

**Washington, D.C.** - Rep. David Price (NC-04) today issued the following statement in response to the report by the bipartisan Iraq Study Group, which was released earlier this morning.

The report from the bipartisan Iraq Study Group confirms what has been clear for quite some time: the situation in Iraq is "grave and deteriorating," staying the course in Iraq is no longer an option, and the President must take our Iraq policy in a new direction.

Our country's challenges in Iraq are daunting, and this dire situation calls for bold action to change our course. I applaud the ISG for recognizing the need to begin bringing our troops home, to enhance diplomatic engagement with Iraq's neighbors, and to act more assertively to achieve a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a priority which has been neglected far too long. The panel also calls on the President to publicly disavow plans for permanent military bases in Iraq, a pledge I have long believed to be imperative for our government to offer the Iraqi people and their neighbors.

While I support many of the recommendations for changes to the President's Iraq policy, I know that the question foremost on many Americans' minds is 'how do we bring our troops home?' The ISG proposes some worthy goals for transitioning our troops out of combat involvement in Iraq. But it is now incumbent upon the President to translate these goals and recommendations – in consultation with Democrats and Republicans in Congress – into a responsible, detailed exit strategy for Iraq.

The most important conclusion the Iraq Study Group reached is that our presence in Iraq cannot be open-ended. The President should now respond to this message by beginning an immediate, initial drawdown of combat forces in Iraq.

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