

February 16, 2007

Today, Congressman Gus M. Bilirakis (R-FL-09) issued the following statement regarding the Democrats political posturing on the House floor in regard to the non-binding, status-quo resolution H. Con. Res. 63.

“Failure in Iraq is not an option and political grandstanding does not move us closer to a successful solution, nor does it belong on the House floor. But, that is what the Democrats have chosen to do this week. Instead of engaging in a substantive debate about how to move Iraq towards a peaceful, stable democracy, they have offered a toothless, non-binding, status-quo resolution.

“I have made no secret of my enduring support for our brave men and women that answer their country's call to duty. Therefore, I was compelled to vote against expressing the belief that they do not deserve reinforcements. As I said on the House floor, I am concerned the Democratic resolution is a first step to cutting off funding for the troops - and recent statements and proposals from my counterparts across the aisle reinforce this concern. While I do not support an open-ended commitment in Iraq, I will actively oppose any efforts to deny our brave men and women in the field the support and resources they need.

“I do believe a new direction is needed. That is why I, along with many other Members of Congress, have advocated strategic benchmarks for success in Iraq. Unfortunately, the Democrats would not allow a debate on this or other constructive options, only their status-quo, non-binding resolution.

“The time has come for all Members of Congress to put aside partisan feelings and work together, along with the President, to craft a strategy for Iraq that achieves the following: moves Iraq closer to a peaceful and stable democracy; improves America's security; ensures the utmost safety and best equipment for our soldiers; and provides the shortest feasible time-frame for their return to their families.

“God bless our troops and keep them safe.”