

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 17, 2008**

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## **West Virginians Mourn 5 Years of Devastating War** *Groups mark anniversary with events across the state*

Charleston, WV – March 19, 2008 marks the 5<sup>th</sup> year that the US has been mired in the devastating war in Iraq. This week, groups across the state will be observing the anniversary by holding events to honor those who have died in Iraq and demand an end to the war. Some events will also focus on the unbearable costs and urge our leaders to invest the dollars spent on the war on new priorities at home.

In the past five years, our nation has lost nearly 4,000 American soldiers—and many more Iraqi civilians have been killed since the US occupation began in March 2003. With no political progress in sight and a sinking economy, the American people are questioning the priorities of leaders who squander billions of dollars in Iraq while leaving basic needs at home unmet.

“It is time to say no to the failed policies of this devastating war and start investing in America’s future,” said Lida Shepherd, a WV Patriots for Peace member. “We urge the citizens of West Virginia to lead us out of this war. Call your representative to demand legislation that brings our troops home immediately and to start funding the needs of West Virginians.”

On Tuesday (March 18), West Virginia Patriots for Peace, WV Citizen Action Group and the American Friends Service Committee will set up the ‘Wall of Remembrance’ at the WV Veterans Memorial on the State Capitol grounds in Charleston, seeking to highlight the human and economic cost of the war. The event will be followed by a march to the Kanawha River.

Three other events are planned for Wednesday (March 19). Greenbrier Valley Citizens for Change will display ‘Cost of War’ banners provided by the American Friends Service Committee at the intersection of Routes 219 & 60 in Lewisburg beginning at 4:00pm. In Morgantown, WV for Democracy will hold a protest at 5pm in Court House Square. In Shepherdstown, the Jefferson County Cost of War Group will hold a candlelight vigil, with live music and speakers, beginning at 6pm on the lawn at McMurrin Hall lawn, Shepherd University.

The week wraps up on Thursday (March 20) with a full day of events organized by students and professors at Marshall University in Huntington.

All events are free and open to the public.

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