

Washington D.C. – Today, in response to the continued political escalation from Washington lawmakers attempting to use Iraq for political gains, Congressman McCarthy issued the following statement urging both parties to put politics aside and work together to find a solution in the best interests of our Nation, the safety and security of our brave troops in harm's way, and the stability of the Middle East region:

"I urge Congress to stop approaching this debate as Republicans or Democrats, and come from the perspective as Americans. This means listening to our commanders for objective analyses about our new strategy in Iraq. While it is reasonable to expect both parties to express differences in ideas, it is wrong to approach the coming September report by General Petraeus with a predisposition against positive news in order to pursue partisan political goals.

□

"The consequence of working simply for political gain, and not for the best way forward for our nation, our troops, and Iraq, would have long-term ramifications to our future and our children's future. When I visit schools and see children who are seven, eight, and nine, I imagine a world where these children will be working to be innovators, and not the ones we are forced to ask to redeploy in the Middle East because 10 years prior, we withdrew precipitously from Iraq and left a state to fail, and ultimately grow into a haven for enemies of America.

□

"General Petraeus, our military leaders and our troops courageously implementing the new strategy have recognized the challenges we face, but have also made some important positive gains. Yesterday, a New York Times op-ed by two scholars at the Brookings Institution who just returned from Iraq drew attention to the same successes our military commanders have reported.

□

"Americans expect their leaders to approach this extremely important issue in the best interests of America, and not for raw political gain. I urge my colleagues to work for what the American people want: partnership, not partisanship."

Yesterday, House Majority Whip James Clyburn (D-SC) told the Washington Post that if General Petraeus reported in September that Iraq was making positive steps forward, it would be "a real big problem for" his political party and "likely would split Democrats in the House and impede his party's efforts to press for a timetable to end the war." ([View the video here](#)) These comments come after the new Speaker of the House earlier this year refused to attend a closed-door briefing by General Petraeus for all Members of Congress ([View the article here](#))

Michael O'Hanlon, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, and Kenneth Pollack, the director of research at the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at Brookings, recently returned from Iraq and wrote an op-ed published in the New York Times yesterday about the successes they saw on the ground in Iraq. ([View op-ed here](#)) Of particular note, the two scholars said, "Here is the most important thing Americans need to understand: We are finally getting somewhere in Iraq, at least in military terms."

