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Recognizing the strategic success of the troop surge in Iraq and expressing gratitude to the members of the United States Armed Forces who made that success possible.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 31, 2008

Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. ENZI, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. BOND, Mr. WICKER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. ALLARD, Mr. THUNE, Mr. BARRASSO, and Mr. INHOFE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

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RESOLUTION

Recognizing the strategic success of the troop surge in Iraq and expressing gratitude to the members of the United States Armed Forces who made that success possible.

Whereas, by the end of 2006, it had become clear that, despite exceptional efforts and sacrifices on the part of the United States Armed Forces in Iraq, the United States was pursuing a failed strategy in Iraq;

Whereas, by the end of 2006, large-scale sectarian violence was accelerating throughout Iraq, al Qaeda had established significant safe havens there, militias sponsored by the Government of Iran had seized effective control of

large swaths of Iraq, and the Government of Iraq was suffering from political paralysis;

Whereas, by the end of 2006, insurgents and death squads were killing more than 3,000 civilians in Iraq each month and coalition forces were sustaining more than 1,200 attacks each week;

Whereas, in December 2006, the Iraq Study Group warned that ''the United States is facing one of its most difficult and significant international challenges in decades'' in Iraq and that ''Iraq is vital to regional and even global stability, and is critical to U.S. interests'';

Whereas, in December 2004, Osama bin Laden said the following of the war in Iraq: ''The most important and serious issue today for the whole world is this Third World War. . . . The world's millstone and pillar is Baghdad, the capital of the caliphate.'';

Whereas, on January 10, 2007, in an address to the Nation, President George W. Bush acknowledged that the situation in Iraq was ''unacceptable'' and announced his intention to put in place a new strategy, subsequently known as ''the surge'';

Whereas President Bush nominated and the Senate confirmed General David H. Petraeus as the Commander of Multi-National Forces—Iraq, a position he assumed on February 10, 2007;

Whereas General Petraeus, upon assuming command, and in partnership with Lieutenant General Raymond Odierno, the Commander of Multi-National Corps—Iraq, and United States Ambassador to Iraq Ryan Crocker, developed a comprehensive civil-military counterinsurgency campaign plan to reverse Iraq's slide into chaos, defeat

the enemies of the United States in Iraq, and, in partnership with the Iraqi Security Forces and the Government of Iraq, reestablish security across the country;

Whereas, under the previous strategy, the overwhelming majority of United States combat forces were concentrated on a small number of large forward operating bases and were not assigned the mission of providing security for the people of Iraq against insurgents, terrorists, and militia fighters, in part because there were insufficient members of the United States Armed Forces in Iraq to do so;

Whereas, as an integral component of the surge, approximately 5 additional United States Army brigades and 2 United States Marine Corps battalions were deployed to Iraq;

Whereas, as an integral component of the surge, members of the United States Armed Forces were deployed out of large forward operating bases onto small bases throughout Baghdad and other key population centers, partnering with the Iraqi Security Forces to provide security for the local population against insurgents, terrorists, and militia fighters;

Whereas additional members of the United States Armed Forces began moving into Iraq in January 2007 and reached full strength in June 2007;

Whereas, as a consequence of the additional forces needed in Iraq, in April 2007 the United States Army added 3 months to the standard year-long tour for all active duty soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the United States Marine Corps added 3 months to the standard 6-month tour for all active duty Marines in Iraq and Afghanistan;

Whereas, as an integral component of the surge, members of the United States Armed Forces began simultaneous and successive offensive operations, in partnership with the Iraqi Security Forces, of unprecedented breadth, continuity, and sophistication, striking multiple enemy safe havens and lines of communication at the same time;

Whereas, as an integral component of the surge, additional members of the United States Armed Forces were deployed to Anbar province to provide essential support to the nascent tribal revolt against al Qaeda in that province;

Whereas those additional members of the United States Armed Forces played a critical role in the success and spread of anti-Qaeda Sunni tribal groups in Anbar province and subsequently in other regions of Iraq;

Whereas, since the start of the surge in January 2007, there have been marked and hopeful improvements in almost every political, security, and economic indicator in Iraq;

Whereas, in 2007, General Petraeus described Iraq as ''the central front of al Qaeda's global campaign'';

Whereas, in 2008, as a consequence of the success of the surge, al Qaeda has been dealt what Director of Central Intelligence Michael Hayden assesses as a ''near strategic defeat'' in Iraq;

Whereas, as a consequence of the success of the surge, militias backed by the Government of Iran have been routed from major population centers in Iraq and no longer control significant swaths of territory;

Whereas, as a consequence of the success of the surge, sectarian violence in Iraq has fallen dramatically and has been almost entirely eliminated;

Whereas, as a consequence of the success of the surge, overall insurgent attacks have fallen by approximately 80 percent since June 2007 and are at their lowest level since March 2004;

Whereas, as a consequence of the success of the surge, United States casualties in Iraq have dropped dramatically and United States combat deaths in Iraq in July 2008 were lower than in any other month since the beginning of the war;

Whereas, as a consequence of the success of the surge, the Government of Iraq has made significant strides in advancing sectarian reconciliation and achieving political progress, including the passage of key benchmark legislation;

Whereas, as a consequence of the success of the surge, the Iraqi Security Forces have improved markedly and approximately 70 percent of Iraqi combat battalions are now leading operations in their areas; and

Whereas, as a consequence of the success of the surge, General Petraeus concluded in 2008 that conditions on the ground in Iraq could permit the additional brigades and battalions dispatched to Iraq in 2007 as part of the surge to be safely redeployed without replacement, and all such brigades and battalions have been successfully withdrawn without replacement: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends and expresses its gratitude to the men and women of the United States Armed Forces for the service, sacrifices, and heroism that made the success of the troop surge in Iraq possible;

(2) commends and expresses its gratitude to General David H. Petraeus, General Raymond Odierno, and Ambassador Ryan Crocker for the distinguished wartime leadership that made the success of the troop surge in Iraq possible;

(3) recognizes the success of the troop surge in Iraq and its strategic significance in advancing the vital national interests of the United States in Iraq, the Middle East, and the world, in particular as a strategic victory in a central front of the war on terrorism; and

(4) recognizes that the hard-won gains achieved as a result of the troop surge in Iraq are significant but not yet permanent and that it is imperative that no action be taken that jeopardizes those gains or dishonors the service and sacrifice of the men and women of the United States Armed Forces who made those gains possible.

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