



NEWS RELEASE

Congressman Walter B. Jones

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JONES ASKS RUMSFELD TO RESTRICT MEDIA COVERAGE OF COMBAT

*Congressman worried that our Marines and soldiers in combat will be
distracted by sound bite mentality of television news*

Washington, D.C.- In a letter yesterday to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Third District Representative Walter B. Jones asked the Secretary to restrict media coverage of military men and women engaged in direct combat. Jones fears that the presence of camera crews may eventually jeopardize the safety of American troops.

“I am deeply concerned about the increasing presence of media coverage in combat engagements,” Jones said in the letter. “As you know, our troops are forced to make life or death decisions in a split second. Recent events have highlighted the complexity of recording combat situations and placing those recordings in the proper context of the overall battle. Media coverage provides only a brief and often distorted view of what our men and women are facing in combat. It is unfair for our troops to be constantly monitored by cameras and have their every move recorded and subjected to public opinion based on a sound bite or two minute video segment.”

In the letter, Jones acknowledged the importance of the media in informing the American public but explained he was concerned that the scrutiny of the camera may lead to the loss of life in the future.

“Mr. Secretary, I am requesting that you restrict media coverage of our military men and women engaged in direct combat,” he said. “There must be a balance between the need for media coverage and the difficult and complex missions being carried out by our brave troops. I pray that a Marine or Soldier in the future will not lose their life because they hesitated due to concerns that their action would be recorded by the media, reported out of context, and scrutinized by public opinion before all of the facts are presented.”

For additional information or to schedule an interview with Congressman Walter B. Jones please contact Kristen Quigley at (202) 225-3415.