already announced their commitment to strike a new tone and to unite the interest of the American people. I will work with our leaders to get our work done for the families in West Virginia and across our country.

FEDERAL DISASTERS IN OREGON

Mr. SMITH. I rise on the Senate floor today to lament a state of emergency in the rural parts of my State. The emergency we face is related to natural resources but different from those of drought and hurricane that the Senate has discussed and responded to.

The disasters in Oregon are not acts of God but of an infinitely more fallible entity—the Federal Government. Adverse decisions on forest and fisheries management are imperiling entire communities and entire ways of life.

I am not seeking, at this time, to reverse those management decisions. Although they deserve intense scrutiny. What I am seeking is that this Government recognize that its decisions have a cost—one that is borne on the backs of those who can least afford It. These people and communities need relief as much as those burdened by other disasters not of their creation.

Over a decade ago, the Federal Government sought fit to bring tens of thousands of loggers and mill workers to their knees by stopping timber harvest on Federal lands in Oregon. It did so in the name of the spotted owl, a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. I should add that after 15 years of negligible harvest on these lands, the owl is still not recovering and its habitat is being incinerated in catastrophic wildfire.

That timber war had more casualties than just jobs in the woods. County governments receive a share of timber receipts from Federal land—25 percent from the Forest Service and 50 percent from the BLM. For generations these funds have offset the inability to tax Federal property—which makes up the vast majority of most counties in my State.

When timber harvest evaporated, so did county budgets. In 1999, I came to this floor to describe to my colleagues what was happening in rural Oregon. Schools went to 4-day weeks, dropped sports and extracurricular activities, and curtailed other programs. Communities were forced to make heartbreaking decisions over whether to cut back social service programs or school funding—or to sharply reduce sheriffs' patrols and close jails or to cut out all extracurricular activities at their schools.

Fortunately, Congress created a safety net in the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000. This provided funding to counties based on historic rather than current timber harvest levels. And not just Oregon counties. In the life of that legislation, California received California received $308 million; Idaho, $102 million; and Montana, $63.4 million.

That program expired, on our watch, 2 months ago.

My colleague from Oregon and I have left no stone unturned to find money for an extension. Those efforts have been unsuccessful and we stand here, with our timber dependent counties, at the mercy of the Government.

Their plight is compounded by a second Federally created disaster in Oregon's commercial salmon fishing industry, delivering a double blow to many of the same counties. Commercial salmon fishing remained this season along more than 400 nautical miles, stretching from Florence, OR to Pigeon Point, CA. Estimates put the impact of this closure to Oregon and California fishing communities around $60 million. This year marked the first time in history that there was no commercial salmon harvest in Curry and Coos counties in Oregon. Curry County also stands to lose $6,591,993 or 62.3 percent of its road and general discretionary funds with the failure of Congress to extend the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act.

Mr. President, the clock is winding down on the 109th and soon Members of Congress will leave town to return to their districts or States. We will be leaving without extending this important safety net for our rural counties and without completing action on the annual appropriations bills to fund the Government. I can only tell my counties and Oregon's fishermen that the fire will not die on these issues, it will only grow more intense when the 110th Congress convenes.

IRAQ

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, this past Wednesday, Washington felt a little like Hollywood. In fact, not many blockbuster movies have gotten the kind of massive press and critical acclaim that we saw yesterday for the release of the Iraq Study Group report. Official Washington rushed to embrace the report—understandably, since it reflected the same flawed mindset that led so many here to embrace the war in Iraq 4 years ago. Unfortunately, that same mindset is now what is keeping too many here from fixing an Iraq policy that many now agree is badly flawed.

The administration still believes that Iraq is the be-all and end-all of our national security. So, too, does most of Washington. Unfortunately, the Iraq Study Group report does too little to change that flawed mind-set. I respect the serious efforts of the group to correct the administration's misguided policies, and the report has some valuable ideas. But the very name, the ''Iraq Study Group'' says it all. We need recommendations on how to address Iraq, but those recommendations must be guided by our top national security priority—defeating terrorist networks operating in dozens of countries around the world. We can't just look at Iraq in isolation—we need to also be looking at Somalia and Afghanistan and the many other places around the world where we face grave and growing threats.

The report doesn't adequately put Iraq in the context of a broader national security strategy. We need an Iraq policy that is guided by our top national security priority—defeating the terrorist network that attacked us on 9/11 and its allies. Unless we set a serious timetable for redeploying our troops from Iraq, we will be unable to effectively address these global threats. In the end, this report is a regrettable example of ''official Washington'' missing the point. The report may have gotten a glowing reception at its DC premiere, but I don't think it will get the same response once it goes on the road. Maybe there are still people in Washington who need a study group to tell them that the policy in Iraq isn't working, but the American people are way ahead of this report. It has been just over a month since the American people told us clearly what they were thinking about Iraq. They recognize that we need a timetable to bring the troops out of Iraq. They know that a flexible timetable is needed to preserve our military readiness, to prevent more unnecessary and tragic American casualties in Iraq and to protect our national security. They are the ones we should be listening to—not the insiders, politicians and think-tankers who believe they have cornered the market on wisdom.

