

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 8, 2007

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

For the sake of our own national security we must have a successful outcome to our commitments in Iraq. The choices facing the United States in devising a new strategy for victory are difficult but necessary. We hope that of all the options available, the option of losing will be taken off the table by all concerned.

That is why we will continue to push for and support policies to achieve a stable and free Iraq at peace with its neighbors and the international community.

One proposal that we are convinced will not achieve a successful outcome in Iraq is withdrawing American troops. We will vigorously oppose any plans to do this.

If the United States were to withdraw or redeploy from the battle, we would leave Iraq in shambles. A misguided and short-sighted withdrawal or redeployment plan would in all probability trigger a full-blown civil war encompassing the large parts of Iraq that are currently stable. In contrast, seeing our mission through to success would strengthen moderate forces in both Iraq and the region.

A withdrawal or redeployment could lead to a wider regional conflict involving neighboring nations including Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Turkey. It could create a new safe haven for terrorist groups capable of striking the United States and our allies. It could embolden extremists in the region who view the United States as a paper tiger unwilling to make the necessary and worthwhile efforts to help the Iraqis secure a peaceful, free and productive nation.

Our strategy in Iraq is not working. We recognize that fact.

However, withdrawing from the fight is not a sound, long-term policy for the national security of the United States. Withdrawing from the fight is a recipe for defeat. It should not be adopted.

Now is the time for bold and decisive leadership to chart a new course forward in Iraq. It should be a course that leads toward a stable, secure Iraq which is at peace with its neighbors, an ally in the war against extremists, respectful of the lives and rights of all of its citizens, and with security forces for defending the independence of Iraq.

Some of the necessary changes, including new leadership in both the civilian and military leadership, have already been made. We applaud your efforts to strengthen our leadership team

in Iraq. We also strongly encourage you to send additional American troops to Iraq to improve the security situation on the ground. For far too long we have not had enough troops in Iraq to provide security. It is time to correct this mistake.

A comprehensive new policy must also include clearly defining the mission of our troops and increasing the political and economic aid to and pressure on the Iraqi government to make the necessary political and economic changes. We firmly believe we and the Iraqi people can succeed if we adopt the right policy.

Over the coming weeks, Democrats and Republicans should be united around the fact that what happens in Iraq is directly tied to the future security of our nation. We should all strive to achieve a successful outcome which protects our national security for years to come.



Sincerely,

Joe Lieberman
United States Senator



Lindsey O. Graham
United States Senator