Mr. Speaker, voting to authorize sending young Americans to war is a

serious decision. Members will make that decision in this Chamber tomorrow. Yesterday and today we have heard

very impressive debate, most of which

favors the resolution; some did not. We

have heard over and over again the

threat that Saddam Hussein and his regime is not only to the United States

and our interests but to many other parts of the world.

I am not going to restate those issues

that have already been stated yesterday and today, but as one of the many

cosponsors of House Joint Resolution

114, I do rise in support of this resolution to authorize the use of United

States military force against Saddam Hussein’s regime.

Much like the first hours and days after September 11, the world, our

friends and our foes, wondered how

would the United States respond to

that attack on our Nation? They wanted to know if we as a Nation would follow through with a serious response to

bring the terrorists to justice. They

wanted to see if we would respond with

a token strike, as we did following the

attack on U.S. troops in Somalia, at Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia,

against our embassies in Kenya and

Tanzania, and in the attack on our sailors aboard the USS Cole. The world

watched. Our credibility was at stake.

Before joining us, many of our friends

were waiting to see if we were serious

this time. Our enemies were not concerned because they believed they

could absorb another token response, as they had in past years.

But the message became clear just 3

days after September 11. A response

was certain when Congress, with a

strong bipartisan vote, stood and

unanimously approved a $40 billion

emergency supplemental appropriations bill to allow the President of the

United States to lead not only a recovery effort in those parts of our country

that were attacked in New York City

and at the Pentagon but to pursue the

war against the Taliban and against al

Qaeda and against any terrorist, wherever they might be hiding. It was to

fund the war against terrorism, wherever they were waiting to attack again.

When Congress spoke, almost immediately, with unity and with force, our

friends knew we were serious this time,

and it was with confidence that they

joined our cause. And our enemies

knew right away that America was serious; and when President Bush said

what it was we were going to do, they

knew that we had the resolve to fight

the battle, no matter how long it would take or where it would lead.

Today, we are in a similar situation.

There is no question about the threat

to our Nation from Saddam Hussein’s regime, to our allies, and to world

peace. As has been pointed out here

many times today, he has defied one

United Nations resolution after another for more than a decade.

Remember, he lost the war. He lost

the war in Desert Storm, and he signed

up to certain rules and regulations

which go along with losing a war, and

he has ignored all of them. He has developed and stockpiled chemical and

biological weapons. We know that he is

seeking nuclear weapons. We know

that he has aided and abetted terrorists who have struck international targets around the world. But now it is

time for Congress to speak again with

a firm and resolute voice, just as we

did on September 14, 3 days after the

cowardly attacks on innocent Americans.

Many of our friends are watching and

they are waiting today, as they were

last year. Are they going to join with

us, or not? Is this a serious effort, or

not? Is Congress speaking for the

American people to support the President of the United States as he seeks

to protect this Nation and our interests?

President Bush needs Congress to act

to convince our allies, our friends, and

our enemies that we are serious. They

need to know that our Nation is resolved to continue this battle against

terrorism into Iraq if necessary.

Many have said that Saddam Hussein

is not a real threat to the United

States because he is so far away, and

he is far away. It is a long distance.

Many have said that the President’s

speech Monday night did not address a

lot of new subjects. He compiled and

organized very well, many of the existing arguments. But he did say something new for those who paid really

close attention. The President discussed for the first time publicly information that many of our colleagues

who work with intelligence issues have

been aware of for quite some time.

That involves Saddam Hussein’s aggressive efforts to develop and use unmanned aerial vehicles,

UAVs, as a delivery method for his weapons of mass

destruction. The SCUDs did not have a

very long range. The SCUDs were not

very accurate. I can attest to that because one night visiting with General

Schwarzkopf during Desert Storm in

Saudi Arabia, a SCUD was launched near our site, and it landed not too far

away; but it was far enough away that

it did not hurt anybody. So we know

that the SCUDs were not that accurate. UAVs are a different story. UAVs

have a much longer range; UAVs are

able to be piloted and trained specifically on a target. UAVs are dangerous.

And if my colleagues do not think

UAVs have a long range, we ourselves

have flown a UAV from the United

States to Australia and back. Saddam

is aggressively seeking ability to use

those long-range UAVs to put so many

more targets in his sights. We cannot let that happen.

Mr. Speaker, with this resolution

Congress reaffirms our support for the

international war against terrorism. It

continues to be international in nature, as this resolution specifically ex-

presses support for the President’s efforts to strictly enforce, through the

United Nations Security Council, and I

will repeat that, through the United Nations Security Council, all relevant

Security Council resolutions applicable

to Iraq. It also expresses support for

the President’s efforts to obtain prompt decisive action by the Security

Council to ensure that Iraq abandons

its strategy of delay, evasion, and noncompliance with those resolutions.

One of the lessons of September 11 is that terrorism knows no boundaries.

Its victims are men and women, children and adults. It can occur here; it

can occur abroad. It can occur anywhere. Terrorists strike without warning. If we are to fight and win the war

on terrorism, we must remain united,

united in the Congress, united with the

President of the United States, and

united with the American people. President Bush told the Nation last

September that victory would not come quickly or easily. It would be a

battle unlike any our Nation has ever waged. Now is not the time to send a

mixed message to our friends and allies. Now is not the time to show our

enemies any weakness in our resolve.

Mr. Speaker, as we prepare to record our votes on this important resolution,

we should remember the victims of terrorism, September 11 and other exam-

ples, and our promise last year to seek

out and destroy the roots of terrorism whether it be its sponsors, planners, or

the perpetrators of these cowardly missions. We should remember the unity of

our Nation and the world. The battle

continues, the stakes remain high, and the cause remains just. America must

again speak one more time with unity, with force, and with clarity. This resolution does that.