

House Democrats' Iraq Accountability Act Funds Troops, Demands Accountability

House Democrats are moving quickly to provide our troops with the funds they need, while ensuring that the Iraqi government is held accountable and forcing the President to take a new direction. The Iraq Accountability Act, which will be on the House Floor today, provides all of the money requested by the President for Iraq, in addition to increased funds for the military, the war in Afghanistan, Katrina recovery and other pressing needs. However, Congress would only allow money to be spent on Iraq operations through August, with the remainder "fenced off" until a second vote in July. Under the legislation, the President must submit reports to Congress on July 13th detailing the progress the Iraqi government has made in meeting benchmarks and goals. After receiving this detailed progress report, Congress would vote no more than seven legislative days later whether or not to release the rest of the funding.

Will Republicans Support the Benchmarks They Say They Want?

A growing list of Republicans say they want the same type of benchmarks that are included in the Iraq Accountability Act – today will be yet another opportunity for them to back up their comments with their votes.

- **Rep. Jim Gerlach (R-PA):** "Do we need to put things out in front of the Iraqi government that makes them realize they have to do certain things to continue the support of the American people? Absolutely." [*The Washington Post*, 5/9/07]
 - "Republican leaders in Congress said yesterday that negotiations on a second war spending bill should begin with benchmarks of success for the Iraqi government." [*The Washington Post*, 5/1/07]
 - "[Minority Leader John] Boehner 'believes members and the administration can and will discuss benchmarks as a way of measuring progress and holding the Iraqi government accountable.'" [*The Washington Post*, 5/1/07]
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More and More Republicans Put a Deadline on the President

Each day seems to bring another Republican who puts a September deadline on the President. Why won't these same Republicans step up and hold the President accountable for progress over the next two months?

- "House Republican moderates, in a remarkably blunt White House meeting, warned President Bush...that he cannot count on GOP support for many more months." [*The Washington Post*, 5/10/07]
- **Senator Gordon Smith (R-OR)**, on what will happen if September comes and there is not a change on the ground in Iraq: "I know what I hear from many Republican senators. That means that many will simply change their votes and Chuck Hagel and I won't be the only ones calling on the president to put the troops in a new place." [*NBC's Today Show*, 5/9/07]
- **Rep. Jack Kingston (R-GA):** If progress is not being seen by the fall, "a heck of a lot of us will start peeling away." [*New York Times*, 4/20/07]
- **Minority Leader Boehner (R-OH):** "By the time we get to September, October, members are going to want to know how well this is working, and if it isn't, what's Plan B." [*Fox News Sunday*, 5/6/07]
- **Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY):** "I think the time to look at where we are...is late summer." [*Congress Daily*, 5/8/07]
- **Senator Susan Collins (R-ME):** "I do believe there comes a point in September where if it's evident that the new strategy is not successful and will not succeed we do have to change course and that means looking for all options, including a plan for withdrawing troops." [*CNN*, 5/8/07]