

RESOLUTION NO. 84

URGING THE CESSATION OF COMBAT OPERATIONS IN IRAQ AND THE RETURN OF U.S. TROOPS

Introduced: 2/11/08

By Messrs. Bullock, Steck and McKnight:

WHEREAS, The “Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002” was passed by the U.S. Congress on October 11, 2002, and that Public Law 107-243 cited Iraq’s possession of weapons of mass destruction as a primary reason for the use of United States Armed Forces against Iraq, and

WHEREAS, On January 12, 2005, President Bush officially declared an end to the search for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and

WHEREAS, The United State initiated combat operations in Iraq on March 19, 2003, and March 19, 2008 will mark five years of the Iraq War, and

WHEREAS, Families in the United States have paid a heavy price for U.S. involvement in Iraq, with the deaths of more than 3,900 U.S. troops and the wounding and disabling of more than 25,000 U.S. military personnel, and

WHEREAS, The United States military occupation of Iraq has placed significant strains on the capacity of the United States Armed Forces, both active duty, reserves and the National Guard, and

WHEREAS, The war and occupation have also cost an estimated 100,000 Iraqi civilian deaths, including many men, women and children who simply found themselves “in the wrong place at the wrong time” in this ill-conceived conflict, and

WHEREAS, Countless more Iraqis have been maimed, traumatized and wounded, or have suffered the destruction of homes, schools, sanitation and water treatment plants, hospitals and the environment, and more than 4 million Iraqi civilians have been made refugees, and

WHEREAS, More than \$400 billion has been appropriated by Congress to fund military operations in Iraq, rather than to fund desperately needed education, health care, housing, nutrition and other social services in the United States, and humanitarian assistance abroad, and

WHEREAS, One day of the Iraq War costs \$720 million, and one minute costs \$500,000 of taxpayer dollars, figures which include such future costs as health and disability payments for military personnel and replacement of military

hardware and based upon the work of Nobel Prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz and Linda Bilmes of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, and

WHEREAS, The interest on war debt is \$191 billion, a figure based on Congressional Budget Office calculations, and since we are paying for this war during a time of tax cuts for the wealthy, we are paying for the war on credit, and

WHEREAS, The war and continued occupation have resulted in severe economic strains that have placed additional tax burdens on Albany County, along with diminished social services and Federal funding sources, and

WHEREAS, The presence of United States forces in Iraq and the alleged torture of prisoners at Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba and other facilities have diminished our moral authority and inflamed anti-American passions in much of the world, and

WHEREAS, Polls show that the vast majority of American people oppose the war, now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Albany County Legislature on behalf of the people of Albany County, New York urges the United States government to immediately commence an orderly and rapid withdrawal of United States military personnel from Iraq, dismantle U.S. military bases in Iraq, relinquish control of Iraq's economy and provide the necessary financial compensation and resources for Iraqis to rebuild Iraq, and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Albany County Legislature urges New York State Governor Eliot Spitzer and all New York State local, state and national elected officials to support rapid withdrawal of US troops from Iraq, and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the County Legislature is directed to forward certified copies of this resolution to the above mentioned officials and to the appropriate County Officials.

On roll call vote the following voted in favor: Messrs. Aylward, Bullock, Ms. Chapman, Messrs. Clay, Clenahan, Commisso, Cotrofeld, Higgins, Horstmyer, Joyce, Mayo, Ms. McKnight, Messrs. Nichols, Steck and Ward – 15.

Those opposed: Ms. Benedict, Messrs. Beston, Carman, Clouse, Ms. Connolly, Messrs. Dawson, Domalewicz, Ethier, Gordon, Hoblock, Houghtaling, Infante, Mss. Lockart, Maffia-Tobler, Messrs. McCoy, Mendick, Morse, Scavo, Timmins, Tunny, Ms. Willingham and Mr. Zeilman – 22.

Resolution was defeated. 2/11/08