Unfortunately, the focus of this commission, and the amount of attention being given to this single report, show just how myopic this administration and Members of Congress are. The long-running debate here in Washington about whether and when to redeploy our troops from Iraq always centers on the situation on the ground there, and whether a drawdown of troops will make it better or worse. Those are important considerations. But even more important are the issues that are largely ignored—the fact that our commitment of troops and resources in Iraq is dangerously weakening our national security and the opportunity cost of ignoring the growing threats elsewhere in the world.

As the administration and Congress mull over the Iraq Study Group's recommendations, it comes as no surprise that the group's work includes what the New York Times had called a ''classic Washington compromise.'' But we need much more than a compromise to fix our national security policy. We need a dramatic and immediate change of course in Iraq—a timeline to redeploy our troops from Iraq so that we can refocus on the terrorist networks that threaten the safety of the American people.

The war in Iraq was, and remains, a war of choice. The administration has tried to create a false choice, between staying in Iraq with no end date in sight and ''cutting and running.'' They want us to believe that Iraq is the central front in the war on terror, just as

they wanted us to believe their trumped-up reasons for going to war in the first place. They want us to believe that any option besides staying the course is going to be detrimental to our national security. That argument is mistaken.

The real choice is this: continuing to devote so much of our resources to Iraq, or devoting some of those resources to waging a global campaign against al-Qaida and its allies. We cannot do both.

The administration's choice—to maintain a massive and seemingly indefinite U.S. presence in Iraq—is harmful both to our efforts in Iraq, as well as to our global efforts to defeat the terrorists that attacked us on 9/11.

Our indefinite presence in Iraq is destabilizing and potentially damaging Iraqi efforts to rebuild their government and their country. That is not the fault of our brave troops—it's the fault of the policymakers here in Washington, who don't recognize that our presence is generating instability in Iraq, and that, unless we make it clear that we intend to leave, and to leave soon, our presence is more harmful than it is helpful.

The Administration's approach in Iraq is a diversion from the global fight against terrorism. Iraq isn't, and never was, the central front in the war on terrorism. Unfortunately, because of our disproportionate focus on Iraq, we are not using enough of our military and intelligence capabilities for defeating al-Qaida and other terrorist networks around the world. While we have been distracted in Iraq, terrorist networks have developed new capabilities and found new sources of support throughout the world. We have seen terrorist attacks in India, Morocco, Turkey, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Spain, Great Britain, and elsewhere.

The administration has also failed to adequately address the terrorist safe haven that has existed for years in Somalia and the recent instability that has threatened to destabilize the region. And resurgent Taliban and al-Qaida forces are contributing to growing levels of instability in Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, the U.S. presence in Iraq is being used as a recruiting tool for terrorist organizations from around the world. In Indonesia, home to historically moderate Islamic communities, conservative religious groups are becoming increasingly hostile towards the U.S. In countries like Thailand, Nigeria, Mali, the Philippines, and elsewhere, militant groups are using U.S. policies in Iraq to fuel hatred towards the West.

This administration's choices have been devastating to our national security. Unfortunately, the Iraq Study Group's report doesn't do enough to put Iraq into a global context. It doesn't recognize the extent to which our disproportionate efforts in Iraq are damaging our national security. And, even where the report suggests the toll that Iraq is taking on our ability to address global threats, it ends up falling back into the same Iraq-centric mindset that we need to change. For example, the report says that ''the United States should provide additional political, economic, and military support for Afghanistan, including resources that might become available as combat forces are moved out of Iraq.'' But then it goes on to recommend that ''The most highly qualified U.S. officers and military personnel should be assigned to'' teams imbedded in Iraqi battalions and brigades. Those are the very people we need in places like Afghanistan and elsewhere we face significant threats to our national security. It was the administration's decision to move resources from Afghanistan to Iraq that contributed to the resurgence of the Taliban there—we can't afford to perpetuate that mistake.

Elsewhere, the report recommends that the DNI and Secretary of Defense ''should devote significantly greater analytic resources to the task of understanding the threats and sources of violence in Iraq.'' The problem is that the report doesn't consider the *relative* importance of directing more intelligence resources to understanding Iraq as opposed to al-Qaida and its affiliates around the world, Afghanistan, Somalia and other critically important regions and concerns. So it came up with a recommendation that doesn't serve our overall national security interests. Implementing this recommendation at the expense of fighting terrorism and dealing with other terrorist safe havens around the world will make us less safe.

