Mr. Speaker, today the Committee on Government Reform and

Oversight unanimously approved the

report of the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and Human

Resources titled ‘‘Federal Law Enforcement at the Borders and Ports of

Entry,’’ the most comprehensive report

ever on our Nation’s border security.

As chairman of this subcommittee, I

would like to discuss some of the findings and how I feel they impact the debate on the resolution regarding Iraq that is before us.

There are 130 official ports of entry

on the northern border at which it is

legal to cross, whether by vehicle or

foot. There are an additional over 300

unofficial crossing areas along the

northern border, roads which are

unmonitored and allow for individuals or groups to cross undetected.

Near Blaine, Washington, the only

barrier is a narrow ditch easily stepped

over and containing no water between

two roads. In northwest North Dakota,

it is even easier: It is flat for miles, and

there is no ditch. As for the southern

border, it is not exactly known as impenetrable. If we cannot stop tens of

thousands of illegal immigrants, it

does not breed a lot of confidence that we can stop all terrorists.

Our subcommittee has also begun to

study port security. The challenges in

our largest harbors, Long Beach and

Los Angeles, are overwhelming. But by

the time a nuclear device has slipped

into L.A., we are already in deep trouble. Preclearance at point of origin, or

at a point prior to coming into the U.S., is a probable method to reduce

risk; but shipments could have chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons

added en route at the receiving harbor

or in transit to the next shipping point.

I have not even discussed airport security.

The point of my comments is this: If

those opposed to this resolution somehow think we are going to stop terrorists from crossing our borders, that by

itself is an incredibly high-risk strategy doomed to probable failure. As

chemicals come across in different

forms or nuclear weapons in parts,

even with dramatically improved security we will not catch it all.

We need a multifaceted approach. We

need a vastly improved intelligence

collection and information-sharing. That is obvious to everyone. We are

working to improve border security, port security, and airport security. But

when we can see the chemical and bio-

logical facilities that have manufactured, can manufacture, and probably

are manufacturing weapons of mass destruction intended for us, we need to

act to destroy those facilities. When we

get solid intelligence that someone intends to kill Americans and that they

have the weapons to do so, we need to

eliminate their capacity to do so. If this leader and nation have already

demonstrated, as Saddam Hussein has,

a willingness to use such weapons of

mass destruction to terrorize, like

Iraq, alone in the world in demonstrating such willingness, then the

need to act becomes urgent.

The American people do not want to

burn while the politicians fiddle. We

need to strengthen our borders. We

need to monitor suspected terrorists

and arrest those who become active.

We need to take out the capacity of

those bent on terrorizing our Nation.

If we implement all of these strategies, we have a chance of success. Partial, timid strategies against people

bent upon killing Americans will not save lives. They will cost lives.