



UNITED STATES SENATOR ★ SERVING THE CITIZENS OF IDAHO

# LARRY CRAIG

NEWS RELEASE

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## **Senate Resolutions** **by Idaho Senator Larry Craig**

We will soon be celebrating a new year, and many of us embrace the tradition of establishing resolutions for the upcoming year. Resolutions help us focus our efforts, provide a way to measure results, and keep us accountable. I am one of those who make resolutions each year and want to take this opportunity to share with you some of my resolutions for 2006.

The most important is to continue to prioritize providing timely service to Idahoans. In each of my offices and on my website I display my mission and goals. Goal One has always been to, “Deliver timely, high quality constituent service.” This means I am always in touch with Idaho and that I do all I can to help people who have problems with the federal government, respond substantively to everyone who contacts me, listen with respect, study issues before me, and stick to my principles. In short, I try to serve Idahoans in a way they expect and deserve. I resolve to continue to do that as long as I serve Idaho in the Senate.

The Senate’s first order of business in the new year is to consider Samuel Alito to serve on the United States Supreme Court. His floor vote is expected January 20. I have met with Judge Alito and have studied his record. While I will wait until after the hearings before I make my final decision, what I have seen so far demonstrates an excellent choice by the President. Judge Alito has a fifteen year judicial record for us to examine, and so far we have seen that he is smart, practical, conservative, and understands that judges interpret and apply the law, they don’t make law. As we consider Judge Alito, I resolve to fill Justice O’Connor’s seat in a deliberate, thoughtful, and timely manner.

Speaking of judges, Idaho now has two individuals awaiting Senate confirmation to serve on the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals. Despite being before the Senate for more than two years, receiving approval from the Judiciary Committee twice, and being supported by a majority of the Senate, William Myers continues to be filibustered by Senate Democrats. Joining him just this month as a nominee to the federal circuit court is Judge Randy Smith, an Idaho State District Judge. I resolve to work to ensure both nominees receive a fair up-or-down vote in the Senate – a vote I hope will confirm them to serve.

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This Fall, families across Idaho welcomed home friends and relatives who have been away in Iraq and Afghanistan fighting terrorism, liberating Iraqis, and spreading American principles of freedom, liberty, and democracy. Sadly, some families have had to say goodbye instead, to those who gave the ultimate sacrifice. I could not be prouder of the Idahoans who have served in the War on Terror. It is a worthwhile conflict, brought against those in this world who seek to end America's way of life and deny life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness to everyone. We cannot sit idly by and let that happen. We have to stand up for what is right.

My very first vote in the United States Senate, in 1991, was the hardest vote a federal legislator can ever cast – to send fellow Americans into harms way to fight a war. I relive and review that somber moment every time I call a brave family who has lost a loved one in combat. No condolences can possibly assuage that loss, but we can honor their sacrifice by continuing the fight for freedom. As the new year unfolds, I resolve to continue to support the War on Terror until we prevail.

During a time of war, finances can be tough. I have long been a champion of fiscal responsibility and smaller government. When I was first elected to serve Idaho in Congress, I introduced the country to the Balanced Budget Amendment, which I still champion. Government provides needed services, but, left unchecked, it will balloon out of control, racking up deficits and debt to be left to our grandchildren. The answer is not to increase its size by increasing taxes; the answer is to control spending. Congress just passed a budget that reduces the federal deficit by \$40 billion over five years. This is an enormous first step, but more needs to be done. I resolve to continue my work to control federal spending and reduce taxes.

These are in no way inclusive of everything I will fight for. Idahoans expect me to stand up for responsible use of our natural resources, expansion of our energy supply, and protection of our civil liberties. I resolve I will not disappoint them in the year to come.

As we all reflect on the past year and welcome a new one, I wish each of you the very best.