

State of Vermont

House of Representatives



Montpelier, Vermont

House Resolution

H.R. 11

House resolution relating to United States military and diplomatic policies in Afghanistan

Offered by: Representatives Fisher of Lincoln, Pearson of Burlington, Ancel of Calais, Aswad of Burlington, Atkins of Winooski, Bartholomew of Hartland, Bohi of Hartford, Botzow of Pownal, Burke of Brattleboro, Cheney of Norwich, Christie of Hartford, Clarkson of Woodstock, Conquest of Newbury, Consejo of Sheldon, Courcelle of Rutland City, Dakin of Chester, Davis of Washington, Deen of Westminster, Donovan of Burlington, Edwards of Brattleboro, Ellis of Waterbury, Emmons of Springfield, Evans of Essex, Font-Russell of Rutland City, Frank of Underhill, French of Shrewsbury, French of Randolph, Grad of Moretown, Haas of Rochester, Heath of Westford, Hooper of Montpelier, Howrigan of Fairfield, Jerman of Essex, Johnson of South Hero, Keenan of St. Albans City, Kitzmiller of Montpelier, Klein of East Montpelier, Kupersmith of South Burlington, Larson of Burlington, Lenex of Shelburne, Lippert of Hinesburg, Lorber of Burlington, Macaig of Williston, Malcolm of Pawlet, Manwaring of Wilmington, Marek of Newfane, Martin of Springfield, Martin of Wolcott, Masland of Thetford, McCullough of Williston, Miller of Shaftsbury, Mrowicki of Putney, Munger of South Burlington, Nuovo of Middlebury, O'Brien of Richmond, Partridge of Windham, Peltz of Woodbury, Poirier of Barre City, Ram of Burlington, Shand of Weathersfield, Sharpe of Bristol, Spengler of Colchester, Stevens of Waterbury, Stevens of Shoreham, Stuart of Brattleboro, Sweaney of Windsor, Taylor of Barre City, Townsend of Randolph, Waite-Simpson of Essex, Webb of Shelburne, Weston of Burlington, Wilson of Manchester, Wizowaty of Burlington, Woodward of Johnson, Yantachka of Charlotte and Young of Albany

Whereas, the war in Afghanistan is America's longest war, and there is no end in sight, and

Whereas, this legislative body appreciates and respects the dedication of Vermont's national guard members, Vermonters in other branches of the military who have been deployed to Afghanistan and the surrounding nations, and their families, and any criticism of our nation's policy in the region must not be interpreted as lack of support for the men and women in our armed forces whose bravery is on display each day as they risk their lives, and

Whereas, more than 1,500 brave American servicemen and -women have already lost their lives in Afghanistan, and many thousands more have been seriously wounded, and

Whereas, according to the United Nations, the number of Afghani civilians killed in the first six months of 2010 rose 31 percent, and civilian casualties continue at high numbers, and

Whereas, the United States now has 100,000 troops deployed to Afghanistan, and

Whereas, the Pentagon has recently stated that its costs in Afghanistan are \$300 million a day, and

Whereas, this military conflict began with the goal of killing or capturing the al-Qaeda leaders and fighters who used Afghanistan as a base from which to launch the September 11 attacks on the United States, and

Whereas, the rationale for the military action in Afghanistan has changed substantially, and the altered mission has never been endorsed by Congress and has scarcely been debated, and

Whereas, the impetus for the substantial change in mission was not a national emergency created by an attack on the United States, as was the case after the attack of September 11, and should have been preceded by a congressional authorization for use of force under the War Powers Resolution of 1973 (Pub. L. 93-148), and

Whereas, Bing West, assistant secretary of defense in the Reagan administration, a Marine infantry officer in Vietnam, and a highly respected expert on military policy, is the author of a recently released and well received book, *The Wrong War*, in which he opines, as reported by Elisabeth Bumiller in an April 15, 2011 *New York Times* article, “that the counterinsurgency strategy behind the war—trying to win over the Afghans by protecting them from the Taliban and building roads, schools and civil institutions—is a failure,” and

Whereas, our nation’s limited financial resources should be preserved for addressing the serious economic and domestic challenges that our nation faces in building a strong economic recovery from the economic downturn, now therefore be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives:

That this legislative body urges President Obama, in concert with Congress and in consultation with NATO allies whose troops are present in Afghanistan, to formulate specific policy goals regarding the United States mission in Afghanistan, and be it further

Resolved: That this policy declaration be completed and made public as rapidly as possible, include a durable timetable for withdrawal of American forces commencing no later than the previously announced plan to begin withdrawal by July 2011, and be clear that any post-withdrawal United States role in Afghanistan should be limited to providing material support to Afghans who have stood with the United States and its allies and who have worked to promote liberty and stability in that country, and be it further

Resolved: That the Clerk of the House be directed to send a copy of this resolution to President Obama and to the Vermont Congressional Delegation.

Shapleigh Smith, Jr.
Speaker of the House

Attested to:

Donald G. Milne
Clerk, House of Representatives