



**Contact:** David Lerner, Mahdis Keshavarz, Riptide Communications,  
[dlerner@riptideonline.com](mailto:dlerner@riptideonline.com) 212-260-5000  
Nancy Lessin, Military Families Speak Out, [mfso@mfso.org](mailto:mfso@mfso.org), 617-320-5301

### PRESS RELEASE

#### **MILITARY FAMILIES PARTICIPATE IN ACTIVITIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY** **COMMEMORATING** **4TH ANNIVERSARY OF IRAQ WAR**

#### ***CALL ON CONGRESS TO SUPPORT OUR TROOPS AND DEFUND THE WAR***

*March 16, 2007, Nationwide* – Beginning today and continuing through next week, members of Military Families Speak Out (MFSO) will be participating in activities in cities and towns across the country that are commemorating the fourth anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. They will be calling on their Members of Congress to support our troops by voting against the House Supplemental Appropriations bill and end the funding that allows the war in Iraq to continue. They will call for bringing our troops home now and taking care of them when they get here. Activities will include press conferences, rallies, marches, memorials, vigils, and other types of protests.

Selected events include:

- **Washington, D.C. Friday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m. Service at the Washington National Cathedral, 3101 Wisconsin Ave. NW**, followed by a candlelight procession to the White House. MFSO and Gold Star Families Speak Out member Celeste Zappala will address the assembly at the National Cathedral. Her son Sgt. Sherwood Baker was killed in Iraq on April 26, 2004. He was the first Pennsylvania National Guardsman to die in combat since World War Two.
- **Fayetteville, North Carolina: Saturday March 17<sup>th</sup> - Pre-Rally at 10 a.m. at Health Department Parking Lot 227 Fountainhead Lane; 12:00 noon march up Hay St. to Rowan Park, and 1:00 rally at Rowan Park: “Yes to the Troops, No to the War”** event with participants including members of Military Families Speak Out, Iraq Veterans Against the War and Veterans for Peace.
- **Washington, D.C.: Monday, March 19<sup>th</sup> Press Conference at 10:30 a.m. the Cannon House Office Building Terrace** (corner of Independence and New Jersey) with military and Gold Star families, Active Duty Troops, Iraq War Veterans and Vietnam Veterans unveiling a “Certificate of

Ownership” for the war in Iraq that will be presented to Congress if they vote next week to continue funding the war. Speakers include:

- **Joyce and Kevin Lucey** of Belchertown, MA whose son Cpl. Jeffrey Michael Lucey, a Marine Reservist, served in Iraq in 2003, and took his own life after being released and not treated at a VA hospital in 2004.
- **Tina Richards** of Salem, Missouri who was recently involved in a public confrontation with Congressman Obey and whose son served two tours of duty with the Marines in Iraq, is suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and may be sent on a third deployment
- **Stacy Bannerman** of Kent, Washington whose husband served for a year in Iraq with the Washington Army National Guard, received a mental health exam eight months after serving at the most attacked base in Iraq, and, almost one year from that exam was notified by the military of his diagnosis of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.
- **Kelly Dougherty** of Philadelphia, PA who served with the Colorado Army National Guard in Iraq and is now Executive Director of Ireq Veterans Against the War
- **Elliot Adams** of Albany, NY, Vietnam Veteran and national president of Veterans for Peace
- **Nancy Lessin and Charley Richardson** of Boston, MA, co-founders of Military Families Speak Out, whose son served with the Marines in Iraq in spring, 2003
- **‘Appeal for Redress’ Active Duty Service men and women** from local military bases.

Following the press conference, participants will visit the offices of House Leaders and Members.

- **St. Louis, Missouri: Monday March 19<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 Noon, a march from Kaufman Park to the St. Louis office of Senator Claire McCaskill:** Following a 24 hour memorial vigil at Kaufman Park (at Chestnut and Tucker), MFSO members and others will march to the office of Senator Claire McCaskill at the Robert A. Young Federal Building, 1222 Spruce Street and deliver a symbolic check for \$100 billion that Congress is poised to give President Bush to fund the war, along with a funeral wreath representing those that will die if the war continues. Among those participating is 82 year old Bud Deraps of St. Louis, MO, a WWII veteran whose grandson was killed in Iraq in 2006.

Activities will take place in locations across the country from Friday, March 16 through Monday March 19th, in states including: Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, North Carolina, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, New York, Kentucky, Ohio Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Washington, DC and other locations.

For more information on activities and events that Military Families Speak Out members will be involved in to commemorate the 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Iraq War, and/or to arrange interviews with participating members of Military Families Speak Out, **contact David Lerner, Riptide Communications, at 212-260-5000 or 917-612-5657; or Nancy Lessin, Military Families Speak Out at 617-320-5301**

**For more information about Military Families Speak Out, please visit: [www.mfso.org](http://www.mfso.org)**