

# Walz Still Planning to Run for Congress Despite Possible Call to Duty in Iraq

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On Thursday, March 17 the National Guard Public Affairs Office announced a possible partial mobilization of roughly 2,000 troops from the Minnesota National Guard. First District congressional candidate Tim Walz currently holds the rank of Command Sergeant Major in the 1-125th Battalion, which is based in New Ulm and largely composed of men and women from southern Minnesota. The announcement from the National Guard PAO specified that all or a portion of Walz's battalion could be mobilized to serve in Iraq within the next two years.

Walz, who teaches Global Geography at Mankato West High School, has been an active member of the National Guard since 1981. He has been previously deployed during his 23 years in the National Guard, including an eight month deployment during Operation Enduring Freedom.

When asked about his possible deployment to Iraq Walz said, "I do not yet know if my artillery unit will be part of this mobilization and I am unable to comment further on specifics of the deployment."

Although his tour of duty in Iraq might coincide with his campaign for Minnesota's 1st Congressional seat, Walz is determined to stay in the race. "As Command Sergeant Major I have a responsibility not only to ready my battalion for Iraq, but also to serve if called on. I am dedicated to serving my country to the best of my ability, whether that is in Washington DC or in Iraq."

"I don't want to speculate on what shape my campaign will take if I am deployed, but I have no plans to drop out of the race. I am fortunate to have a strong group of enthusiastic supporters and a very dedicated and intelligent wife. Both will be a major part of my campaign, whether I am in Minnesota or Iraq."

If called to duty, Walz would leave behind his wife Gwen and four year old daughter, Hope.

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