

weeks of rest and recuperation, and I am proud to share that the “Welcome Home a Hero” program at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport has been selected by the U.S. Military to host this celebration. I extend my personal gratitude to the program’s volunteers for their efforts in supporting our dedicated men and women in uniform who are proudly serving our Nation.

Madam Speaker, I am indeed honored to pause and pay tribute to these wonderful volunteers and valiant soldiers who represent the very best of the United States of America.

THE IRAQ STUDY GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS IMPLEMENTATION ACT

**HON. MARK UDALL**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 5, 2007*

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today I am pleased to introduce legislation to implement the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group (ISG)—also known as the “Baker Hamilton Commission”—as a bipartisan foundation for long overdue strategic change in our policy in Iraq.

I am pleased to be joined by my colleagues Representatives FRANK WOLF, MICHAEL MCCAUL, and DANIEL LIPINSKI—and 41 other Members—in introducing this bill, and I am grateful for all their help in building support for this legislation. Representative WOLF deserves special recognition for the role he played in spearheading the creation of the Iraq Study Group and in pushing forward its recommendations.

The ISG was created in March 2006 at the request of a bipartisan group of Members of Congress, led by Representative WOLF, and was co-chaired by former Secretary of State James Baker and former chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Representative Lee Hamilton. In December 2006, the ISG released its recommendations and outlined a bipartisan approach to bringing a responsible conclusion to the Iraq war.

What this legislation does is to take these recommendations and establish them as official United States policy. Among the recommendations outlined in the bill are a new diplomatic offensive in the region that includes the creation of the Iraq International Support Group; giving the highest priority to training, equipping and advising the Iraqi military and security forces; assessing the full budgetary and personnel impact of the war in Iraq on the U.S. military; accelerating and increasing oil production and accountability including equitable distribution of oil revenues in Iraq; implementing and oversight of economic reconstruction programs in Iraq with the creation of a new Senior Advisor for Economic Reconstruction; ensuring that the President includes the cost of the war in his annual budget request; and setting conditions that can lead to redeployment of U.S. combat forces as early as the first quarter of 2008, including necessary diplomatic, infrastructure and security benchmarks.

It is clear to me that a Democratic majority in Congress cannot unilaterally legislate an end to this war and expect its architect and champion—President Bush—to sign on the

dotted line. In my view, the only way to end this war—and to end it in a way that minimizes the likelihood of greater regional bloodshed—is to broaden the tent of opposition, and engage concerned Republicans in pressuring the Bush Administration to change course. That is why I worked last year with Representative Joe Schwarz on a resolution insisting on benchmarks for Iraqi political stability and a process to hold the Bush Administration accountable.

That is why I am introducing this bill today. Democrats and Republicans must work together to change the course in Iraq, and implementing the major policy recommendations of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group is an overdue step in this direction.

As an early and consistent opponent of this war I do not believe that embracing these recommendations is the only action we in Congress must take, but it is important as a foundation. I, for one, will also continue to push for a strategy of military disengagement in Iraq and phased redeployment of our forces, because I do not believe we should ask our soldiers to referee a civil war.

Ending American military participation in this war and managing the consequences of the Bush Administration’s failures will not be easy and it will not come overnight, but it will come—and the ISG recommendations offer a means of moving toward these goals.

Many of us embraced the ISG’s recommendations when the report was first released last year, and many of us believe that the report still provides a comprehensive blueprint for a way forward in Iraq and the Middle East, from both the military and the diplomatic perspective.

I do not believe the ISG recommendations or my bill will offer a complete solution, but they will offer a start.

We went into war as a badly divided country; I hope we can end it differently and that is my motivation in offering this bill today.

A TRIBUTE TO THE 2007 ELLIS ISLAND MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

**HON. DAN BURTON**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 5, 2007*

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the 2007 recipients of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor. The Ellis Island Medal of Honor is presented annually by the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations (NECO), representing more than 250 organizations that span the spectrum of ethnic heritages, cultures and religions. Since the organization’s founding in 1986, approximately 1,700 American citizens have received Ellis Island Medals of Honor, including six American Presidents, several United States Senators, Congressmen, Nobel Laureates, outstanding athletes, artists, clergy, and military leaders.

As we all know, citizens of the United States can trace their ancestry to many nations. The richness and diversity of American life makes us unique among the nations of the world and is in many ways the key to why America is the most innovative country in the world. The Ellis Island Medals of Honor not only celebrate select individuals but also the pluralism and de-

mocracy that enabled our ancestors to celebrate their cultural identities while still embracing the American way of life. This medal is not about money, but about people who really seized the opportunities this great country has to offer and who used those opportunities to not only better their own lives but make a difference in the lives of those around them. By honoring these outstanding individuals, we honor all who share their origins and we acknowledge the contributions they and other groups have made to America.

In addition, NECO awards one International Ellis Island Medal of Honor each year. This year’s international honoree was Victor Phillip Dahdaleh, Chairman, Dadco. Mr. Dahdaleh is Canadian.

And for the first time in its history, NECO presented a Global Humanitarian Award to H. E. Sheikh Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, President of the 61st Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

When the immigrant station at Ellis Island, New York, opened on January 1, 1892, it admitted 700 immigrants into the United States on just its first day of operation. By the time the center closed in 1954, 17 million immigrants had passed through its doors. The Ellis Island administration and staff, on average, processed up to 5,000 people per day. Many of these newcomers had little or no knowledge of English, hardly any money, and many arrived with only the clothes on their backs. They arrived risking their lives in exchange for freedom and a better way of life.

I, once again, commend NECO and its Board of Directors headed by my good friend, Nasser J. Kazeminy, for honoring these truly outstanding individuals for their tireless efforts to foster dialogue and build bridges between different ethnic groups, as well as promote unity and a sense of common purpose in our Nation. As Rosemarie Taglione, Executive Director of NECO has said so eloquently on a number of occasions: “NECO’s message of tolerance and harmony among diverse ethnic groups is, perhaps, even more important today than it was 20 years ago.”

Madam Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in recognizing the good works of NECO, and congratulating all of the 2007 recipients of the Ellis Island Medals of Honor. I also ask unanimous consent that the names of this year’s recipients be placed into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD following my statement:

Dr. Gregory Adamian, H. E. Sheikh Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, George Altirs, Peter Arnell, Dr. Elias Ayoub, Dr. Ernest M. Barsamian, Michelle Bodden, Edgar Cahn, Leo Chen, Dr. Aram V. Chobanian, Jaekun Chung, Mario Ciano, Denis A. Cortese, MD, Hon. Leslie Crocker-Snyder, Victor Phillip Dahdaleh, Nicholas J. Daniello, MD, Dr. Joel Alan DeLisa, Kirti Desai, Dr. Akshay Desai, Michael J. Dowling, James J. Dowling, Blaise Durante, Hon. Jacob Eapen, MD, MPH, Mory Ejabat, Richard A. Elias, MD, Hani Findakly, PhD, Arthur Flegel, Jon Fortgang, Douglas Foshee, Philip Friedman, Cynthia R. Garrett, Obren Gerich, Joi Gordon, Col. R. L. Grabowski, USMC, MSGT Nicholas G. Grand, USAF (Ret.), Patrick Grant, Hon. Chuck Hagel, George Hamilton, William Harrington, Esq., Richard Heckmann, Col. Jack H. Jacobs, USA (Ret.), Rev. John I. Jenkins, CSC, Ik Joong Kang, Dr. Sarkis Kechejian, Don Keenan, Do-Young Kim, David E. Kimmel, Jr., Dr. Steven S. Koh, George J. Kostas, Les Kuczynski,