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CRAIG CALLS FOR IRAQ TO FUND ITS OWN INFRASTRUCTURE **-- *Complains of Lack of Movement on Domestic Emergencies* --**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Idaho Senator Larry Craig today said it is time for the Iraqi government to fund its own infrastructure instead of expecting American taxpayers to continue paying the bill.

“I’m going to have a very difficult time going home and telling the people of Idaho that we’re going to spend their money while Iraqi money is drawing interest in some bank somewhere in the world,” said Craig, speaking during a hearing in the Senate Appropriations Committee on the President’s Fiscal Year 2008 War Supplemental Request.

“We invested in their infrastructure to get their oil systems back in place and flowing into the world oil supply,” Craig said. “It appears that has been accomplished, and they are now reaping the benefits of it.”

“There has to be much greater transparency in understanding how much is going to be spent and what’s out there drawing interest before this Senator is going to find it easy to keep supplying money into Iraqi infrastructure – not to our troops, not to our men and women in uniform who stand at risk at this moment – but into building their infrastructure, when ours goes wanting,” Craig said.

Craig also criticized the Senate majority for not moving regular appropriations bills “in a timely and responsible fashion,” and leaving Senators with no choice but to use the war supplemental as a vehicle for U.S. domestic emergencies.

“If the Senate doesn’t plan to act on appropriations bills, there are emergency or near-emergency situations that some of us would like to deal with in a timely fashion this year,” Craig said. “California Senator Dianne Feinstein and I, out in ag country, are hearing phenomenal appeals from agricultural America that the work force is diminishing so rapidly, it may send us into an agricultural crisis. We would at least like to do something in a temporary and an emergency fashion to supply a work force.”

Craig said he will consider offering domestic emergency funding requests to the war supplemental when the bill is marked up if the regular appropriations process is not followed by Senate leaders.