

**Washington, D.C.** - Congressman David Price (D-NC) released the following statement in response to President Bush's address to the nation on the war in Iraq and his intent to make small reductions in US troops levels in Iraq over the next year. The President also indicated that the US military role in Iraq would stretch beyond his presidency.

"Returning to pre-surge troop levels would continue the 'stay the course' strategy that has failed for four and a half years. Keeping 130,000 American soldiers on Iraqi soil is unlikely to resolve Iraq's political crisis in 6 months, 12 months or 2 years. In the meantime, more American troops and innocent civilians will lose their lives, and America's military readiness and global leadership will continue to decline.

"The President is skirting responsibility by simply waiting out his term and passing along the Iraq problem to his successor. Congress must assert its prerogative to bring this war to a responsible end and reject the President's plan for an open-ended occupation. I will continue working to build a bipartisan coalition to make that happen."

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