

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 911

Expressing the sense of the House that the United States should increase United States forces in Afghanistan and responsibly redeploy forces from Iraq.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 19, 2007

Mr. SMITH of Washington (for himself and Mr. SKELTON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House that the United States should increase United States forces in Afghanistan and responsibly redeploy forces from Iraq.

Whereas the terrorist attacks on the United States of September 11, 2001, were perpetrated by al Qaeda, whose top leadership operated out of a safe haven in Afghanistan;

Whereas despite the end of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in 2001, a persistent insurgency supported by the Taliban and al Qaeda has continued to threaten the security and stability of Afghanistan;

Whereas the security and stabilization of Afghanistan is in the vital national security interests of the United States in order to prevent the return of a safe haven for al Qaeda and the Taliban;

Whereas the July 2007 United States National Intelligence Estimate concluded that “Al-Qa’ida is and will remain the most serious terrorist threat to the Homeland” and that “the group has protected or regenerated key elements of its Homeland attack capability, including a safe haven in the Pakistan Federally Administered Tribal Areas (‘FATA’),” located along the border with Afghanistan;

Whereas the United Nations Half-Year Review of the Security Situation in Afghanistan found the country is suffering its most violent year since 2001; and in the first eight months of 2007, suicide bombings alone increased 69 percent over the same period last year;

Whereas despite tactical achievements in combating the renewed insurgency in Afghanistan in 2007, the Taliban has reportedly been able to expand its geographical presence in the country, and its command structure remains mostly intact and is believed to be working with Al Qaeda leaders;

Whereas in late 2007, an assessment by the President’s National Security Council reportedly concluded that the United States’ strategic goals for the security and stabilization of Afghanistan for 2007 have not been met;

Whereas since the attacks on the United States of September 11, 2001, the United States Government has spent less than 28 cents on Department of Defense activities in Afghanistan and in other Operation Enduring Freedom

countries for every dollar spent on similar activities in Iraq;

Whereas since the attacks on the United States of September 11, 2001, the United States Government has spent less than 31 cents on foreign aid and diplomatic operations activities in Afghanistan and in other Operation Enduring Freedom countries for every dollar spent on similar activities in Iraq;

Whereas as of December 1, 2007, the United States maintained approximately 25,000 troops in Afghanistan and over 160,000 troops in Iraq;

Whereas as of November 14, 2007, the United States Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (“CSTC-A”) reported shortfalls of 2,410 required United States personnel to train and mentor the Afghan National Security Forces;

Whereas as of December 8, 2007, the NATO International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (“NATO-ISAF”) reported significant force shortfalls, including the need for 3 additional maneuver battalions for NATO-ISAF missions, 25 Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams to train the Afghan National Army, and 2 Provincial Reconstruction Teams;

Whereas the ability of the United States to devote adequate levels of troops, funding, and other resources to the security and stability mission in Afghanistan is constrained by United States commitments to Operation Iraqi Freedom;

Whereas in testimony before the House Armed Services Committee on December 11, 2007, Admiral Michael Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated, “Our main

focus, militarily, in the region and in the world right now is rightly and firmly in Iraq. It is simply a matter of resources, of capacity. In Afghanistan, we do what we can. In Iraq, we do what we must”;

Whereas in 2007, the Commandant of the United States Marine Corps, General James T. Conaway, advocated for a redeployment of United States Marines from Iraq to Afghanistan, and the United States Special Operations Command advocated for a more active role for its forces in Afghanistan;

Whereas the United States Congress and the congressionally-commissioned Iraq Study Group have declared support for a responsible redeployment of United States forces in Iraq and a narrowing of the mission of United States forces to targeted counterterrorism activities, training and equipping Iraqi security forces, and protection of United States citizens and facilities;

Whereas the President anticipates maintaining at least 130,000 United States troops in Iraq through July 2008, roughly the same number as in December 2006; and

Whereas the President has not announced any significant increases in United States force levels in Afghanistan: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the United States
2 House of Representatives that—

3 (1) the United States, in concert with its inter-
4 national partners, should strengthen its overall long-
5 term commitment to securing and stabilizing Af-
6 ghanistan and contribute the necessary levels of eco-

1 nomic, civilian, and military resources to achieve
2 that end;

3 (2) the United States, in concert with its inter-
4 national partners, should increase its military force
5 levels in Afghanistan to a level sufficient to signifi-
6 cantly improve security and stability in the country,
7 prevent the return of a safe haven for al Qaeda and
8 the Taliban, and enhance the ability of the Afghan
9 National Security Forces to maintain long-term se-
10 curity and stability; and

11 (3) in order to provide for sufficient forces in
12 Afghanistan, and for other critical reasons, the
13 United States should responsibly redeploy those mili-
14 tary forces in Iraq not essential for targeted
15 counterterrorism activities, training and equipping
16 Iraqi security forces, or protection of United States
17 citizens and facilities.

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