

LARSON RETURNS FROM TRIP TO IRAQ MORE CONVINCED OF NEED FOR TIMETABLE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 21, 2008

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Washington, DC - Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01), Vice Chair of the Democratic Caucus, joined Speaker Nancy Pelosi on a trip to Iraq this past weekend. The delegation met with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki. Larson confronted al-Maliki with the reality of America's waning patience with the War in Iraq and the government's performance there.

Congressman Larson said, "Having spoken with Prime Minister Maliki, I am even more convinced of the need to establish a timeline for U.S. withdrawal from Iraq. The American people have supported the Iraqi government with life, limb and treasure. Now, it is time for Iraqis to stand up and take responsibility for their own future. It is time for Iraq's neighbors and the Arab League to help create a stable and secure Iraq. It's incumbent for Iraq's neighbors and the international community to step up. It seems obvious to me they are content to see this administration go it alone.

"Americans at home are wondering why our troops are paying the ultimate sacrifice in Iraq, caught in the midst of a sectarian war. The United States is going deeper and deeper into debt to rebuild Iraq while the Iraqi government is running a surplus.

"Iraq's government must demonstrate to the United States and the world that it is capable of building a strong coalition to lead their country to stability and security. We have yet to see that sort of leadership from them.

"This continues to be one of the worst foreign policy decisions in our country's history, the scope of which is eclipsing the Vietnam War."