Mr. Speaker, this

bill defunds Libya unless authorized

specifically by law. If it passes, long

before it’s passed by the Senate, the

President will come to us and ask for

authorization, and I, for one, would

want to grant limited, conditional authorization.

Now we just rejected an authorization

provision that was, in effect, all

authority and no limitation—at least

that’s certainly how it would be interpreted

by the White House legal counsel

given how it was drafted. The House

should consider real binding limits and

conditions because democracy and rule

of law for the people of Libya is important,

but democracy and rule of law for

the people of the United States is more

important.

There are those who regret that they

cannot offer an amendment to this

bill—yes, they can. The motion to recommit

will be in order just as soon as

we end debate.

I know that we’ve had important resolutions

from the Arab League, the

U.N., and NATO. Those are not substitutes

for Congress. The War Powers

Act is the law of the land, and if we

don’t stand up for it now, when will

we? And if this President won’t obey it,

what President will?

I have said that I

would vote for a resolution granting

authority to the President if it was appropriately

limited and conditioned. I

would like to see conditions that require

the Benghazi Transitional Government

to remove from their midst

the al Qaeda fighters and the Libyan

Islamic Fighting Group. I would like to

see the condition that we use the Qadhafi

money that we seized, some $33

billion, rather than taxpayer money.

But putting those conditions aside,

the one thing we almost all agree on is

that we would want to limit this to air

forces and perhaps a ground rescue

mission if necessary. That’s not what

this resolution does.

Section one grants authority to the

President to do whatever he decides to

do, including armor divisions on the

ground, in support of the NATO mission.

Don’t be fooled by section 2,

which provides the President with nonbinding,

unsolicited advice that we

think that he should limit our ground

operations to rescue missions and diplomatic

security.

This is a grant of authority to the

President to put armor divisions on the

ground, if that’s what he chooses to do.