Congressman Pence authored an op-ed, titled "Give New Strategy a Chance", in today's Washington Times about his support for the troop increase to quell the sectarian violence in Iraq here .

Last month, President Bush delivered a speech to the nation outlining a new way forward in Iraq. It has since met with resistance from both parties on Capitol Hill. I support the president's call for reinforcements and a change of our strategy because we must do everything in our power to see freedom prevail in Iraq.

A few days before the president addressed the nation, I was invited to the White House to discuss his plan to increase troop levels in Iraq. What I found most persuasive was that the president didn't just lay out a plan for more troops for more troops sake. He laid out a new strategy, including new tactics, new rules of engagement on the ground, and a plan to work alongside Iraqi military forces to give priority to securing Baghdad. This was first recommended by the Iraq Study Group and I believe we owe it to our military and Iraq's people to give it a chance to work...

...Given that reinforcements will strengthen the hand of the U.S. military in Iraq and give us more leverage in the region, I find it curious that many in Congress in both parties are taking a wait-and-see approach or openly oppose the president's plan.

Ironically, most of my colleagues who oppose the president's plan say they still support the troops and want to see us succeed in Iraq. However, the alternative strategies they have put forward will do nothing but promote withdrawal and defeat. It is hard to understand how legislators can claim to support our troops while advocating abandonment of all they fought and died to accomplish...

...However, the roles of Congress and the president are clearly defined in the Constitution. Under Article I of the Constitution, Congress has the authority to declare war, prescribe rules governing military discipline and regulate the capture of enemy property and appropriate funds for the military.

Under Article II of the Constitution, the president is the commander in chief of the Armed Forces and is responsible for tactical, operational and strategic decisions involved in war fighting. The Supreme Court has reaffirmed these functions and the president has had this role ever since George Washington was entrusted as our nation's first commander in chief. Our Founders expressly rejected vesting Congress with warmaking power, fearful as they were of ineffective "war-by-committee."

Each branch of national government has a clearly defined role in the declaration and conduct of war. As such, while Congress has a role in formulating military policy, it is constitutionally questionable for Congress to impose timetables, benchmarks or tactical decisions on our commander in chief or our troops in the field.

There is no question that even in the heartland of America, people are troubled with our lack of progress in Iraq. I understand the temptation of many in Congress to go backward but I

disagree with it. The temptation to retreat must be ignored. Winston Churchill gave us this counsel: "One ought never to turn one's back on a threat in danger and try to run away from it. If you do that, you will double the danger. But if you meet it promptly and without flinching, you will reduce the danger by half."

It is time for an unflinching American response. I support our commander in chief. I support our new way forward. We must come together as a nation and choose to see freedom prevail in Iraq.