

Washington, DC -- Today, U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) outlined his strong support for The U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Health, and Iraq Accountability Act which would provide our troops with the equipment they need, require Iraqis to take control of their own country, establish benchmarks for withdrawal from Iraq, and help fight the war on terror in Afghanistan. The bill will provide \$2.8 billion for veterans' and troops' health care.

"For months, I've said that our country needs a plan for how to achieve the necessary objectives to ensure the timely redeployment of our troops out of Iraq. The previous Congress failed in their duty to provide oversight and refused to ask the tough questions about how this war was being managed," said Arcuri.

"The U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Health, and Iraq Accountability Act for the first time lays out a responsible and realistic strategy for completing our mission in Iraq and bringing our brave troops home as soon as possible. This is a responsible and deliberate plan to change the direction in Iraq without jeopardizing the safety and wellbeing of our soldiers.

"I was sent to Washington to stand up against the mismanagement of this war. My constituents want our servicemen and women home—safely, responsibly, and as soon as possible.

"In the 70 days since this Congress was sworn in, we've conducted 97 hearings on the war in Iraq—to get the answers the American public deserves. We are holding, and will continue to hold, the Administration accountable for the war."

The U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Health, and Iraq Accountability Act:

- Establishes a clear strategy for withdrawal of U.S. forces in Iraq with real benchmarks and real consequences, requiring the Iraqi government to meet fundamental security, political and economic benchmarks established by the President by July 2007.
- Ensures that our troops have the tools and resources they need to do the job they have been asked to do. At a time when soldiers and their families have been asked to sacrifice through multiple tours in Iraq, this legislation honors their service by prohibiting the deployment of troops who are not fully trained, equipped and protected.

- Keeps our promise to veterans by providing \$2.8 billion for health care for troops and veterans. We owe it to the brave men and women who have sacrificed for their country to provide them the care they need and deserve when they come home.
- Increases funding to fight the global war on terrorism and ensure that our homeland is safe and secure.

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