

## COOPER RETURNS FROM CONGRESSIONAL VISIT TO AFGHANISTAN, PAKISTAN

Says training Afghan military and police  
must be primary focus

NASHVILLE-On

Monday, September 8th, U.S. Congressman Jim Cooper returned from a five-day congressional visit to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The delegation met with Afghan President Hamid Karzai and Pakistan Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani, U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Anne W. Patterson, General David D. McKiernan, Commander of the International Security Assistance Force.

Cooper, the only Tennessean on the House Armed Services Committee, also praised the recent shift in forces from Iraq to Afghanistan, cautioning that while violence in Iraq has decreased, the situation remains tense. He noted that there are many causes for the recent decrease in violence, including the troop surge and U.S. payments to former Sunni insurgents. "We still don't know if the enemy has quieted down or is just reloading," he said. "There are a number of factors at play in that country and ... and it is still a very dangerous place."

Cooper said that based on his most recent visit, more troops are needed in Afghanistan, particularly to train the Afghan military and police. The strategy for Afghanistan must be different than the one used for Iraq, Cooper said, because the two countries are extremely different socially, politically and economically.

Traveling with Cooper were Congresswoman Nancy Boyda (D-Kansas), Congressman Thomas Petri (R-Wisconsin), Congressman Jon Porter (R- Nevada), and Congressman Dave Reichert (R-Washington).

More coverage of the visit, and Cooper's statement on the president's decision to shift more troops into Afghanistan, can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

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