

By John Fritze

[Maryland](#) leaders praised the U.S. raid in [Pakistan](#) that led to the death of [Osama bin Laden](#), but members of the state's congressional delegation and other local officials on Monday tempered their optimism by cautioning that the war on terror is not over.

[President Barack Obama](#) announced late Sunday that a team of U.S. had killed bin Laden in a firefight Sunday. [Gov. Martin O'Malley](#) commended the military for the action.

"This closes a sad and tragic chapter in our country and our world's history," O'Malley said in a statement released Monday. "This should be a day of reflection and prayer for a more peaceful future."

While expressing hope that bin Laden's death would bring closure to the families of those killed in the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, officials also said the threat of terrorism remains real and cautioned the public, in the words of [Rep. Steny H. Hoyer](#), to remain vigilant to "confront the national security threats we face."

"That terrible day has been seared into our memory," the Southern Maryland Democrat, who serves as the House minority whip, said in a statement. "While the enormity of this moment cannot be overstated, we all recognize that the threat of terrorism still exists and we must remain vigilant."

That warning, sounded by lawmakers of both parties, came as the [U.S. State Department](#) issued a warning early Monday to citizens traveling and living abroad. Citizens in areas where bin Laden's death could cause anti-American violence, the statement said, were strongly encouraged to limit travel.

[Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski](#), a member of the Senate's Select Committee on Intelligence, called bin Laden's death a "historic day for our country," but warned that terrorists will continue to harbor "predatory intent" toward the country.

"While bin Laden is dead, the hateful ideology he espouses will persist," Mikulski said in a statement. "[Al Qaeda](#) is a resilient operation."

She said the country must be vigilant and prepared.

Rep. Andy Harris, one of the state's two Republican members of the House, said Monday that bin Laden's death was "great news for the security of America, as well as for our troops at home and overseas who continue to protect us from terrorism every day."

Rep. [C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger](#), the top-ranking Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, praised the work of intelligence professionals who tracked bin Laden down.

"This is a great day for America," Ruppertsberger said. "Bin Laden had the blood of thousands of people on his hands. Justice has now been done."

"The death of Osama bin Laden is an important milestone in the fight against terrorism and a relief to millions of Americans and others around the world who have felt his murderous destruction," [Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin](#) said in a statement. "All Americans can feel safer knowing that bin Laden is dead, but we must remain vigilant in the continued fight against al-Qaida and any terrorists who seek to harm our nation."

Baltimore Rep. [Elijah E. Cummings](#), also a Democrat, said the "moment of justice" must be "tempered with caution," and noted that the nation's fight is with terrorism, not Islam.

"The pursuit of bin Laden has been only one part of our war on international terrorism -- a war that has cost the lives of more than 6,000 American soldiers," Cummings said. "Though it took years, the death of Osama bin Laden shows the righteous might of our citizens and our military."

[Rep. John Sarbanes](#) called the effort "a significant blow" to Al Qaeda and said that "the demise of Osama bin Laden will help turn the page on a dark chapter for the families of the victims of [9/11](#), the American people, and people of good will everywhere. "

Washington Mayor [Vincent C. Gray](#) said bin Laden's death would "not erase the pain nor diminish the threat of terror," but said he hoped "this service of justice brings some comfort to the families and friends of loved ones lost on September 11, 2001."