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STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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Rep Hebl's Statement on Troop Withdrawal in Afghanistan

(MADISON) – State Representative Gary Hebl (D-Sun Prairie) released the following statement following official troop withdrawal in Afghanistan:

We cannot thank our troops enough for the bravery they showed during the evacuation of over 100,000 people out of Afghanistan. For almost 20 years, American service members have done what was asked of them despite finding themselves in incredibly difficult situations.

Troop withdrawal has incredible bipartisan support. A July 2021 poll by Chicago Council Survey showed 77% of Democrats, 73% of Independents, and 56% of Republicans favored the decision to withdraw U.S. combat forces from Afghanistan by September 11, 2021. Overall, 70% of the American public supports withdrawal.

America under the Trump Administration made a commitment to withdraw U.S. troops, and it is important for the rest of the world to know that America will keep its promises, even when there is a change of leadership. That is what true global leadership looks like. Many media types, warmongers, and military contractors have maligned the troop withdrawal, since it is in their best interests to do so.

We cannot continue a war simply because military contractors want to keep the cash flow that they have enjoyed for two decades going. Contractor profits are not worth American lives. While contractors may have gotten rich over the last two decades, the War in Afghanistan has cost American taxpayers \$2,300,000,000,000, not including the interest, since that war has been waged on borrowed money.

We of course mourn the American service members lost during the evacuation and throughout the decades-long war. The right thing to do is ensure that no more Americans lose their lives for an occupation of a foreign country that has no discernible goal. There are no weapons of mass destruction in Afghanistan and Osama Bin Laden has been dead for more than a decade. It is not a sign of weakness to recognize that and bring our troops home to safety instead of maintaining course in a war that has taken the lives of more than 2,400 American service members and wounded almost 20,000 more.

For twenty years, American service members have put their lives on the line to defend American interests. They have served with valor and distinction. After two decades, making Afghanistan America's longest war, they will finally come home out of harm's way. They deserve our respect and our eternal thanks for their sacrifices to the country.

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