



Congressman Tim Bishop

FIRST DISTRICT -- NEW YORK

NEWS RELEASE

MARCH 23, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CONTACT: JON SCHNEIDER
PHONE: (631) 696-6500**

BISHOP VOTES TO SUPPORT TROOPS AND BRING END TO WAR IN IRAQ

*Emergency Supplemental would enforce benchmarks in Iraq and increase funding
for military readiness and veterans' health care*

Congressman Tim Bishop voted in favor of the U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Health, and Iraq Accountability Act, which would bring the war in Iraq to a responsible and timely conclusion while increasing funding for military readiness and veterans' health care. The bill was passed by the House of Representatives by a vote of 218 to 212 and now heads to the U.S. Senate.

"In an ideal world, we would bring our troops home today, but that doesn't match the reality of our struggle in Iraq," said Bishop. "This bill represents the best opportunity available to affect the conduct of this war."

The benchmarks established by this bill are the same as those outlined by the President in January, proposed by the Iraq Study Group, and endorsed by Iraqi leaders. They include real consequences for non-compliance by the Iraqi government and a definite timeline for a phased and deliberate redeployment of U.S. combat forces from Iraq by no later than August 2008.

"The bill provides what is currently missing in the President's policies: a plan to redeploy our troops from a situation that cannot be improved by their continued presence," noted Bishop.

To date, the war has cost the lives of 144 New Yorkers out of the approximately 3,200 U.S. troops killed in Iraq. Moreover, of the 24,000 U.S. troops wounded in Iraq, 1,144 are from New York. Congressman Bishop advocated for better care for veterans long before the recent investigations were called to examine shortfalls around VA facilities, which have been overwhelmed by wounded troops returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

To address this growing crisis, the supplemental bill expands protections for troops and veterans beyond those requested by the President:

- \$1.7 billion more for military health care, including for Walter Reed and other hospitals;
- \$1.7 billion more for veterans' health care;
- \$2.5 billion more for improving the readiness of our stateside troops; and
- \$1.4 billion more for military housing allowances.

"I am opposed to this war," Bishop said. "I believe the decision to invade Iraq is the single most devastating and misguided foreign policy decision our nation has ever made. I voted for the supplemental because I believe it is the best course available to us at this time to bring our involvement in this misguided tragedy to an end."

#