

McCollum: Credit Obama for Iraq War's end

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Washington, DC –Congresswoman Betty McCollum (MN-04) issued the following statement, regarding the official end to American military operations in Iraq.

“President Obama deserves tremendous credit for ending America’s war in Iraq, honoring his commitment to bring all U.S. troops home. As commander-in-chief he has always set the appropriate course of action in Iraq while always honoring the service and sacrifice of our troops and our military families.

“The Iraq War has been a tragedy for far too many American and Iraqi families. The human costs of this war – in deaths, suffering, and permanent loss – cannot be calculated. U.S. troops served and fought with a profound sense of duty to our country. For this, all Americans should be grateful. The family members and loved ones of our brave troops also endured tremendous sacrifices that can never be repaid. Those selfless Americans who sacrificed their lives and bodies in service to our country, we must always remember them and always fulfill the promises we have made to our veterans and their families.

“At home we cannot ignore the war’s other costs. The Iraq War directly added \$800 billion to the nation’s debt – a bill that will be paid by our children and grandchildren. Meeting the long-term health care needs of Iraq war veterans will require hundreds of billions more for decades to come and that’s an obligation Congress must never balk at paying.

“Over the past nine years, my opposition to this war has been well known. This was a war of political choice, not strategic necessity. Iraq is no longer ruled by a dictator, but the price the Iraqi people paid in death, destruction, violence, and misery casts a very dark shadow over their country’s future.

“In the final analysis, America’s war in Iraq was a strategic and human tragedy that must not be repeated. Now, as armchair generals in their disgraced neo-conservative pinstripes plot their next misadventure, this time with Iran, the American people must not be fooled, not be driven by fear, and not yield to another expensive and painful war of choice.”