Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of

House Joint Resolution 114, authorization of use of force against Iraq.

After the attacks of September 11,

Congress reaffirmed our commitment

to keep the American people safe from

international threats. That commitment faces its first true test as we debate this resolution.

We are faced with clear evidence of a

threat against the security of the

American people. We have several options to deal with this threat.

This resolution will provide all necessary options to the President for protecting

the security interests of the American people.

By giving the President the needed

flexibility, Iraq and the rest of the

world will know that we are prepared

to enforce our demands for disarmament with the use of force.

By giving the President this flexibility, the American people can be

fully defended from the threat Iraq

poses to our national security.

It is clear that Saddam Hussein constitutes a grave threat to the security

of the United States through his motives, history, technological capabilities and his support for international

terrorism. Saddam Hussein is a ruthless dictator who has sworn eternal

hostility to the United States. There is

evidence that this same dictator has financed and supported international

terrorism, including harboring members of al Qaeda. Despite agreeing to

fully disarm by ridding itself of weapons of mass destruction, Iraq has

worked to actually enhance its weapons program, increasing its stockpiles

of biological and chemical weapons and

working to build nuclear weapons.

Saddam Hussein has used weapons of

mass destruction against his neighbors

and his own people. He has attempted

assassinations of foreign leaders, including an American president.

Alone, these facts are very troubling.

Together, they present a clear and

present danger to the national security

of the United States. Saddam Hussein

has the motive, has the capabilities

and the absence of humanity that is all

too clear. Ignoring this evidence would

be abandoning our duty to the security

of the American people.

Now we are faced with this question:

How do we deal with this threat? The

answer is to leave all options at the

President’s disposal on the table, including military options. Like every-

one in this Chamber, I sincerely hope

and pray it will never come to that.

Nevertheless, I believe the evidence

justifies the President to act in the interests of our national security. This

resolution gives the President the necessary authority to deal with this threat.