

FEBRUARY 9, 2005

**SCHAKOWSKY CALLS ON REPUBLICAN LEADERS TO ALLOW FOR SERIOUS DEBATE
IN CONGRESS ON
WITHDRAWAL FROM IRAQ**

JOINS CALL FOR HEARINGS ON H.CON.RES. 35

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today joined her colleagues in demanding that the International Relations Committee hold hearings on H.Con.Res.35, a resolution expressing the sense of Congress *"that the President should develop and implement a plan to begin the immediate withdrawal of United States Armed Forces from Iraq."* □ □

Schakowsky, who announced last month that the Bush Administration must begin the "orderly and rapid" withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq, stated that "support is growing across our nation for the President to bring our troops home."

"Our soldiers are honorable men and women who will continue to fight in Iraq as long as they are ordered to do so by their Commander-in-Chief, President Bush. □ But members of Congress take their orders from their constituents, many of whom are demanding that the United States have an exit strategy and a timetable to withdraw our troops from Iraq," Schakowsky said.

During a news conference calling for the hearing on the resolution, Schakowsky read from an email she received last month from a soldier stationed in Iraq. □ It begins:

□ Ma'am;

I work in the medical operations section. My division has been in Iraq for nearly a year. Thank you for saying what must be said. □ Rational minds MUST win the day as I fear that more is at stake than we realize at this point. □ Stay true to your convictions! □ Do not listen to those who denounce you as a traitor to your country and/or the soldiers. □ Soldiers who [voice] support [for] their command and the highest level of leadership of the executive branch do so as a self-insulating defense mechanism; as it is simply too terrible to fathom the futility of the mission while undertaking it. □ It is far easier to view the battlefield through red, white, and blue stained-glass than to see the cold, hard truth. □ And, those of us who admit to and understand the futility are not

allowed to let that belief prevent us from fulfilling our mission, nor should it be so.[] [] It is up to people like you to bravely fight the war on the home front to reign in this madman and his band of merry war mongers, who would plunge our country into unparalleled debt, exacerbate the very problems they claim our misery and sacrifice will eradicate, and sully our international image, all the while wearing a self-assured messianic mask of hubris as the troops follow their orders and accomplish their missions, praying to return home physically and spiritually intact.[]

She added, "The elections in Iraq did not vindicate President Bush's rush to war, which was based on lies and innuendos, and has cost more than 1,400 U.S. soldiers their lives and the American taxpayers over \$150 billion dollars.[] Iraq did not possess weapons of mass destruction and it was not an imminent threat to our nation's security, but has become, in a gruesome self-fulfilling prophecy, the ground zero for terrorism that it was not when President Bush chose to invade. "

"A political process has begun, admittedly fragile, and we should support that effort financially and diplomatically because the military solution has accomplished neither stability nor security in Iraq.[] Instead of debating another wasteful request from President Bush for more money for the occupation, Congress should be pressuring the Administration for a clear, rapid and orderly exit strategy from Iraq and guarantee that the United State would dismantle any and all permanent military bases in that nation," Schakowsky concluded.

H.Con.Res.35 was introduced on January 26, 2005, by U.S. Representative Lynn Woolsey and is co-sponsored by 27 members of the House, including Schakowsky.