

Office of the Mayor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mayor Ortt Calls on Representatives Higgins & Collins To Investigate Exchange of Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl

NORTH TONAWANDA - Mayor Robert G. Ortt announced today that he is calling on Representatives Brian Higgins and Chris Collins to investigate the exchange of Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, specifically whether or not the President violated the law by not informing Congress 30 days prior to any exchange of combatants. "I believe Congress has a responsibility and duty to the American public, to our veterans, and the families of those who fought and in some cases died honorably, to investigate this exchange, as well as the impacts it will certainly have on our national security and on the security of our military men and women still serving in harm's way," stated Ortt.

Ortt added, "For those who think this doesn't matter, or this is just politics, let me tell you: it does matter. It matters to the hundreds of thousands of men and women who served in Afghanistan and Iraq. It matters to the families of the men and women who died in Afghanistan and Iraq. It matters to the future security of Americans who now have a price on their head. This is just the latest misstep by a commander in chief who clearly doesn't understand the US military or how to properly use it. He traded 5 senior Taliban leaders, without the knowledge of Congress, who conspired with al-Qaida to kill innocent Americans on 9/11, for a soldier who left his post and by almost every account, deserted his unit."

Ortt continued, "This is not just about Bowe Bergdahl and his family. It is about the thousands of families who have lost loved ones in combat and the hundreds of thousands who have truly served with distinction and honor in both Afghanistan and Iraq. I served in Afghanistan and I know men who lost their lives defending our country. There is little doubt that the 5 members of the Taliban who were just released will rejoin the fight and the people of Afghanistan and American soldiers, just like the men I served with, are in greater danger because of it. I also want to make sure that Sgt. Bergdahl's disappearance is investigated fully. If he is found to have deserted, then he should be tried under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. That is why I am

calling on Congressmen Higgins and Collins to launch a congressional investigation into this matter as soon as possible. Congress has a responsibility to act. I hope that our area representatives will do so."

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