

Castle Assails Democratic Leadership for Playing Politics with Troop Funding -- April 26, 2007

Washington, D.C. -- Delaware Congressman Mike Castle today dismissed attacks from the Delaware Democratic Party regarding his vote on the Emergency War Funding Bill, saying Democrats are playing politics with funding for U.S. troops in Iraq.

"The bill brought forward by Democratic leadership takes advantage of critical funding for our soldiers to force a partisan agenda. I disagree with their argument that Congress should mandate a hard deadline for the redeployment of U.S. troops because such crucial decisions should not be made without substantial input from our military and foreign policy leaders. Redeploying U.S. troops will be extremely complex and Congress alone should not be mandating arbitrary timelines that could endanger our soldiers and undermine efforts to maintain stability in the Middle East. While I have disagreed with many aspects of our strategy in Iraq, I have worked to encourage the administration to change direction and implement a robust diplomatic strategy to secure the country and turn responsibility over to the Iraqis.

"Additionally, because they did not have the votes to pass this bill, the Democrats added billions of dollars in non-emergency pork barrel spending projects to buy votes. For example, the bill Democrats are sending to the President includes \$60.4 million for the shrimp and fishing industries in California and Oregon. This is not the way we should be doing business in Washington.

"Our men and women serving in the military are doing extraordinary work under very difficult circumstances and we owe them a tremendous debt of gratitude. Now is the time for Democrats and Republicans to dispense with the political rhetoric and get to work on passing a bipartisan emergency supplemental bill that funds our troops and supports an effective way forward in Iraq."

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