

Iraq war hobbling U.S. budget debate

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. House of Representatives has approved a \$515 billion budget bound to meet resistance in the U.S. Senate for not funding the war in Iraq. The domestic spending vote was 253-154 Monday night, followed by a 206-201 vote to spend \$31 billion for the war in Afghanistan, but nothing for Iraq, The Washington Post reported. The White House responded with praise for the bill but also threatened U.S. President George Bush would veto it if the Senate didn't add Iraq funding, the report said. Senate debate on the bill was scheduled for Tuesday as lawmakers strive to have a budget in time for Friday. While the fiscal year began Oct. 1, there was no budget consensus then and the country has been running on a stopgap spending measure that expires Dec. 21. The Post said it was widely believed political bickering would lead to the Senate replacing the Afghanistan funding bill with a \$70 billion package that covers both wars.

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