

# Hawai'i delegation disappointed with Bush veto

By BRIAN CHARLTON

May 2, 2007

Despite President Bush's veto of legislation to pull U.S. troops out of Iraq, Hawai'i's lawmakers in Washington said today they'd continue to try to change the course of the unpopular and costly war.

Bush rejected legislation pushed by Democratic leaders that would require the first U.S. combat troops to be withdrawn from Iraq by Oct. 1, with a goal of a complete pullout six months later.

All four Hawai'i Democrats who had supported the legislation accused Bush of ignoring the American public's desire to stop the war, which has claimed the lives of more than 3,350 members of the military.

"The president is making another huge mistake," said Sen. Daniel Akaka in a recorded statement. "He is rejecting the bill that will provide funding for troops."

Bush said the bill would "mandate a rigid and artificial deadline" for troop pullouts, and "it makes no sense to tell the enemy when you plan to start withdrawing."

Rep. Neil Abercrombie said the veto was "tragic," especially falling on the fourth anniversary of Bush's "Mission Accomplished" speech declaring that major combat operations had ended in Iraq.

"He still does not realize that this war is one of the greatest geopolitical blunders in the history of the United States," Abercrombie said in a statement.

U.S. Sen. Daniel Inouye said Democrats are dedicated to ending the war.

"The president began this war on very questionable grounds," said Inouye, chairman of the Senate defense appropriations subcommittee. "Now, he continues to seek a military solution to a situation that has evolved into a civil war that the Iraqis themselves must end."

U.S. Rep. Mazie Hirono said it's clear to her and other Democrats that the legislation was supportive of troops, especially since lawmakers included about \$24 billion more than the Bush administration requested.

"I'm very disappointed he didn't take the opportunity to change his course," she said in a phone interview.