Mr. Speaker, I yield

myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, on March 19 of this

year, the President sent us into military

activity, or war, in Libya. Within

48 hours, the President notified the

Congress in accordance with the War

Powers Act of his decision to do so. For

60 days, the President under the War

Powers Act had the opportunity, and

chose not to, to come to this body and

make the case as to why being in Libya

was important. On the 60th day, he

wrote a letter to this body saying that

he would welcome authorization but

he’s not asking for it.

Time and time again on the Armed

Services Committee, we were presented

with speakers from the administration

who would give certain updates on various

matters to which I would ask: Are

you here to ask authorization for ongoing

activity in Libya? And the speakers,

the witnesses, would say, ‘‘No.’’

After 90 days and the President has

not ceased activity or hostilities in

Libya, the time has come and gone and

we’ve sent our indication over to the

administration time and time again

that we disapprove. But because the

War Powers resolution, by some either

Republican or Democrat or in the

House or the Senate, is questionable

whether or not they consider it constitutional

or not, the President has

operated in what we now know is called

the zone of twilight as to whether or

not he even needs our approval.

So what are we left with? Mr. Speaker,

we’re left with, today, our ability

under the power of the purse to restrict

funds from ongoing operations in

Libya. Without it and without the Supreme

Court weighing in on whether or

not the War Powers is unconstitutional,

in my opinion, the President is

breaking the law, but he is being restricted

by nobody and being able to

continue unfettered.

Some have said that the War Powers

resolution isn’t worth the paper that it

is written on. To that I say: Based on

what Supreme Court decision? Based

on what precedent? There is none, because

the courts haven’t weighed in on

it. I know some of our colleagues here

have a pending case before the Court,

and I wish them well, but what if they

don’t accept the case? What if they say

these Members, as they have said before,

don’t have standing? Then we’re

right back to square one.

Mr. Speaker, today we have the opportunity

to send a message to the executive

branch, and this transcends

party but it exerts our power under the

separation of powers, to say we, the

House of Representatives, are relevant;

we, the House of Representatives, are

exercising our ability that the Founding

Fathers gave us in the ability to

declare war because they wanted us to

have this deliberation, this debate that

we’re having here today, arguments

that have been made on both sides that

have been very good, because the last

thing that we want as Americans is for

some President, whether it’s this President

or some future President, to be

able to pick fights around the world

without any debate from another

branch of government.

It’s the most difficult thing we have

to do as government officials, and

that’s send our kids into harm’s way.

So it has to be a sober, deliberative,

long debate, and the President has 60

days and chose not to engage in that

debate. So here we are today saying, if

you choose not to come here and get

authorization, we are going to stop it

until you do. The President always has

the ability in the future to come and

try to get authorization for what he’s

doing in Libya or anywhere else.

So, Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of

my bill to withdraw funding from future

engagement in Libya.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, we have

heard a lot of arguments today, and

we’ve had a great debate—a debate we

really should have been having over

the last hundred days or so, one that

could have been spurred on by the administration

for coming here and making

the arguments as to why we should

authorize or should not authorize

money for hostilities in Libya. The

President had the opportunity to come

and make the case to this body, and he

chose not to.

The War Powers Act is clear. He has

violated that law. Some have said it’s

unconstitutional, but the courts have

never weighed in on it, so it is the law

of the land, and it’s one we have to

abide by. But we can send resolution

after resolution to the Senate and say

that we don’t agree, that we don’t authorize.

In the end, the power that we

have is the power of the purse, as Mr.with

TERRY just said, and we have to exercise

that power in this House and say

that we aren’t going to spend money

for hostilities in Libya.

We heard the mission ‘‘if you want to

take out Qadhafi’’ or ‘‘if you want to

free the Libyan people and give them

the liberty they deserve.’’ Number one,

it was never the mission to begin with

to take out Qadhafi. That has somehow

morphed over time. We don’t even

know who the people are we’re supposedly

setting free.

Without that debate and without

that argument—and I appreciate the

debate we’ve had today because I think

it has been very helpful, quite frankly—

all we can do is say, until the

President comes and makes that case

and gets authorization, he won’t get

funds; and at the same time responsibly

say to our NATO allies that we’ll

support you in the rear, but we are not

engaging in hostile acts.