

(WASHINGTON)--- Congressman Allen West (FL-22) released this statement today:

"Today, the President announced the withdrawal of all combat forces from Iraq by the end of the year.

As a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom who served during the initial battles of this conflict, I am proud to be among the more than one million Americans who served in Iraq. What my fellow comrades in arms achieved in Iraq is nothing short of historic. Together, we defeated one of history's most tyrannical dictatorships and replaced it with a free and democratic government. American Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines fought and defeated a radical Islamic insurgency, and helped create an ally and partner in freedom.

I will never forget those who I served with, and those who served after I left. I will never forget the sacrifice borne by so many of our service members and their families.

However, I must question the motives of President Barack Obama for this sudden announcement. Why now? Did the President consult with any of our American Generals on the ground before making this decision? What kind of message will this send to our allies, the Kurds, in the Northern part of Iraq, and will they feel abandoned? My fear is that political expediency drove this decision, not recommendations by the Military's leadership.

Much is at stake and many questions are yet to be answered. I fear that our President is acting as "Campaigner in Chief" rather than "Commander in Chief," thus putting the entire Middle East at risk.

Right now, the American people deserve answers."

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