

110TH CONGRESS
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S. CON. RES. 7

Expressing the sense of Congress on Iraq.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 31, 2007

Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. LEVIN, and Ms. SNOWE) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress on Iraq.

Whereas we respect the Constitutional authorities given a President in article II, section 2, which states that “The President shall be commander in chief of the Army and Navy of the United States”; it is not the intent of this resolution to question or contravene such authority, but to accept the offer to Congress made by the President on January 10, 2007, that, “if members have improvements that can be made, we will make them. If circumstances change, we will adjust”;

Whereas the United States strategy and operations in Iraq can only be sustained and achieved with support from the American people and with a level of bipartisanship;

Whereas over 137,000 American military personnel are currently serving in Iraq, like thousands of others since

March 2003, with the bravery and professionalism consistent with the finest traditions of the United States Armed Forces, and are deserving of the support of all Americans, which they have strongly;

Whereas many American service personnel have lost their lives, and many more have been wounded, in Iraq, and the American people will always honor their sacrifices and honor their families;

Whereas the U.S. Army and Marine Corps, including their Reserve and National Guard organizations, together with components of the other branches of the military, are under enormous strain from multiple, extended deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan;

Whereas these deployments, and those that will follow, will have lasting impacts on the future recruiting, retention and readiness of our Nation's all volunteer force;

Whereas in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006, the Congress stated that "calendar year 2006 should be a period of significant transition to full sovereignty, with Iraqi security forces taking the lead for the security of a free and sovereign Iraq";

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 1723, approved November 28, 2006, "determin[ed] that the situation in Iraq continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security";

Whereas Iraq is experiencing a deteriorating and ever-widening problem of sectarian and intra-sectarian violence based upon political distrust and cultural differences between some Sunni and Shia Muslims;

Whereas Iraqis must reach political settlements in order to achieve reconciliation, and the failure of the Iraqis to

reach such settlements to support a truly unified government greatly contributes to the increasing violence in Iraq;

Whereas the responsibility for Iraq's internal security and halting sectarian violence must rest primarily with the Government of Iraq and Iraqi Security Forces;

Whereas U.S. Central Command Commander General John Abizaid testified to Congress on November 15, 2006, "I met with every divisional commander, General Casey, the Corps Commander, [and] General Dempsey. We all talked together. And I said, in your professional opinion, if we were to bring in more American troops now, does it add considerably to our ability to achieve success in Iraq? And they all said no. And the reason is, because we want the Iraqis to do more. It's easy for the Iraqis to rely upon us to do this work. I believe that more American forces prevent the Iraqis from doing more, from taking more responsibility for their own future";

Whereas Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki stated on November 27, 2006, that "The crisis is political, and the ones who can stop the cycle of aggravation and bloodletting of innocents are the politicians";

Whereas there is growing evidence that Iraqi public sentiment opposes the continued U.S. troop presence in Iraq, much less increasing the troop level;

Whereas, in the fall of 2006, leaders in the Administration and Congress, as well as recognized experts in the private sector, began to express concern that the situation in Iraq was deteriorating and required a change in strategy; and, as a consequence, the Administration began an in-

tensive, comprehensive review by all components of the Executive Branch to devise a new strategy;

Whereas, in December 2006, the bipartisan Iraq Study Group issued a valuable report, suggesting a comprehensive strategy that includes “new and enhanced diplomatic and political efforts in Iraq and the region, and a change in the primary mission of U.S. forces in Iraq that will enable the United States to begin to move its combat forces out of Iraq responsibly”;

Whereas, on January 10, 2007, following consultations with the Iraqi Prime Minister, the President announced a new strategy (hereinafter referred to as the “plan”), which consists of three basic elements: diplomatic, economic, and military; the central component of the military element is an augmentation of the present level of the U.S. military forces through additional deployments of approximately 21,500 U.S. military troops to Iraq;

Whereas, on January 10, 2007, the President said that the “Iraqi government will appoint a military commander and two deputy commanders for their capital” and that U.S. forces will “be embedded in their formations”; and in subsequent testimony before the Armed Services Committee on January 25, 2007, by the retired former Vice Chief of the Army it was learned that there will also be a comparable U.S. command in Baghdad, and that this dual chain of command may be problematic because “the Iraqis are going to be able to move their forces around at times where we will disagree with that movement”, and called for clarification;

Whereas this proposed level of troop augmentation far exceeds the expectations of many of us as to the reinforcements that would be necessary to implement the various

options for a new strategy, and led many members of Congress to express outright opposition to augmenting our troops by 21,500;

Whereas the Government of Iraq has promised repeatedly to assume a greater share of security responsibilities, disband militias, consider Constitutional amendments and enact laws to reconcile sectarian differences, and improve the quality of essential services for the Iraqi people; yet, despite those promises, little has been achieved;

Whereas the President said on January 10, 2007, that “I’ve made it clear to the Prime Minister and Iraq’s other leaders that America’s commitment is not open-ended” so as to dispel the contrary impression that exists; and

Whereas the recommendations in this resolution should not be interpreted as precipitating any immediate reduction in, or withdrawal of, the present level of forces: Now, therefore, be it—

1 *Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives*
2 *concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—*

3 (1) the Senate disagrees with the “plan” to
4 augment our forces by 21,500, and urges the Presi-
5 dent instead to consider all options and alternatives
6 for achieving the strategic goals set forth below;

7 (2) the Senate believes the United States should
8 continue vigorous operations in Anbar province, spe-
9 cifically for the purpose of combating an insurgency,
10 including elements associated with the Al Qaeda
11 movement, and denying terrorists a safe haven;

20 (6) the military part of this strategy should
21 focus on maintaining the territorial integrity of Iraq,
22 denying international terrorists a safe haven, con-
23 ducting counterterrorism operations, promoting re-
24 gional stability, supporting Iraqi efforts to bring
25 greater security to Baghdad, and training and

1 equipping Iraqi forces to take full responsibility for
2 their own security;

3 (7) United States military operations should, as
4 much as possible, be confined to these goals, and
5 should charge the Iraqi military with the primary
6 mission of combating sectarian violence;

7 (8) the military Rules of Engagement for this
8 plan should reflect this delineation of responsibil-
9 ities, and the Secretary of Defense and the Chair-
10 man of the Joint Chiefs of Staff should clarify the
11 command and control arrangements in Baghdad;

12 (9) the United States Government should trans-
13 fer to the Iraqi military, in an expeditious manner,
14 such equipment as is necessary;

15 (10) the United States Government should en-
16 gage selected nations in the Middle East to develop
17 a regional, internationally sponsored peace-and-rec-
18 onciliation process for Iraq;

19 (11) the Administration should provide regular
20 updates to the Congress, produced by the Com-
21 mander of United States Central Command and his
22 subordinate commanders, about the progress or lack
23 of progress the Iraqis are making toward this end;
24 and

(12) our overall military, diplomatic, and economic strategy should not be regarded as an “open-ended” or unconditional commitment, but rather as a new strategy that hereafter should be conditioned upon the Iraqi government’s meeting benchmarks that must be delineated in writing and agreed to by the Iraqi Prime Minister. Such benchmarks should include, but not be limited to, the deployment of that number of additional Iraqi security forces as specified in the plan in Baghdad, ensuring equitable distribution of the resources of the Government of Iraq without regard to the sect or ethnicity of recipients, enacting and implementing legislation to ensure that the oil resources of Iraq benefit Sunni Arabs, Shia Arabs, Kurds, and other Iraqi citizens in an equitable manner, and the authority of Iraqi commanders to make tactical and operational decisions without political intervention.

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