



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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With the Iraq War Putting the Nation's Health in Peril, Military Families Make a House Call

Military Families Speak Out Begins "Operation House Call" with June 22, 2006 Press Conference

WASHINGTON, DC - On Thursday, June 22 at 10 a.m., Military Families Speak Out will hold a press conference outside the Cannon House Office Building to launch ***Operation House Call***, a summer- long campaign to highlight the damage caused by the Iraq War. Beginning on June 22, military families with loved ones who are serving in Iraq, those whose loved ones died as a result of the Iraq War, and those with loved ones awaiting deployment or re-deployment will come to Washington, D.C. to call attention to the growing toll of the Iraq war and tell Congress: "End the occupation, bring our troops home now and take care of them when they get here."

Beginning on June 22 and continuing until August 7 when Congress recesses for the summer, members of Military Families Speak Out will be holding daily vigils, speaking events, visits with Congress and related activities at Congressional Office Buildings. An on-going display will feature pairs of combat boots representing U.S. troop deaths, and shoes representing the deaths of Iraqi children, women and men. The count will begin from June 15, the day of the 2,500th troop death, when the Iraq War was debated in both the Senate and the House and the majority voted to "stay the course." New boots and shoes will be added to the display to correspond with continuing deaths in Iraq, highlighting lives lost due to Congressional *inaction*.

WHAT: Military Families Hold Press Conference launching summer-long ***Operation House Call*** campaign; visuals (pictures of family members in the military, signs and banners).

WHO: Members of Military Families Speak Out, including:

- **Stacy Bannerman of Kent, WA** whose husband serves in the Washington Army National Guard, SFC Mortar Platoon, and served a year's tour of duty in Iraq. He may re-deploy in the future.
- **Elizabeth Frederick of Washington, DC** whose partner of 4 ½ years is a former Marine who was deployed to Iraq from 2004-2005 with the New York Army National Guard as a combat infantryman. His National Guard unit had not been deployed overseas since the Korean War.
- **Elaine Johnson of Cope, SC** whose son, Spc. Darius Jennings, age 22, was killed in action in Iraq on November 2, 2003, when his Chinook helicopter was shot down, taking his life and the lives of fifteen other soldiers.

- **Mona Parsons of Mt. Vernon, OH** whose son is a Sgt in the Army and is currently serving his first deployment to Iraq.
- **Al Zappala of Philadelphia, PA** whose son, Sgt. Sherwood Baker, was killed in action in Iraq on April 26, 2004. He was the first Pennsylvania National Guard soldier to die in combat since World War II. He was killed in an explosion while assigned to protect the Iraq Survey Group who were searching for Weapons of Mass Destruction long after it was known that there were no WMD's in Iraq.

WHEN: Thursday, June 22 at 10 A.M.

WHERE: 1st Street and Independence Avenue, SE in front of the Cannon House Office Building

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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