After the success of a targeted, special forces raid that killed Osama bin Laden, Chief Deputy Whip Peter Welch and Chairman of the Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on National Security, Homeland Defense and Foreign Operations Jason Chaffetz (R-Utah) are leading a bipartisan effort in the House urging President Obama to recalibrate America's anti-terrorism policy and end the war in Afghanistan.

In a letter to President Obama sent Monday, Welch, Chaffetz and a group of three Democrats and three Republicans are calling for a shift from the expensive nation building strategy currently underway in Afghanistan to one modeled after the successful mission that located and killed Osama bin Laden. Joining Welch and Chaffetz in signing the letter are Reps. John Garamendi (D-Calif.), Walter Jones (R-N.C.), Rush Holt (D-N.J.), John Campbell (R-Calif.), John Tierney (D-Mass.) and John Duncan (R-Tenn.).

"The success of this mission does not change the reality that America still faces a determined and violent adversary," Welch, Chaffetz and their colleagues wrote. "It does, however, require us to reexamine our policy of nation building in Afghanistan. We believe it is no longer the best way to defend America against terror attacks, and we urge you to withdraw all troops from Afghanistan that are not crucial to the immediate national security objective of combating al Qaeda...The killing of Osama bin Laden was made possible by a strong intelligence operation and well-trained Special Forces units. In combating extremism, the combination of actionable intelligence and highly mobile Special Forces has proven most effective against an enemy that is not limited to a single geographic location."

Welch and Chaffetz are leaders in their respective party caucuses in urging an end to the war in

Afghanistan and a more sensible policy to combat terrorism.

The full text of the letter is copied below.

Dear Mr. President:

The success of bringing Osama bin Laden to justice is a tribute to the sustained commitment of our armed forces, our intelligence agencies, and our Special Forces. We share your pride in their courage and competence.

The success of this mission does not change the reality that America still faces a determined and violent adversary. It does, however, require us to reexamine our policy of nation building in Afghanistan. We believe it is no longer the best way to defend America against terror attacks,

and we urge you to withdraw all troops from Afghanistan that are not crucial to the immediate national security objective of combating al Qaeda.

The cost to taxpayers of this war is immense – $2 billion weekly and $386 billion already spent, while billions more in legacy costs await us. Every dollar spent is added to America's deficit.

The burden on our overstretched military is likewise immense. There are 99,800 American troops on the ground as we write this letter engaged in this nearly 10 year old war, the longest in America's history.

Also, our success depends on the cooperation of the Karzai government whose capacity or willingness to curb rampant corruption has evaporated.

Finally, we know the terror threat is dispersed and decentralized, not concentrated in a nation state. Consequently, a nation-building strategy has little efficacy.

The killing of Osama bin Laden was made possible by a strong intelligence operation and well-trained Special Forces units. In combating extremism, the combination of actionable intelligence and highly mobile Special Forces has proven most effective against an enemy that is not limited to a single geographic location.

As our national debt grows, the borrowing and importing from our competitors continues, and the drug-related violence on our borders increases, we must evaluate the best use of our resources. The time has come to acknowledge that the threat posed by Afghanistan no longer justifies 100,000-plus troops on the ground.

Sunday's events in Pakistan underscore the need for an emphasis on intelligence gathering and highly mobile Special Forces units. We can no longer fight this war by the old rules. This battle requires a nimble and agile force with a capacity for rapid response anywhere in the world. It requires integration and cooperation between intelligence-gathering entities. The CIA, NSA, NGIA and JSOC's new Targeting and Analysis Center were all instrumental in finding and tracking Osama bin Laden. Such operations can transform the way intelligence is gathered, analyzed, and acted upon.

After fighting the longest war in the history of the United States of America, it's time to redeploy our resources to address our most pressing threats. It's time to bring the formal war in Afghanistan to an end as we adapt to the changing demands of a different kind of war.

Sincerely,

Peter Welch

Jason Chaffetz

John Garamendi

Walter Jones

Rush Holt

John Cambell

John Tierney

John Duncan