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SENATOR CARDIN VOICES HIS SUPPORT FOR A NEW U.S. MISSION IN IRAQ

The cost in lives and resources continues to be too high

Washington, DC – **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin**, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, took to the floor of the U.S. Senate today to express his support for a Reid-Feingold measure, S. 2633, that would redefine our country's mission in Iraq and begin to redeploy our troops.

“The American public has been calling for a new direction and new priorities in Iraq and Congress has a responsibility to act,” **said Senator Cardin**. “The Feingold resolution provides an honorable and orderly process for us to complete a mission in Iraq. It does not place a time limit on the withdrawal of U.S. troops. I believe it's in the best interests of the United States. I believe it's the right policy for our soldiers.”

Excerpts from his statement follow. Full text is available at www.cardin.senate.gov.

“The President's policy is basically waiting out a civil war. Our troops deserve a new mission that removes them from the midst of a civil war and hastens their return home safely and honorably.

“In initiating the surge, the President said it would provide stability in the country so that the Iraqi government can take control and we can bring our troops home. That was the mission. That's what we were trying to accomplish, but we haven't accomplished it. The surge has not worked in accomplishing a mission that is in the best interests of this country.

“This war is now entering its sixth year. We've been in Iraq longer than we were in World War II. We have now spent half a trillion dollars directly in our war in Iraq, almost 4,000 Americans have been killed, almost 30,000 have been wounded, 67 Marylanders have given their lives, and more than 400 have been injured. Many of these injuries are life-changing.

“The costs in lives has been our deepest loss, but also the dollars. I think about what we could have done with that money. We could have replaced every school in Baltimore with the money that we spent in Iraq. We could have dealt with the energy crisis in this country or built the transit systems we need so we're not dependent upon Middle East oil. We could have done

something about the health care system that allowed a 12-year-old Prince George's' County boy to die because he couldn't get dental care.”

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