to the services. We alone have lost 325 men and women in Iraq, and we have sustained about 2,500 injuries to our military personnel, more than any other State in the United States.

And Iraqis have paid the price. Our military, their families; the families of our military are the ones sacrificing in this war. They have paid the price, and our country has paid the price for this President's war.

Yet Iraq is less secure than ever, even before the President's "mission accomplished" declaration. There is no functioning infrastructure, no banking system, zero economic stability. Iraq is not secure, Baghdad is not secure. The Iraq Study Group reported that the President's strategy in Iraq is failing. It is failing.

And how does our President respond? With more of the same. He wants to send 21,500 more of our men and women into Iraq to carry out the same failure.

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The President has failed to articulate what these new troops will do that is different from what has been done over the

past few years. What is his plan? Four surges? Four surges that didn't work. He wants to do it again?

And believe me, sitting on the Armed Services Committee, I have been here to see it. I was the one in the first few months who told General Franks, this is an insurgency, it is guerrilla warfare. He refused to call it that. I was the one that went to Iraq when General Odierno told me there were only 359 insurgents left, that we were almost there, while the day before, his boss, Abizaid, had said he thought there were about 5,000. That was 2 years ago.

I was there when Secretary Rumsfeld was saying we have trained 89,000; 2 days later, 95,000; a week later, 160,000 Iraqi Army. This was 2 years ago. Just pulling numbers out of the air, that is what they were doing to America.

And I was there in Iraq the day that General Petraeus, who was successful in Mosul, and then Mosul fell because he pulled his troops from there to Fallujah, and to try to take Fallujah. And he said to me with tears in his eyes, We couldn't hold Mosul because we had to take the troops to go to Fallujah.

At that point he said, We didn't have enough troops. But the President didn't listen. The President fails to grasp that military action alone is not sufficient to stabilize Iraq. And without a legitimate diplomatic component, there will be no end to the civil war in Iraq. But the President has refused to engage the powers in the region. He has outright rejected the notion of dialogue with Iran and Syria, a key suggestion from the Iraq Study Group. It is not the role of Congress to command our forces. That is the constitutional responsibility given to the Commander in Chief. But he has to do it right. And we have to hold him accountable for our failures in Iraq.

As Commander-in-Chief, that responsibility is up to President Bush.

The President must be frank with Congress and with the American people, and admit that the strategy in Iraq to date has been a complete failure.

The President must come up with a new strategy to stabilize the situation in Iraq, one that ends with the redeployment of our troops home. What is his plan?

My message for the President is this:

The voters have told you, Mr. President, that they have had enough of your failed strategy in Iraq.

And today, Mr. President, this Congress is telling you that we too have had enough of your failed strategy in Iraq.

Our troops deserve more from you. You have ignored the American people's wishes. You have ignored the Iraq Study Group's recommendations.

Today, I hope you will not ignore this Congress. I hope you will not send any more of our Armed Forces into harm's way, until you have a plan to win.

Our military is the strongest and most capable in the world, but they cannot continue to be overextended and asked to participate in your failing strategy.

Mr. President, I ask you to listen to the American people, the Iraq Study Group, and this Congress.

We are telling you clearly that we do not want you to send any more troops to participate in a failing strategy. It is your responsibility as the Commander-in-Chief, to come up with an actual plan to stabilize Iraq and begin bringing our troops home to their families.