

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Tom Rooney (FL-16) visited Iraq this weekend with a Congressional delegation led by House Speaker John Boehner to see the progress Iraq has made toward democracy and discuss the next steps for the Iraqi and U.S. governments.

“Prime Minister Maliki hopes that Iraq will serve as an example to the Middle East and the world that Democracy can work in the region,” Rooney said. “During our meeting with the Prime Minister, we discussed how the U.S. and Iraq can work together through more traditional diplomatic means after our troop withdrawal, which is scheduled for December. For example, Prime Minister Maliki was very interested in my position on the House Agriculture Committee, and we discussed how we can move from a military dialogue like we're having now toward efforts to advance agriculture in Iraq.

“The brave American men and women in uniform who have served in Iraq deserve tremendous credit for providing the security that the Iraqi people and government needed to transition to a functioning democracy. Thanks to the dedication and sacrifice of our troops and the strategy developed by General Petraeus, democracy is taking root in Iraq. This weekend I was able to see that progress firsthand.”

The delegation met with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, U.S. Ambassador to Iraq James Jeffrey and senior military officials.

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