



## Senator Dianne Feinstein Delivers Speech on Senate Floor in Favor of Resolution to Change the U.S. Military Mission in Iraq

March 14, 2007

**Washington, DC** – *U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) today delivered a speech on the floor of the Senate in favor of the joint resolution calling for a timetable to draw down combat forces in Iraq and change the American mission there.*

*Under the joint resolution Senator Feinstein spoke in favor of today, the United States must begin drawing down combat forces in Iraq within 120 days of the resolution's passage.*

*In addition, the resolution sets a March 31, 2008 goal for removing combat forces from Iraq. It would allow for a smaller U.S. force to remain in Iraq for a limited mission to include force protection, training and equipping the Iraqi army, and targeted counter-terrorism operations.*

**Following is the text of Senator Feinstein's remarks today:**

**"Mr. President. In less than a week, our nation will mark four years in Iraq.**

**We have spent nearly \$400 billion.**

**We have lost more than 3,000 Americans.**

**More than 140,000 of our brave men and women find themselves trying to salvage a situation that simply cannot be solved through military force.**

**If I believed there was any chance that the military could solve the problem of hundreds of years of hatred between Sunni and Shia by resolving what is effectively a civil war, I would believe that this surge and more troops might solve this situation.**

**But I do not. The only solution rests with the Iraqi government and the Shia majority.**

**The Iraq of today is embroiled in four different wars – a terribly complex civil conflict that even General Petraeus, our commander in Iraq, says requires a political solution.**

**Simply put, there is no end in sight. Yet the President insists on escalating our troop presence there.**

**None of this makes sense.**

**We must change course in Iraq.**

**That is why I support the Joint Resolution before us today.**

**Where the Administration expands our involvement in Iraq, this Resolution sets a time limit.**

**Where the Administration sees a military solution, this Resolution recognizes that the solution must be political.**

**Where the Administration calls for more money and more troops, this Resolution says, "Enough is enough."**

**And where the Administration fails to put demands on the Iraqi government, this Resolution tells them, "You must take responsibility for your own future."**

**The Iraqis must realize that our commitment is not open-ended, and that they must stand on their own.**

**How can we ever expect the Iraqis to stand up and make difficult political choices if we keep such a large, sustained American troop presence in Iraq?**

**We are acting as a buffer preventing a solution.**

**Only the Iraqis can choose to end this civil war.**

**Only the Iraqis can unify their country.**

**Yet this will never happen until we begin to draw down our troop levels there.**

**This Resolution does exactly that.**

**It is a vehicle for the Congress to show leadership, to tell the President that he has put us on the wrong course, and that a political solution is the key to this conflict.**

**This Resolution sets us on that path.**

**It spells out clear deadlines:**

- **The phased redeployment of our combat forces must begin within 120 days of the Resolution's passage.**
- **A goal of March 31, 2008 would be established for redeploying our combat forces out of Iraq.**

**This Resolution also redefines the mission.**

**A smaller force could remain in Iraq. The mission would be limited to:**

- **Force protection;**
- **Training and equipping Iraqi troops; and**
- **Targeted counter-terrorism operations.**

**It is in many ways similar to the resolution I introduced last month, which set an expiration date for the 2002 Authorization for the Use of Military Force in Iraq.**

**This Resolution fills a void.**

**It puts a long-term political, diplomatic and economic strategy for Iraq at the center of our national policy – something that, in my view, should have been done a long time ago.**

**And it is consistent with the views of the American people, whose opposition to this war and this escalation remains strong and sustained.**

**But instead of following the will of the American people, this Administration is pursuing a surge in forces, which appears to be growing.**

**This Administration has not set any limits on the number of troops needed, or on the duration of the mission, or the costs to the American people.**

**In January, the President said he would send 21,500 additional troops to Iraq at a projected cost of \$5.6 billion.**

**Yet just this week, the White House asked the Congress for at least another \$2.5 billion to pay for an additional 4,700 support troops for the surge in Iraq.**

**The costs keep rising.**

**The Pentagon leadership initially said it would be just a matter of months before we could assess whether the surge was a success.**

**But the commanders on the ground now suggest that we may have to sustain the escalation until well into next year.**

**Yet it is clear that our military is under such strain that the only way to maintain a presence of 20 brigades is by extending the deployments of many of our soldiers in Iraq – and by making many more deploy overseas earlier than scheduled.**

**We are breaking our own military in Iraq, even as it becomes increasingly evident that success cannot be achieved militarily.**

**Consider these facts:**

- **More than 420,000 troops have been deployed at least twice.**
- **More than 50,000 troops have had their tours extended through “stop-loss” orders.**
- **Troops are being rushed into the field without enough armor.**
- **We are leaning more and more heavily on the National Guard – yet 90 percent of the Guard units in the United States are rated “not ready.”**

**I understand why the President may wish to talk about “encouraging signs” in Iraq.**

**But the facts show otherwise.**

**Even while the violence in Baghdad has decreased, violence outside the capital has increased.**

**Two-hundred Shia pilgrims have been killed in just the past week alone.**

**As insurgents have left Baghdad to avoid the ongoing military crackdown, they have simply melted away into outlying regions, waiting for the pressure to ease.**

**And while more American soldiers deploy to Baghdad, the Iraqis have yet to provide all the troops they promised.**

**There is no end in sight.**

**This Joint Resolution changes that.**

**It changes course, and redefines the mission.**

**I urge the Senate to vote for it.**

**Thank you. I yield the floor.”**

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