We need to return to the post-9/11 mindset. In the days after 9/11, we all shared an anger at and a resolve to fight back against those who attacked us. This body was united and was supportive of the Administration's decision to attack al-Qaida and the Taliban in Afghanistan. No one disputed that decision.

That is because our top priority immediately following 9/11 was defeating the terrorists that attacked us. The American people expected us to devote most of our national security resources to that effort, and rightly so. But unfortunately, 5 years later, our efforts to defeat al-Qaida and its supporters have gone badly astray. The administration took its eye off the ball. Instead of focusing on the pursuit of al-Qaida in Afghanistan, it launched a diversion into Iraq—a country that had no connection to the 9/11 plot or al-Qaida. In fact, the President's decision to invade Iraq has emboldened the terrorists and has played into their hands, by allowing them to falsely suggest that our fight against terrorism is anti-Muslim and anti-Arab, when nothing could be further from the truth.

But instead of recognizing that our current policy in Iraq is damaging our national security, the President continues to argue that the best way to fight terrorists is to stay in Iraq. He even quotes terrorists to bolster his argument that Iraq is the central front in the war on terror. Just a few months ago, he told the country that Osama bin Laden has proclaimed that the ''third world war is raging'' in Iraq and that this is ''a war of destiny between infidelity and Islam.''

Instead of letting the terrorists decide where we will fight them, the President should remember what he said on September 14, just 2 days after 9/11. He said:

> [t]his conflict was begun on the timing and terms of others. It will end in a way, and at an hour, of our choosing.

The President was right when he said that, and he is now wrong to suggest that we must stay in Iraq because that is where the terrorists say they want to fight us. al-Qaida and its allies are operating around the globe. We must engage in a global campaign to defeat them, not focus all of our resources on one country.

The way to win a war against global terrorist networks is not to keep over 140,000 American troops in Iraq indefinitely. We will weaken, not strengthen, our national security by continuing to pour a disproportionate level of our military and intelligence and fiscal resources into Iraq.

Unfortunately, the administration has yet to understand that the threats to our country are global, unlike any we have encountered in the past. Our enemy is not a state with clearly defined borders. We must respond instead to a loose network of terrorist organizations that do not function according to a strict hierarchy. Our enemy isn't one organization. It is a series of highly mobile, diffuse entities that operate largely beyond the reach of our conventional war-fighting techniques. The only way to defeat them is to adapt our strategy and our capabilities, and to engage the enemy on our terms and by using our advantages.

We have proven that we can't do that with our current approach in Iraq.

By redeploying our troops from Iraq, we can pursue a new national security strategy. We can finish the job in Afghanistan with increased resources, troops, and equipment. We can develop a new form of diplomacy, scrapping the ''transformational diplomacy'' this administration has used to offend, push away, and ultimately alienate so many of our friends and allies, and replacing it with an aggressive, multilateral approach that would leverage the strength of our friends to defeat our common enemies.

And we can repair and infuse new capabilities and strength into our armed forces. By freeing up our Special Forces assets and redeploying our military power from Iraq, we will be better positioned to handle global threats and future contingencies. Our current state of readiness is unacceptable and must be repaired. Our National Guard, too, must be capable of responding to natural disasters and future contingencies.

This new national security strategy will make our country safer. It will enable our government to fully address the wide range of threats our country faces. It will free up strategic capacity to deal with Iran, North Korea, and the Middle East, and to provide real leadership internationally against other enemies that we all face, like poverty, HIV/AIDS, and corruption.

In sum, it will help return the United States to a place of preeminence in the world and will give us the opportunity to address the very real threats we face in the 21st century. While the Iraq Study Group has generated some good ideas and choices, it doesn't put Iraq in the context of a broader national security strategy.

We face an unprecedented threat to our national security, and we must respond with much more than a classic Washington compromise. We need to refocus on fighting and defeating the terrorist network that attacked this country on September 11, 2001, and that means realizing that the war in Iraq is not the way to defeat al-Qaida and its global affiliates. It never was and it never will be. That global fight can't be won if we let Iraq continue to dominate our security strategy and drain vital security resources for an unlimited amount of time. The President's Iraq-centric policies are preventing us from effectively engaging serious threats around the world. We must change course in Iraq, and we must change course now.

This isn't a choice, it's a necessity.

MAGNUSON-STEVENS FISHERY CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. INOUYE. Mr. President, I rise to recognize final passage of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006 by both the Senate and the House this week, clearing the bill for Presidential approval. I am proud to have. developed this bill with my friend and colleague, Senator TED STEVENS.

