

Published on Tuesday, March 6th, 2007 by [Politico.com](#)

Liberal Democrats Revolt on Iraq Spending Bill

by John Bresnahan

Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) is facing a full-blown revolt from liberal House Democrats over the \$98 billion Iraq supplemental bill, according to Democratic insiders. Anywhere between 50 to 75 Democrats are now threatening to vote against the bill because it doesn't go far enough toward ending the war, including setting a date certain for withdrawal of U.S. combat forces from Iraq, said the sources. Pelosi and Democratic leaders are expected to postpone markup of the Iraq bill in the House Appropriations Committee by at least a week in order to buy time to resolve the matter.

Liberals are unhappy with the current proposal being discussed by Rep. John Murtha (D-Pa.) and the Democratic leadership, which would prevent President Bush from sending more troops to Iraq unless they are certified as being properly equipped, trained and rested to take on combat missions. After weeks of political attacks from Republicans, Murtha softened his original proposal so that Bush can waive the requirements, although the White House would have to report to Congress why they are issuing such waivers. The Blue Dog Coalition, a group of moderate and conservative Democrats from swing districts, also wanted Murtha to revise his proposal.

But as happens so often in politics, if you move too far in appeasing one group, you then alienate another, which is what's happening here. Liberals Dems now don't want to vote for the Iraq supplemental, with many pointing out to Pelosi and party leaders that they never have voted for one before and aren't about to start doing so now just because Democrats are in the majority. These Democrats also want to offer their own alternative proposal to cut off Iraq funding immediately as an amendment to the supplemental on the House floor, said Democratic leadership aides.

Liberals Democrats like Rep. Maxine Waters (Calif.), co-chairwoman of the [Out of Iraq Caucus](#), want to end the war now, so they want a date certain for a withdrawal or pullout or "strategic redeployment," and they want it in the Iraq supplemental or they won't vote for it. "They figure that we won the election on a promise to end the war, and they want to live up to that promise," said a senior House Democratic lawmaker

who spoke on the condition of anonymity. "It's a tough place the speaker is in right now, but we'll work all this out."

Pelosi has a bit of a problem here. If the Democratic leadership puts a date certain for withdrawal in the bill, there's a chance that enough Blue Dog Democrats would defect and vote with Republicans, meaning the bill could go down to defeat outright. While that might suit anti-war lawmakers and groups, the political consequences could be disastrous for the party. It would end the Iraq war by default since there would be no more money for combat operations, and Republicans would punish the Democrats for years over it.

But if she leaves out a date-certain withdrawal, Pelosi may lose her left, and that's her power base, both within the Democratic Caucus and the party at large. She faces a very ticklish task sorting the whole thing out, although the senior Democrat lawmaker isn't worried. Pelosi "will get everyone on board at the end of the day," the lawmaker insisted.

The House Democratic Caucus will meet at 12 p.m. on Tuesday, and Iraq will be at the top of the agenda, according to Democratic sources.



© The Politico & Politico.com

###

Discuss This Article

[click here...](#)

###

 [Printer Friendly Version](#)  [E-Mail This Article](#)

FAIR USE NOTICE

This site contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in our efforts to advance understanding of environmental, political, human rights, economic, democracy, scientific, and social justice issues, etc. We believe this constitutes a 'fair use' of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law. In accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107, the material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for research and educational purposes. For more information go to: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml>. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

Common Dreams [NewsCenter](#)

A non-profit news service providing breaking news & views for the progressive community.

[Home](#) | [Newswire](#) | [Contacting Us](#) | [About Us](#) | [Donate](#) | [Sign-Up](#) | [Archives](#)

© Copyrighted 1997-2007_
www.commondreams.org