

Bipartisan Bill on Iraq Passes House -- October 2, 2007

WASHINGTON, DC -

The U.S. House of Representatives approved a bill Congressman Michael N. Castle of Delaware has been pushing leadership to schedule for months. HR 3087, which passed Tuesday by a vote of 377-46, will require the Administration to transmit to Congress a comprehensive post-surge strategy for the redeployment of United States Armed Forces in Iraq.

H.R.

3087 mandates that the Administration report to Congress within 60 days on the status of its planning for the redeployment of U.S. troops and requires further reports every 90 days thereafter.

Congressman

Castle spoke on the floor of the House of Representatives in favor of the legislation, which is the first bipartisan legislation considered by the House of Representatives in this, the 110th Congress.

"Congress has been consumed by partisan in-fighting - which has resulted in gridlock and has prevented debate on substantive proposals for achieving stability and bringing our troops home.

"The American people deserve a straightforward understanding of our involvement and long-term objectives in the Middle East. The legislation before us today, of which I am a proud cosponsor, takes an important step forward by requiring the Secretary of Defense to submit regular reports to Congress regarding the status of post-surge planning.

"Clearly, the U.S. Congress should not be acting without considering the advice of our military commanders in Iraq, and this legislation will ensure that Secretary Gates, General Petraeus, and other senior officials are capable of effectively communicating developments with Members of Congress and the Administration.

"This information will also provide a greater understanding of progress made on General Petraeus' proposal for the redeployment of U.S. troops and it will assist Congress in budgeting for the possible missions that may continue in Iraq - such as efforts to disrupt terrorist organizations and train Iraqi security forces.

"H.R. 3087 is the first of what I hope will be a substantive, bipartisan effort in Congress to work with our military and foreign policy leaders to achieve stability in Iraq and bring our soldiers home to their families.

"Last week, 14 Democrats and

14 Republicans endorsed such an approach by signing the Bipartisan Compact on Iraq Debate. Like Mr. Tanner's proposal, the importance of developing a clearly defined and measurable mission in Iraq is one of eight central principles agreed to in the Bipartisan Compact," Castle said.

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