



Contact: Ateqah Khaki, Riptide Communications, [ateqah@riptideonline.com](mailto:ateqah@riptideonline.com), 212-260-5000  
Kelly Dougherty, Iraq Veterans Against the War, [Kelly@ivaw.org](mailto:Kelly@ivaw.org); 719-660-8106  
Nancy Lessin, Military Families Speak Out, [mfso@mfso.org](mailto:mfso@mfso.org), 617-320-5301  
Michael McPhearson, Veterans For Peace, [vfped@veteransforpeace.net](mailto:vfped@veteransforpeace.net) , 314-725-6005

**MILITARY FAMILIES AND VETERANS TO CONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP: "USE YOUR 'POWER OF THE PURSE' TO END THE WAR THAT SO MANY OF YOU SAY YOU CONDEMN"**

March 1, 2007, Washington DC – Today, as House Democratic leaders unveiled their new Iraq plan, **Military Families Speak Out** (MFSO), together with **Iraq Veterans Against the War** (IVAW) and **Veterans for Peace** (VFP), sent a letter to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, Speaker of the House Representative Nancy Pelosi, majority whips, and committee chairs urging these Congressional leaders to support our troops by using their "power of the purse" to de-fund the war and end the U.S. military occupation of Iraq. In the letter, the organizations who represent military and Gold Star families, Veterans of the Iraq War, current servicemen and women, Vietnam Veterans and Veterans of other eras challenge the prevailing logic that de-funding the Iraq War means de-funding or abandoning troops in the field. The letter also draws a grim parallel between the Iraq War and the Vietnam War, and points to the time when political maneuvering and lack of leadership led to the deaths of 28,000 additional US troops after there was widespread agreement that the war needed to end.

The letter reads in part:

*"We are asking that, as leaders in Congress, you exercise leadership. Your voice is needed now more than ever. Tell the American people the truth about President Bush's funding request. President Bush is not asking for more funds for the troops. He is asking for more funds to continue a war that should never have happened.....It is not too late for you to do the right thing. ...[S]stand up and call for the de-funding of the Iraq War. Stand strong when you explain that de-funding the war is not de-funding or abandoning our troops. Let the American people know what we as military families and Veterans know -- that de-funding the war will not leave our troops without equipment or supplies. Stand strong when you explain that there are sufficient funds available to bring our troops home quickly and safely, and that if more funds are ever needed, Congress has the ability to re-program monies from the Department of Defense budget to use for this purpose. Stand strong and fight to bring our troops home . ...Stop telling us that you don't have the votes, and work with us to secure them. That is what leaders do."*

**Military Families Speak Out** ([www.mfso.org](http://www.mfso.org)) is the largest organization of military families opposing a war in the history of the United States. The group currently has over 3,200 military families with loved ones currently serving in Iraq, loved ones soon to deploy or redeploy, loved ones who have returned physically and/or psychologically wounded, and loved ones who died as a result of the war.

**Iraq Veterans Against the War** ([www.ivaw.org](http://www.ivaw.org)), founded in July, 2004, includes service members who are active duty, Guard, Reserve and Individual Ready Reserve in 41 states as well as on bases overseas including in Iraq. ...

**Veterans For Peace** ([www.veteransforpeace.org](http://www.veteransforpeace.org)), founded in 1985, includes Veterans from World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, the current Iraq war and other conflicts.

A copy of the letter sent to Congressional leaders by MFSO, IVAW, and VFP is available upon request or can be viewed at [www.mfso.org](http://www.mfso.org).