

Washington, DC -- U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) spoke on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives this afternoon in support of the Rule that allows the U.S. Troops Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007 (H.R. 2206), as well as H.R. 2207 and H.R. 2237, to come to the House floor.

Arcuri's remarks in support of the bill, as prepared for delivery, are attached below:

**The Honorable Michael A. Arcuri (NY-24)
In the House of Representatives
Rule Providing for the Consideration of H.R. 2206, H.R. 2207 and H.R. 2237
Floor Statement**

May 10, 2007

I thank the distinguished Chairwoman of the Rules Committee for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, for almost a year now, I've said that our country needs a plan to ensure the safe and orderly redeployment of our troops out of Iraq. My colleagues and I have been clear -- we do not support a precipitous withdrawal that would in anyway endanger our brave troops or our citizen here at home.

This bill would give the President 90 days to develop a plan for the redeployment our troops in Iraq, and 180 days thereafter to complete a safe and orderly redeployment that protects our troops from the ongoing civil war in Iraq.

This is what the American people have asked for -- a responsible and deliberate plan to change the direction in Iraq without jeopardizing the safety and wellbeing of our soldiers.

Since the beginning, the war in Iraq has distracted us from our first true mission – fighting Al Qaeda and its global terrorist network. For the last four years we have spent precious resources fighting a civil war in Iraq –instead of hunting the world over for those who would do us harm.

As a proud New Yorker, I have no higher priority than to protect our country from future terrorist attacks. This bill would allow the Administration to retain members of the Armed Forces for the purpose of providing security for our embassy, engage in killing or capturing members of al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations, and train Iraqi Security Forces.

The war in Iraq has strained our military –creating a crisis in U.S. troop readiness and decreasing our ability to respond to new threats. We have recently seen the National Guard's severely limited ability to respond to domestic emergencies - like during Hurricane Katrina, and just last week when tornadoes hit Kansas.

With over 3,300 troops dead, more than 24,000 troops wounded, and more than \$400 billion of taxpayer dollars spent – we have paid too high a price.

The bills before us today put our priorities back in place – finally, and after far too long.

Today we are sending the President a message: the American people no longer support a war without strategy, they will no longer sacrifice lives and resources without end.

Mr. Speaker, it's time for a new direction for Iraq, and a new direction for our country, one in which veterans are taken care of and families provided for.

Last November, I was sent to Washington to stand up to the mismanagement of this war and misplaced priorities of the Administration. The time has come for the President to listen to the people.

Thank you. I yield back the balance of my time.

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