

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell today called for an investigation into the reports of deplorable conditions at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, where wounded U.S. troops returning from Iraq and Afghanistan receive treatment.

"It is appalling and absolutely unacceptable for our wounded troops to return from the front lines and receive this kind of treatment," said Mitchell. "We are going to investigate this and do everything we can to make sure this never happens to our brave men and women again."

Mitchell is the chairman of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. He has asked for a joint hearing with the House Armed Services Oversight Committee to address the issue.

This week, the Washington Post reported on the poor conditions of Walter Reed and the treatment of wounded troops. "The entire building, constructed between the world wars, often smells like greasy carry-out. Signs of neglect are everywhere: mouse droppings, belly-up cockroaches, stained carpets, cheap mattresses," reported the Post. [Source: Washington Post, Feb. 18, 2007]

"The quality of care these brave people receive before that transition point has direct and lasting impact on the level of care later required by the Department of Veterans' Affairs," said Mitchell, who added that poor treatment of wounded troops could also impact military recruitment.