

## HOUSE RULES COMMITTEE TO ALLOW VOTE ON LARSON ALTERNATIVE RESOLUTION ON IRAQ

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WASHINGTON, D.C.- On Monday night, the House Rules Committee reported a structured rule that will allow the alternative resolution on Iraq offered by Rep. John Spratt (D-SC), Rep. John B. Larson and other colleagues to be offered as a substitute amendment during debate on H. J. Res. 114, Authorization for the Use of Military Force Against Iraq. Larson and several other sponsors of the alternative resolution also testified in support of the amendment before the Rules Committee Monday evening.

The proposal being advocated by Larson provides a strong stand against terrorism and against the Iraqi weapons of mass destruction program with a focus on international collaboration, without issuing a "blank check" for unilateral action in Iraq.

If there were to be collective action against Iraq in conjunction with the United Nations, then the Larson alternative would give the President the authority to act and to lead an international coalition to disarm Iraq and dismantle their weapons of mass destruction programs, including long-range ballistic missiles and the means of producing such weapons and missiles.

However, in the absence of cohesive international support, and lacking appropriate resolutions from the United Nations, the alternative requires the President to then seek additional authorization and a second vote from Congress, under an expedited process, to use the United States Armed Forces to unilaterally address Iraqi disarmament.

Larson stated: "The real debate before Congress, the debate between the President's requested authorization for use of force and our alternative, is more than a debate related to the weapons of mass destruction program in Iraq, it is also a debate on whether or not we are prepared to depart from over 50 years of U.S. foreign policies and for the first time in U.S. history, authorize the preemptive and unilateral use of force against another nation, as the President has requested. This is a radical departure from long standing United States policy of deterrence, diplomacy, containment, and collective security. "

"The underlying resolution we are seeking to amend Resolution 114 is a radical and unacceptable shift in U.S. foreign policy, and we must be wary of the precedents and consequences such an action would present. While the U.S. may ultimately need to use military force to make Iraq disarm, at this stage, the U.S. should not to go it alone. This is why we have proposed a two-step solution which is intended to maintain the importance of working together with our international allies to affect global security.

"This discussion is part of the constitutional responsibility of Congress and we must engage in a full and open debate on this important issue," said Larson.

Historical research conducted by the Congressional Research Service states: "The historical record indicates that the United States has never, to date, engaged in a "preemptive" military attack against another nation. Nor has the United States ever attacked another nation militarily prior to its first having been attacked or prior to U.S. citizens or interests first having been attacked." (CRS Report RS-21311)

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Congressman Larson is a Member of the House Armed Services Committee