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LARSON STATEMENT ON THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF "MISSION ACCOMPLISHED" STUNT

WASHINGTON, DC ♦ Congressman John B. Larson (CT-1) today released the following statement on the third anniversary of President Bush's declaration that the mission had been accomplished in Iraq:

♦ Three years ago today, the President declared ♦ Mission Accomplished ♦ in Iraq. Unfortunately, the President still has not leveled with the American people, Congress, and especially the Reservists and National Guard who have been redeployed two or three times and don't know when their mission will end. Since the President's announcement three years ago, 2,261 of our men and women in uniform have died ♦ including 28 from Connecticut ♦ and the total cost of the war is approaching \$500 billion. Yet, daily attacks against our troops and the dramatic rise in global terror attacks make it clear that our continued presence in Iraq is endangering American lives.

♦ I would like to renew the call I ♦ve made for the last three years. This war cannot be won with slogans. The President needs to level with our troops and the American people about the war, what our mission is, how long it will take, and what it will cost.

♦ The recent selection of an Iraqi prime minister to lead the new government is a sign of progress made with the aid and sacrifices of our troops. However, the time has come for Iraq to start progressing under its own power. I reiterate my support for Congressman John Murtha (D-PA) and his plan calling for a redeployment of troops at the earliest practicable time, a quick-reaction force and an over-the-horizon presence of Marines, and the pursuit of security and stability in Iraq through diplomacy. ♦

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