

Statement on State of the Union Address

For Immediate Release: January 31, 2006

Contact: Kimberly Allen, (202) 226-8364, (571) 232-8037 [cell]

Statement on President Bush's State of the Union Address

Tonight, President George W. Bush will deliver his State of the Union Address. Congressman Steve Rothman's statement follows:

Compassionate language from Mr. Bush is not enough to make America a better place. We need new policies and a new direction.

On the War in Iraq, I agree with the President that we cannot withdraw all of our troops immediately. To do so would be dangerous for the U.S. and dangerous for Iraq. However, I strongly disagree with the President that staying the course is acceptable policy. We need to examine ways to redeploy American troops and move forward on giving the responsibility of securing Iraq to the Iraqis.

No matter how strong the President may be, he is not above the law. His support for torture was abhorrent and put our troops in even greater danger. And there is no reason he could not clear his wiretaps on U.S. citizens with the court established by the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act [FISA], before or after he began them. If changes to the law are needed, he should come before Congress to offer them.

On health care, this President has refused to help the 46 million uninsured Americans. Instead, he has wasted billions on a prescription drug plan nobody understands and that gives huge subsidies to the insurance industry. We need universal health care. Yet, the President is pushing a health savings account proposal that says the solution for people who can't afford the outrageous cost of health care is to encourage them to open a new bank account. How will that help someone who does not have enough money to pay for health insurance to begin with?

This President's budget priorities are fiscally irresponsible and morally reprehensible. His decision to prioritize corporate welfare and tax cuts for the wealthiest one percent of Americans has pushed us into record debt. And New Jerseyans across the state are paying for it in the form of increases in local taxes, increasingly unaffordable gas and oil prices, and cuts to needed government services, such as federal college loan and tuition assistance.

Tonight, the President once again uses compassionate language and then offers policies that hurt, not help, the average American. Enough is enough. America has seen before what happens when a President thinks he is above the law and when his supporters in Congress think staying the course and trickle down economics will solve all of our problems. It's time for a change."

###

Updated: February 8, 2006

