

LARSON TAKES A STAND FOR THE TROOPS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 2, 2007

LARSON TAKES A STAND FOR THE TROOPS

Votes for bill to mandate troop rest times equal to deployment times

WASHINGTON – U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-1), Vice Chair of the House Democratic Caucus, today voted in favor of the Ensuring Military Readiness Through Stability and Predictability Deployment Policy Act (H.R. 3159), which passed by a vote of 229 to 194. The bill would mandate minimum periods of rest and recuperation for units and members of regular and reserve components of the Armed Forces between deployments.

Larson stated, "Most recently, we heard at a World Affairs Council meeting in Hartford from General Eric Shinseki and Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Paul Bucha. They stressed that there is a nonpartisan desire to achieve the goal of troop readiness. It is essential and important for both our troops and their families.

"An unprecedented strain has been placed on the members of the Reserve and National Guard. There is a growing stress on their mental health and on their families. Excessive deployments are having a negative impact on recruiting and retention and our military as a whole is at a dangerously low level of readiness."

An estimated 250,000 soldiers in the Army and Marine Corps have served more than one tour in Iraq and each of the Army's available active duty combat brigades has served at least a 12-month tour in Iraq or Afghanistan. On top of this, the Secretary of Defense announced in the spring that all active duty Army soldiers would have their tours in Iraq extended from 12 to 15 months.

###