

## Mahoney Praises Use of Diplomacy to Stabilize Iraq

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### Mahoney Has Advocated Regional Talks for Over a Year

(Washington, D.C.) - Congressman Tim Mahoney (FL-16) praised the Administration's decision to engage in regional diplomacy to help stabilize Iraq today. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced Tuesday that the United States would hold high-level talks with Iran, Syria, and other countries in the region to discuss the future of Iraq. Congressman Mahoney has advocated a regional diplomatic solution to end the Iraq War for more than a year.

"I am pleased that the Administration has decided to listen to the wise advice of the Baker-Hamilton Commission, our generals, Congress, and the American people to go back into the region and talk with Iraq's neighbors in an effort to stabilize the country. The United States is taking the first step in building the broad regional support needed to win the peace in Iraq," said Congressman Tim Mahoney (FL-16).

The shift to diplomacy had been recommended last year by the Iraq Study Group, a bipartisan commission headed by former Secretary of State James A. Baker III and former Congressman Lee H. Hamilton. Secretary of State Rice confirmed yesterday that the U.S. would partake in meetings with Iraq and its neighbors, including Iran and Syria over the next few months. The decision is seen as a major change in policy for the Bush Administration which has resisted talks despite mounting criticism.

Since his entry into politics in 2005, Mahoney has urged the President to "do what his father did in the first Gulf War: that is to go back into the region and talk to Iraq's neighbors," in an effort to secure the country.

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