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Inglis: Troop surge working
Iraqi government doesn't have resolve, urgency, he says

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U.S. Rep. Bob Inglis pronounced President Bush's troop surge in Iraq a military success Wednesday, but he said political progress by the Maliki government isn't encouraging.

"We have succeeded militarily in a number of places, Anbar Province being the key example," Inglis told reporters and editors of The Greenville News.

Inglis expressed concern that Iraqi politicians aren't showing a sense of urgency in resolving their political problems as an uneasy American public watches.

Time is short, perhaps 12 to 18 months, Inglis said, because the American public's patience is running thin. "If you're providing another country's protection, you've got a right to insist" on stability-oriented change, Inglis said.

Advertisement Inglis said he expects Gen. David Petraeus, the U.S. commander in Iraq, to confirm that next month when he reports to the Senate and House Armed Services committees. Inglis is a member of the latter.

Whatever Petraeus says won't represent accomplishment of the U.S. mission in Iraq "because there are still these political decisions to be made before real, lasting stability comes to Iraq," Inglis said.

Key among them are distribution of oil revenue, amending the constitution to provide rights for Sunni Muslims and Kurds, and curtailing the influence of Saddam Hussein's ruling Baathist Party, he said.

The military can only do so much, Inglis said, because "in the end, it must become the will of the people of Iraq to live in peace and stop beheading each other."

The Travelers Rest Republican said that among his constituents there is strong support for the Iraq mission, but they are "increasingly insistent on progress ... some way of moving it along."
