



Talking Points



The Iraq Study Group Implementation Act of 2007 (S. 1545/H.R. 2574)

This bill has the strong bipartisan support that is needed to change U.S. policy for Iraq and the Middle East region—and will be needed after November 2008 to sustain the change. Iraq will not be stabilized and U.S. standing in the Middle East will not be restored without bipartisan cooperation in this administration and the next.

This bill puts the emphasis of U.S. policy where it belongs, on diplomacy with all of Iraq's neighbors, including Iran and Syria, and with all Iraqi factions, including those that are fighting the Iraqi government and the U.S. As Adm. Michael Mullen said at his Senate confirmation hearing in July, "there is no purely military solution in Iraq." A new U.S. diplomatic approach to Iraq and the region is essential.

This bill gives Congress an unprecedented opportunity to exercise oversight and hold the administration accountable by requiring the administration to report to Congress every three months on diplomatic, political, and economic progress.

This bill could build momentum for stronger measures that currently have little chance of becoming law. While the bill envisions but does not require withdrawal of most U.S. combat troops by March 2008, passage of the bill by a large majority would create political momentum for this goal. Binding measures could follow, if Congress wills.

The bill affirms the Iraq Study Group's conclusion that its recommendations can only work if they are implemented together to bring about a fundamental change in the U.S. approach to the Middle East. The package includes efforts to engage with Iran and Syria and to reengage, after a six-year lapse, with Arab-Israeli diplomacy. The road to peace in Iraq leads through the Middle East; nothing is more urgently needed in the Middle East than new region-wide diplomatic efforts by the U.S. to bring all those who have been excluded into a new framework for regional stability and peace.