

Michaud Reacts to the State of the Union Speech

Sunday, January 27 2008

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WASHINGTON, DC - Tonight, Congressman Mike Michaud issued the following statement on the President's State of the Union speech:

"I appreciated the President's focus on the economy and his call for action. I stand ready to work with the President and Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle to invest in America and bring us in a new direction.

"However, the President is late to the game in making earmark reduction a priority. Last year, the new congressional leadership instituted a one-year moratorium on earmarks for 2007 until a reformed process could be put in place. With that process now in place, earmarks have been cut in half.

"The President also focused some of his remarks on trade. To my disappointment, he called for extending more of the same failed NAFTA-style trade agreements that have cost this country 3.2 million manufacturing jobs over the past seven years. Since President Bush took office, our national trade deficit has exploded from \$380 billion in 2001 to \$759 billion today. We must adopt a new trade model that benefits hardworking American families.

"The household budgets in Maine are being stretched beyond the breaking point. Many have been forced to turn off their heat at night in order to cope with escalating costs, and many more have been forced to delay needed purchases like food and medication. No Mainer should ever have to make this choice. I was deeply discouraged that I didn't hear the President commit more funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance.

"In his final State of the Union Address, the President failed to offer a change in war strategy that will begin to bring our troops home. It remains clear that he fully expects to pass this responsibility along to the next Administration. It is time for Iraqis to control their own country. It is time for us to bring our soldiers

home. I will do what I can in the remaining months of the Bush Administration to ensure that our returning soldiers get the care and benefits that they have earned.

"The fact remains that millions of Americans are hurting. I look forward to working in a bipartisan manner to provide families immediate relief. It's time to get this economy moving again."