

On October 9, 2002, Oregon Reps. Defazio, Blumenauer, Hooley and Wu came together to deliver a brief message about the vote on a resolution authorizing the use of military force in Iraq. The resolution passed in the House of Representatives on October 10, 2002. All four Oregon House Democrats voted against the resolution. Note: An audio recording of this message is also available by calling 1-800-320-6091 and entering PIN # 1931.

Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-4-OR)

Even as the debate has begun in Washington, new evidence has come forward from the CIA saying that in fact Saddam Hussein does not present a preeminent threat to the United States of America. Last year, George Bush was most concerned about North Korea, their weapons of mass destruction and their intercontinental ballistic missiles. He's also named Iran, who has a well-developed program and deals regularly with terrorists and harbors Al Qaeda. So the question is, "Should the United States of America have the first ever preemptive war in our history, perhaps unilaterally, without allies, to counter the threat of Saddam Hussein, particularly if that threat is not so great?" My answer is, "No, it's not justified at this time. We should work through the international organizations, work for intrusive inspections." Inspections worked before, destroyed his arsenal, they can work again

Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-3-OR)

A generation ago, Senator Mark Hatfield and Senator Wayne Morris were right when they spoke out against giving a blank check to Lyndon Johnson for the war in Vietnam. Today, it is wrong to give any president a blank check to wage war, particularly if it's unilateral and it's preemptive. Saddam Hussein is an evil man who should and will be removed, but he is not the greatest threat to America today. The situation is much more complex, much more dangerous than that. Our greatest threat is one of terror. It is important that the United States not lose its focus and not abandon its principals. Make no mistake about it: there will be a regime change sooner rather than later in Iraq. But it is important that the United States have the right debate here in Congress for the right reasons and not lose an opportunity to have a secure and enduring peace-- and that is not going to be advanced by approving this resolution.

Rep. Darlene Hooley (D-5-OR)

I am voting against the resolution, and I am voting against the resolution because, frankly, they haven't answered my questions. Now, I know that they have weapons of mass destruction and I know they don't have nuclear weapons in Iraq. But what I have not had answers to is, "How long does this last? Are we going to do nation building? Who are our partners going to be? Have we done everything we can using diplomacy before we go into war?" We haven't done those things. Have we gone to the UN and gotten a resolution? No. When we went into Desert Storm, we had partners, we had a fraction of the cost. What is this going to do to our economy? How much is this going to cost? What sacrifices are we going to ask Americans to make? This is a war... This is the most important vote I'll take while I'm here, and it's on war, and it's about sending our young people to another country, and it's about... Is it to secure the United States or is it for, I mean, What's going to happen? Are we

going to have other eruptions in the Middle East? There are so many questions that have not been answered, I think now is not the time to do this. Let's try everything first to nullify Saddam. Let's make sure we have the answers to those questions before we start debating a resolution on war going into Iraq.

Rep. David Wu (D-1-OR)

When I was home last Saturday, the first question I got was, "Why are you guys spending so much time on Iraq? I've been out of work for a year and a half. What are you doing to improve the economy?" I think that that person was correct. We're not doing enough to improve our economy, to improve our education system, but we do have this critical question before us about what to do in the coming months. Make no mistake about it, although we are standing here together, the four of us, we are in a distinct minority. The vote's going to go the other way, but I think that the majority is wrong in this instance because the administration has not made a compelling case that there is an imminent threat to the United States. If there were an imminent threat, I would have no hesitation to use force to protect the United States. That case has not been made. And until that case is made I cannot vote for the resolution supporting war in Iraq