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act is the primary Federal statute governing how we manage our Nation's fisheries and, as such, plays a vital role in our Nation's ability to achieve its overarching ocean policy goal. This bill reauthorizes the Magnuson-Stevens Act from fiscal year 2007 through fiscal year 2013 and takes steps to improve the act both by making it more effective and responsive to the needs of our fishing communities here at home and by taking important steps toward exporting our successful management approaches internationally.

After the Senate passed the bill earlier this year, Senator STEVENS and I worked with the House on a bipartisan basis in order to reach consensus on a final version of the bill. I am pleased that these discussions have resulted in further improvements and additions to the bill that have motivated strong bicameral and bipartisan support for this important piece of conservation legislation.

The key to the success of the Magnuson-Stevens Act has always been its regional approach to management. Keeping with that regional approach, this bill strengthens the accountability of the Regional Fishery Management Councils by requiring training of new members to prepare them to comply with legal, scientific, economic, and conflict of interest requirements applicable to the fishery management process.

Our bill also aims to improve conservation performance in our fisheries by requiring all Councils to establish annual catch limits in each federal fishery management plan. The role science plays in this decisionmaking process will be strengthened by this bill as well, since requirements will now be in place for each council to adhere to the recommendations provided by their Science and Statistical Committee, SSC, or other peer review process to prevent overfishing and achieve rebuilding targets. In recognition of the SSC's increased role, we have strengthened the conflict of interest disclosure requirements to which each SSC member must comply.

The bill also requires limited access privilege programs, such as individual fishing quota systems, established in the future not only to contribute to a reduction of capacity in overcapitalized fisheries and improve fishermen's safety by ending the race for the fish but also to consider social and economic benefits to coastal communities. Senator STEVENS' and my intent was to sustain thriving fishing communities and promote access to the fisheries by residents of our coastal communities in order to foster the independent, coastal community-based character of our Nation's fisheries. To achieve this aim, the bill sets forth a strong list of standards to ensure that any such program take into account the social and economic implications of the program. In addition, it authorizes the creation of voluntary regional fishery associations for the mutual benefit of fishery participants, including provisions to ensure we maintain free and open markets for fishermen to sell their catch.

The bill also requires a periodic review of each program's compliance with the goals of their program. Individual permits will be renewed automatically every 10 years, unless the permit holder fails to meet the requirements specified in the program as meriting modification, limitation, or revocation. The bill also contains grandfathering and transition rules to address the application of these new standards to existing and developing programs. I want to make clear that final Senate changes in these provisions were not intended to adversely affect or delay ongoing development of a proposal for a rationalization program for the Pacific trawl groundfish and whiting fisheries by the Pacific Fisheries Management Council. We intend that this process go forward and that adherence to the new standards not delay development of the plan called for in the bill.

In order to assist fishermen in helping to reduce bycatch and seabird interactions, H.R. 5946 establishes a regionally based Bycatch Reduction Engineering Program to develop technologies and methods to improve the ability of fishery participants to reduce bycatch and associated mortality, including post-release mortality. The provision includes an outreach mandate to encourage the adoption of new technologies and also encourages the adoption of bycatch reduction incentives in fishery management plans, such as bycatch quotas. Finally, it encourages the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to continue coordinating with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other entities to reduce or mitigate seabird interactions in fisheries, a process that has had much success in the Western and North Pacific.

This comprehensive package not only addresses conservation and management within our Nation's waters but equally as important, strengthens controls on illegal, unreported, and unregulated IUU fishing in the high seas. IUU fishing, as well as expanding fleets and high bycatch levels, are threats to sustainable fisheries worldwide. The bill includes provisions to strengthen the ability of international fishery management organizations and the United States to ensure appropriate enforcement and compliance with conservation and management measures in high seas fisheries. The international component of this bill ensures other nations provide comparable protections to populations of living marine resources at risk from high seas fishing activities. These provisions help the U.S. fishing industry by both sustaining shared resources and leveling the playing field in terms of regulation and responsibility.

I am particularly pleased that the bill includes provisions crucial to the long-term sustainability of tuna and other high seas stocks so important to Hawaii and the Pacific Islands, as well as a program to help increase marine education and technical skills in the region. These provisions will not only help us work with other countries to conserve our shared marine resources but also reduce unfair conservation burdens on U.S. high seas fleets. The bill also contains long-awaited legislation to implement the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Convention, a critical step in ending overfishing of bigeye and other tuna species in the Pacific. I am pleased that representatives of both the Western Pacific Council and the Pacific Council will be commissioners and that the territories will be provided representation in this important organization.

In addition, the bill contains provisions that promote marine education,