

GOP leaders warn Bush on immigration, Iraq

by UPI

WASHINGTON - Leading Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives say an immigration showdown with the White House could erode conservatives' support for the Iraq war.

Rep. Peter King, R-N.Y., told The Washington Times President George W. Bush's drive on behalf of immigration reform could cost the administration support for the president's top policy goals, including the Iraq war.

"The White House should keep in mind that if they have a direct confrontation with House Republicans on (immigration), it could affect the vote on the Iraq appropriation in September," said King.

He said he would stand by Bush, but he suggested the White House should worry about "other Republicans who are borderline."

King last week introduced legislation that emphasizes border security and eliminates some aspects of the immigration reform being considered in the Senate -- such as guest-worker and path-to-citizenship provisions -- which King calls "amnesty."

Rep. Adam Putnam, R-Fla., told the newspaper the immigration debate outcome could do "irreparable harm" to House GOP support for Bush.

"If the president makes it clear he'll sign any immigration bill that gets to his desk, no matter what it looks like, then it certainly will do more harm than good," said Putnam, the third-ranking House Republican.

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