



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 28, 2006

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172nd Stryker Brigade Tour of Duty in Iraq Extended; Family Members Speak Out Against the War

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Members of the 172nd Stryker Brigade were returning home, and **Jennifer Davis, a member of Military Families Speak Out from Anchorage, Alaska**, was preparing for her husband's homecoming. He had served almost one year in Iraq. She just received a call she never expected. "My husband called to let me know in the best way that he knew how, that the Army was extending his deployment four more months, mere hours before he was to board a flight home," said Ms. Davis. "I am totally frustrated, disappointed and heart broken. Just when I thought we were going to be able to resume a 'normal' life. Just when I thought the nightmare was over, it was extended..... This war should never have started, and now I'm left wondering if it will ever end. My husband and all of the troops should be brought home now. "

Kathy Knowles, a member of Military Families Speak Out from Shorewood, Illinois was preparing to celebrate her son's 25th birthday next week with him after his deployment in Iraq with the 172nd Stryker Brigade – and she too received the call that he would not be coming home. "I am devastated -- I was so excited that he was returning to our soil and we could celebrate the victory that he had survived the hell of this war," said Ms. Knowles. "The President and Congress have truly let us down – returning my son and so many others to combat in a war that should never have happened."

The 172nd Stryker Brigade is one of the units scheduled to return to the United States, but is instead being extended and kept in Iraq for several more months under orders from Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. Despite numerous promises of progress being made and milestones being accomplished, the war in Iraq is once again about "taking Baghdad." As the violence continues to escalate, fueled by the on-going U.S. military occupation, the burden of the failures of this Administration is again falling on the troops who have given so much and the families back home who love them.

Ms. Davis and Ms. Knowles are available for interview, to speak about the damage to families and to the troops that is being done by the war in Iraq and by the unscheduled extensions of service.

For further information, go to: www.mfso.org
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