

Republican Moderates: We Can Not Afford to Waste Precious Time Arguing Over Political Proposals -- March 22, 2007

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- As the House began consideration of the FY07 Iraq War Supplemental under a closed rule, House Republican Moderates, led by Congressman Mike Castle, urge the Democratic leadership to put the needs of our troops first. The text of the letter is below:

Dear Madame Speaker and Chairman Obey:

"Our soldiers are risking their lives and it is vital that we provide them with the tools and equipment they have requested. It is our duty to ensure our military has the resources it deems necessary to protect our brave soldiers serving in harm's way and to assure our troops - from general officers down to the privates fresh out of boot camp - that we will continue to support them.

Army officials have warned that disruptive changes in day-to-day operations will occur without immediate supplemental funding. Unfortunately, the bill approved by the House Appropriations Committee on March 15th includes billions of dollars and unrelated provisions not requested by the Administration or our military leaders, which have the potential to obstruct passage of this vital emergency funding.

President Bush has issued a veto threat as a result of the inclusion of non-emergency spending and policy proposals, and a large number of Members from both sides of the aisle have expressed concern over these provisions. While such proposals may warrant consideration on the House floor under different circumstances, this body should not hold critical funding in limbo in order to force political votes. For example, we are concerned that setting an arbitrary timeline for withdrawal would tie the hands of our commanders in the field and assuredly lead to an impasse with the White House, which in turn will further delay this crucial funding.

When it comes to emergency funding for our soldiers, we can not afford to waste precious time arguing over political proposals."

As of 4:15 p.m., the following Members signed the letter: Mike Castle (R-DE), Mark Kirk (R-IL), Charlie Dent (R-PA) , Jim Gerlach (R-PA), Randy Kuhl (R-NY), Thomas Petri (R-WI), Todd Platts (R-PA).

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