

Washington, D.C. – Today, Congressman Tom Rooney (R-Fla.) led the House Republican Freshman in sending a letter to President Obama regarding General McChrystal's assessment of the situation in Afghanistan.

The text of the letter is below and attached:

Dear Mr. President:

We are at a vital turning point in Afghanistan. In June of this year you directed Secretary Gates to provide an assessment on the situation in Afghanistan. Specifically, you requested to know if we can complete our mission and if so, how do we do it. General McChrystal answered your questions and presented to you his assessment on Afghanistan where he clearly states the situation there is deteriorating and failure to adopt a new fully resourced strategy will result in the inability to defeat the insurgency. However, we can win in Afghanistan. In the words of General McChrystal, "Time matters, we must act now to reverse the negative trends and demonstrate progress." Decisive and deliberate action must be taken in determining the next step forward with our mission in Afghanistan.

As members of the Freshman Class we applaud General McChrystal's recommendation to implement your strategy of executing and resourcing an integrated civilian-military counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy in Afghanistan. An important component of this is to accelerate and expand the Afghan force, both in size and capabilities. This is necessary to meet the growing insurgency that threatens the Afghan population. Training the Afghan forces is manpower intensive and requires a large investment of resources, both from the United States and our Allies. We remain confident this investment will result in an Afghan force fully capable of providing safety and security to the people of Afghanistan.

In addition, we fully understand and support General McChrystal's assessment that increasing the size of the Afghan National Security Force is not the only solution in this new strategy. It is critical that both the Department of Defense and the Department of State work hand in hand to help build confidence in the Afghan government at both the national and local level.

As Commander in Chief, we understand how important your responsibility is to make certain that our commanders have a clear mission and they have all the tools and resources at their disposal to succeed. Typically, command assessments include a request for resources necessary to complete the required mission. However, the assessment provided by General McChrystal does not offer a resources request. It is imperative that the resource request be delivered in an expeditious manner to move forward and execute the counterinsurgency strategy outlined in the assessment.

Finally, we believe that Congress must have the opportunity to hear from General McChrystal and Secretary Gates on this assessment. For this reason, we respectfully request that General McChrystal testify before the full House Armed Services Committee so that Congress can better understand the future of the U.S. mission in Afghanistan.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to working with you on this very important issue to ensure that our troops have the same success in Afghanistan that they did in Iraq.

Sincerely,

Tom Rooney