



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 8, 2008

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CARDIN TELLS PETRAEUS, CROCKER: “WE NEED TO STEP UP DIPLOMACY AND BRING OUR TROOPS HOME”

Change in Iraq Cannot Wait for the Next President

Washington, DC – **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD), a member of the Foreign Relations Committee**, participated today in the latest questioning of General David Petraeus and U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker on the current status of U.S. military and diplomatic efforts in Iraq. Senator Cardin reiterated the need to bring our troops home as soon as possible, allowing the Iraqi’s to control their own country while the United States returns to the vital mission of tracking international terrorists worldwide.

“I’ve always believed invading Iraq was a mistake. I voted against granting our President that authority in 2003. I have opposed this Administration’s strategy from the beginning. But as much as we might wish it, we cannot change the past. Our troops have performed admirably, but this war was recklessly begun. After more than five years, more than 4,000 American lives lost, 30,000 wounded, and \$600 billion spent, we’ve got to find the smartest, most prudent way to end it and bring our troops home,” said **Senator Cardin**.

“From the very beginning, the Administration has cherry-picked the facts and intelligence used for starting and continuing our military engagement. Each time the facts show the mission was wrong, the American public has been told to ‘wait and see’ while they string things out a little longer. This is not an acceptable strategy for the United States of America. **Stalling is not a plan. President Bush owes the American public a clear path to end our military involvement. A plan to bring our troops home and other hard decisions cannot wait 10 months for the next President to take office.**

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