

WALTER B. JONES
3D DISTRICT, NORTH CAROLINA

ROOM 2333
RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-3415

COMMITTEES:
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES

DISTRICT OFFICE:
1105-C CORPORATE DRIVE
GREENVILLE, NC 27858
(252) 931-1003
(800) 351-1697

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3303

February 22, 2007

The Honorable John P. Murtha, Chairman
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
Room H-149, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As Congress and the President continue to discuss and debate the best way forward in Iraq, no one can debate the need to provide our men and women in uniform with the finest equipment and training available. Anyone who goes into harm's way under the flag of the United States of America should be deployed with the best our nation can provide.

Therefore, I fully support your demonstrated leadership to properly equip and train our armed forces.

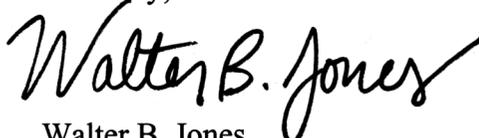
However, I believe that we must take great care to ensure that any effort to provide for our armed forces not be used as a proxy for resolving larger issues concerning the war in Iraq. Any attempt to "starve" the war as a way of bringing it to a conclusion, rather than through a serious policy debate about the best way forward in Iraq, would be wrong.

I have been, and will continue to be, willing to hold accountable those institutions and individuals who have made serious misjudgments leading up to, and during, the war in Iraq. But I also have assured the citizens of Eastern North Carolina, and our brave men and women in uniform, that I will never vote to cut off funding for our troops in the field.

Those troops were sent on a mission created by elected officials in Washington, and until those elected officials – operating under the system of checks and balances enumerated in the Constitution – change that mission, their funding should be unfettered by appropriations strings that are in reality a way for Congress to avoid straight up or down policy votes on the House floor.

Thank you for your consideration of my views on this most important matter.

Sincerely,



Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress