

# Statement of Congressman Danny K. Davis on Bringing American Troops Home Safely from the War in Afghanistan

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from the War in Afghanistan

March 17, 2011

Today the House of Representatives, consistent with their responsibilities under the War Powers Resolution, held a vote on bringing our troops home safely from the War in Afghanistan as soon as possible. I have held a consistent position on this issue over the years, I was an original co-sponsor of the bi-partisan privileged resolution which brought the question to the floor and I voted YES on the resolution.

The vote comes as the House prepares to consider the request for an additional \$33 billion for the coming assault on Kandahar, still with no withdrawal timetable or an exit strategy. For years, the Congress and the American people have been told that we were making "progress" in Afghanistan. To put it bluntly, those statements just don't square with the reality on the ground. The costs of the war, in American lives, in Afghan lives, in tax dollars totaling hundreds of billions of dollars continue to escalate.

There is no significant Al Qaeda presence in Afghanistan. The Taliban leadership has successfully sought refuge in Pakistan despite the fact that we provide billions of dollars of military aid to Pakistan each year. The training of the Afghan army continues to founder, the level of corruption in the Afghan government continues to grow along with Afghan opium exports. Our continued presence in Afghanistan feeds the growth of Al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations internationally and threatens our national security while draining resources from homeland security. There is no military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan and it is time to recognize that and reshape our strategy.

Though the resolution failed, the 93 to 321 vote represented a very significant boost in support for Afghanistan withdrawal over 2010, when the House vote on a similar measure was 65 to 356 — a 43% increase in support for responsible withdrawal including an increase in Republican support from 5 to eight members.