

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 9, 2008

Dear Colleague:

We invite you to join us in cosponsoring Senate Resolution 636, a bipartisan resolution that recognizes the strategic success achieved by the surge in Iraq and expresses our gratitude to the brave men and women in uniform who made that success possible.

As you know, the war in Iraq has been deeply divisive for our country. The Senate spent much of last year locked in intensive debate about the wisdom of the new strategy that General David Petraeus was pursuing in Iraq and the deployment of approximately 30,000 additional U.S. Army and Marine Corps servicemembers in support of it.

In fact, it was just one year ago this month that General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker returned to Washington to report on the progress of the surge. At the time, many Americans still doubted whether the surge was working.

Today, by contrast, it is beyond dispute that the surge has been an extraordinary strategic success for our country, an operation that is certain to be studied and praised for decades to come in the annals of American military history.

Although the war in Iraq is not yet over, virtually every indicator of progress—political, economic, and military—has dramatically improved since General Petraeus took command in February 2007 and the surge began.

Large-scale sectarian violence has effectively ended. Al Qaeda in Iraq—which our intelligence community last year characterized as “the most visible and capable affiliate” of al Qaeda’s global terrorist network and “the only one known to have expressed a desire to attack the Homeland”—has been dealt a near strategic defeat, in the words of CIA director Gen. Michael Hayden. The Iranian-backed militias that once controlled large swaths of the country have been routed. And as our enemies have retreated, American casualties have likewise plunged.

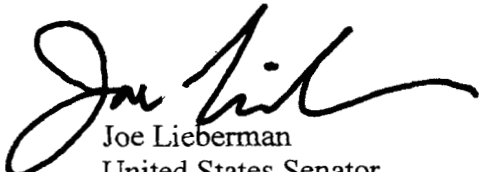
These represent more than mere “tactical” gains. Because of the surge, the United States has been saved from a strategic defeat in the heart of the Middle East that would have carried catastrophic consequences for our country, and our allies, far beyond the borders of Iraq. Indeed, because of the success of the surge, America’s strategic position in the Middle East and the world is stronger; our most dangerous enemies—al Qaeda and Iran—are weaker; and our country is safer.

General Petraeus is expected to hand over command of coalition forces in Iraq on Tuesday, September 16. After months of divisive debate, we hope that members of both parties can set aside whatever disagreements have divided us over Iraq in the past, and join together now to acknowledge what we all know to be true: that the surge has been a strategic success; that we owe our deepest gratitude as a nation to the courageous men and women in uniform who fought so valiantly to achieve that success; and that their struggle and sacrifice must not be squandered.

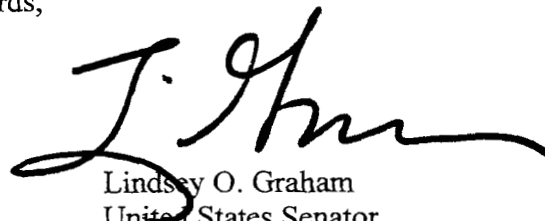
We hope that you will join us as a cosponsor of Senate Resolution 636 to send a bipartisan message of national unity that we salute our heroic troops for their extraordinary achievement.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Vance Serchuk in Senator Lieberman's office at . or Jen Olson in Senator Graham's office at .

Best regards,



Joe Lieberman
United States Senator



Lindsey O. Graham
United States Senator