



Woodrow Wilson
International
Center
for Scholars

LEE H. HAMILTON
President and Director

July 9, 2007

Senator Ken Salazar
702 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Ken:

In December 2006, it was the view of the Iraq Study Group that the United States needed to initiate a responsible transition out of Iraq. To achieve that goal, the Study Group made 79 recommendations, including three core principles for moving forward:

- Shift the primary mission of U.S. forces from combat to training, with the goal of removing all combat brigades not necessary for training, force protection and counter-terrorism by the first quarter of 2008;
- Make U.S. political, economic or military support for the Iraqi government conditional on Iraq's progress in meeting specific benchmarks;
- And launch a new diplomatic offensive in the region, including all of Iraq's neighbors in an Iraq International Support Group, on behalf of stability.

The Administration has made some positive statements – and taken some interim steps – toward implementing our recommended approach. But our core recommendations have yet to be implemented. We have yet to shift the primary mission from combat to training. We have set benchmarks but not enforced conditionality. We have not launched a robust, sustained, high-level diplomatic offensive, as detailed in the ISG Report. We have not initiated a responsible transition out of Iraq.

The legislation that you and your co-sponsors have introduced represents – in spirit and in substance – the Iraq Study Group approach. It offers a clear shift in policy. It outlines the best chance of salvaging a measure of stability in Iraq and the region. It provides a bi-partisan way forward on a problem that cannot be solved unless we come together to address this singular national challenge.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Lee H. Hamilton



**Woodrow Wilson
International
Center
for Scholars**

LEE H. HAMILTON
President and Director