*Washington, DC - Congressman Maurice Hinchey released this statement following President Obama's remarks on Iraq:*

"I welcome the President's announcement that all U.S. troops will be out of Iraq by the end of this year, and we all welcome home the countless troops who served with bravery and honor in this war. We must never forget the sacrifices made by those who gave their lives, and we must continue to help those who still bear the physical and emotional scars of this war.

"This is a war that I opposed from the very beginning. We were deliberately misled into this conflict by the Bush Administration, and the nation paid a heavy price in lives and treasure as a result. This war distracted our attention away from fighting those who attacked s on September 11, and created huge budget deficits that our children and grandchildren will spend a lifetime repaying. It was an absolute disaster, and we must be ever vigilant to ensure that such an unforgivable mistake is never made again.

"After spending nearly $1 trillion and losing nearly 4,500 brave American soldiers on the battlefield, it is good news that this misguided conflict is now coming to an end. It is an announcement that has been long overdue."