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STATEMENT

MILITARY FAMILIES SPEAK OUT OPPOSE INCREASE IN US TROOPS IN IRAQ

Challenge Senator Reid and other Congressional Leaders to Take Real Action to End the War

December 18, 2006 – Military Families Speak Out (MFSO), an organization of over 3,100 military families who are opposed to the war in Iraq, have grave concerns about the statement made yesterday by incoming Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid supporting a short-term increase in U.S. troops in Iraq. “If it’s for a surge, that is, for two or three months and it’s part of a program to get us out of there as indicated by this time next year, then, sure, I’ll go along with it,” said Senator Harry Reid.

“The U.S. invasion of Iraq set in motion the course of action that has led to the deaths of almost 3,000 U.S. troops and hundreds of thousands of Iraqis,” said Nancy Lessin, co-founder of Military Families Speak Out. “Sending more troops will only mean that more U.S. troops die and it will not halt the escalating violence. The U.S. occupation of Iraq is the problem, not the solution,” Lessin added.

“Even some architects of this war – and those who sold it to the American people, such as former Secretary of State Colin Powell, are casting doubt on this strategy,” said Charley Richardson, another co-founder of Military Families Speak Out. Colin Powell said yesterday that he is not persuaded that another surge of troops into Baghdad for the purposes of suppressing the violence will work. “It is easy for those who have no personal stake in this war to talk about sending more troops. They do not have to deal with the real-life consequences of these decisions,” added Richardson.

Military Families Speak Out is calling on Congress to stop focusing on what others may or may not do, and take action itself to end the U.S. occupation of Iraq. The U.S. Congress has the power of the purse, and can cut off funding for the war. MFSO understands that there is enough money currently appropriated in the Defense Department’s budget to bring all U.S. troops home quickly and safely – funding the equipment, armor, supplies, food and other items they will need during their exit.

MFSO is the largest organization of anti-war military families in U.S. history. The group plans to gather members in Washington DC in early January to apply pressure on the incoming 110th Congress to defund the war in Iraq and bring home our troops now!

For more information about *Military Families Speak Out*, please visit: <http://www.mfso.org>