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Military Families Speak Out Launches *Operation House Call*

Military Families travel to Washington, DC to Tell Congress: 'Bring Our Loved Ones Home Now!'

WASHINGTON, DC- This summer, families with loved ones who are serving in Iraq, those with loved ones who were killed in Iraq, and families whose loved ones may deploy or re-deploy are bringing their message directly to Congress. *Operation House Call*, a summer-long campaign to highlight the damage caused by the Iraq War, will bring military families from across the United States to Washington, D.C. to highlight the growing toll of the Iraq war and to tell Congress to bring our troops home now and take care of them when they get here. "Every day that Congress fails to act to end this war, an average of two U.S. troops and countless Iraqi children, women and men are dying," said **Stacy Bannerman of Kent, Washington** whose husband served in the Iraq with the Washington Army National Guard and faces possible re-deployment. "Congress should be ashamed of their political posturing and mock debates, as our loved ones and the people of Iraq continue to be maimed and die in a war that should never have happened."

Beginning June 22nd, and continuing until Congress recesses for the summer on August 7th, MFSO will be holding a daily vigil outside of Congressional Office Buildings. The vigil will feature boots representing U.S. troops and shoes representing Iraqi children, women and men who have been killed in the Iraq war. A new pair of boots will be added for each US soldier killed in Iraq since June 15, the day of the 2,500th troop death and the day the war in Iraq was debated in the Senate and House and Congress voted to "stay the course." New pairs of shoes representing Iraqi deaths will also be added each day. In addition to the ongoing vigil, there will be special speaking and press events, visits to Senators and Members of Congress, and events featuring military and Gold Star families, returned Iraq War Veterans and Veterans of other conflicts. MFSO members from across the country will also be sending tens of thousands of postcards to their Senators and Representatives demanding action to end the war in Iraq.

When Congress recesses in August, MFSO members will follow their elected officials back to their home districts. "We want Congress to know that we are not going away," stated **Debbie Johnson of West Jordan, Utah** whose son will be deployed for a second time to Iraq in July or August, 2006. "Most serving in Congress aren't feeling the urgency to end the war. Their loved ones are here safe and sound, not facing multiple deployments to Iraq. But our loved ones and so many others are in harm's way every minute because of their inaction. We need real leadership, commitment and courage to end this war."

Military Families Speak Out members will be available for interview throughout the summer as they travel to Washington, D.C. from across the country to participate in *Operation House Call*.

Military Families Speak Out was founded by two military families in November, 2002; its membership now includes over 3,000 military families speaking out to end the war in Iraq. It is the largest organization of military families opposing a war in the history of the United States. For more information see www.mfso.org

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