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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## “Oberstar against troop surge in Afghanistan”

This past week our President and Commander in Chief went before the country with his goals for the success of our mission in Afghanistan. He decided to listen to the Generals who are on the ground and know what they need to get the job done. While the president announced his decision, Mr. Oberstar was on the news announcing his opposition to the surge. His reasons are as follows. “We need to invest in infrastructure back here in the states and keep people working.”

I know of no one who does not want to put people to work or who does not want better roads, but don't we have \$700,000,000,000.00 set aside for shovel ready projects?

Now, in full disclosure, my son who is currently on his second deployment to the region and I believe that if the commanders need more men with boots on the ground, then that is what they should get. The best example of this is Iraq. There is no one who could argue that the surge in Iraq was not a success. With the violence increasing in the Afghanistan region and the lack of will by some, we are not showing the leadership needed to keep our troops safe and to succeed in our mission.

As Americans, we all support those who are currently serving and those who have served. This includes our National Guard, our all volunteer forces and their families who are at home supporting them. We need to make sure that our message is clear to our enemy. We cannot continue to send mixed messages from our national leaders. While the president made the right decision committing to a troop surge in the area, I am disappointed that he is putting timelines on the surge. I'm also disappointed that Mr. Oberstar is letting his disagreement with the Obama administration over transportation funding color his foreign policy and military policy statements.

Jobs are important, with unemployment over 10% and - real numbers closer to 17%, we need to help our employers by creating meaningful tax cuts and we need to remove road blocks that continue to get in the way of real growth and sustainable private-sector jobs.

Finally, I remind Mr. Oberstar, to many of us, military jobs are real jobs too. 2010 is going to be a make or break year for a lot of families. We cannot afford to continue to support the policies of big government and high deficits.

Michael Cummins

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