



Dingell Declares Disapproval for President's Plan in Iraq

Michigan Congressman Votes for Resolution that Supports Our Troops, but Opposes Escalation

Washington, DC –Congressman John D. Dingell (D-MI15) voted yes today on H. Con. Res. 63, expressing support for our troops and disapproving of the President's escalation plan in Iraq. The measure passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 246-182. Below is the statement made by Congressman Dingell regarding this resolution:

"Madam Speaker, it has been four years since the first American soldier crossed into the deserts of Iraq, and almost four years since President Bush declared victory. Since then, more than 3,100 Americans have been killed, 24,000 have been wounded, and anywhere from 40,000 to 100,000 Iraqis have died.

"As a veteran, and as an American, I rise in opposition to the President's plan to send an additional 20,000 men and women to the front.

"Our soldiers have done a superlative job, and I support them fully. However, it's the leadership here in Washington that has been less than stellar.

"I am against this plan, if it even can be called a plan, because it is simply a tragic rerun of the strategies and tactics that have consistently failed over the last four years.

"I am against this surge because it will not make America safer; because it will put more lives at risk; because it continues to neglect the battle in Afghanistan; and because it completely turns away the necessary diplomatic and political recommendations of the Iraq Study Group.

"Iraq became the central front in the 'War on Terrorism' because the Administration has made it so.

"Vice President Cheney said of the insurgency that it was in 'Its last throes.' Madam Speaker, the National Intelligence Estimates said fanatical terrorism has now, and I quote, 'metastasized and spread across the globe.'

"At each possible turning point - the toppling of the Saddam Hussein statue; the dissolving of the Iraqi army; the creation of the Iraqi constitution; the vote for the constitution; the parliamentary elections; the capture of Saddam; or the death of Zarqawi - the Bush Administration has told us that the victory is at hand.

"Today, peaceful and stable outcomes, much less absolute victory, are further away than ever before. Regional chaos has become more likely.

"Madam Speaker, the debate about Iraq now is not whether we should or shouldn't have gone in; nor is it about whether or not victory is at hand. Instead, because of poor Presidential leadership, the debate is about whether there will be more deaths if we leave or more deaths if we stay.

"I don't know the answer to that question. I am not sure if any of us do. But I do know that when faced with a

choice of approving of the President's policy or giving a vote of no confidence, the choice is easy.

"I cannot support, nor will I condone, any policy that continues the long train of failure that brought us to this point.

"My experience during World War II was much different than the hell our men and women in Iraq now must face. Sixty years ago, we knew our mission, we knew the outcome, and we knew the battle lines.

"Today, our soldiers are in the middle of a civil insurrection testing Sunni against Shiite, Shiite verse Shiite, Coalition verse insurgents, and any other muddled combination.

"In World War II, our nation came together through common sacrifice and universal service to beat back totalitarianism. I was the son of a Congressman who served side by side with sons of farmers and bricklayers.

"Today, we have tried to have war on the cheap. Rather than sacrifice precious tax cuts for the few, we have sent inadequately armored humvees to the frontlines. The debt of the war, which the President said would cost \$10 billion dollars, is now being financed by the Chinese and will be repaid by our children.

"So Congress, after four years and more than \$500 billion, is finally asserting its Constitutional prerogative, beginning oversight, and expressing disapproval of policies that we all know to have been disastrous.

"I know there are some commentators and defenders of the Administration that assert that Iraq is too important, too vital to our national interest, to be debated or to be criticized.

"I want to ask those who believe this, if Iraq is so fundamental to our safety and security, why did we not use enough troops? Why did we under equip them? Why are we financing the war on the cheap? And why are we so afraid to find a political settlement with Iraq's neighbors?

"None of these questions can be answered by the President or his defenders. That is why we have a duty to disapprove of the 'more of the same' policy of this Administration.

"Our men and women in uniform need an Administration and Congress worthy of their sacrifice. They have made us all proud; I hope they can be as proud of us.

"I yield back the balance of my time."