Mr. Speaker, I rise in

opposition to this amendment.

It is clear to me that most Members

hope that the administration wins support

at the United Nations for a robust

weapons inspection regime. I am one

who wishes this. That is the outcome

that I think the gentleman’s amendment

aims for, but it does this, however,

in a way that I believe sets the

administration up for failure.

This amendment expedites congressional

consideration of an authorization

to act against Saddam Hussein

should the administration be unable to

secure an acceptable U.N. inspections

resolution. That is its second step, but

let us think a ways down the road.

Does this Congress really want to be

in the position of spotlighting our possible

failure at the U.N.? The story line

for the second congressional deliberation

on Iraq this amendment mandates

would be ‘‘Failing at the U.N., Administration

Forced to Try Congress

Again.’’ I have a hard time seeing how

our Nation could possibly be strengthened

by that.

In considering this amendment, we

cannot afford wishful thinking about

the U.N. The fact, often lost in this debate,

is that the United Nations is a

grouping of Nations with often differing

political interests, some that

share our values, others that do not.

This is one of the reasons that, while

working with the Security Council, we

must always guard against its compromising

our national security policy.

This amendment, in practice, gives

the edge to the U.N. Security Council

over our administration in facing the

threat of Saddam. The negotiating

hand of other Council members would

surely be strengthened against the administration

if they knew that our

President would be forced to return to

Congress if he could not strike a Security

Council weapons inspections deal.

Neither outcome, a weak weapons inspection

resolution nor if the administration

must walk away, a perceived

and universally noted failure by our

country to win at the U.N., is one we

should be setting our administration

up for.

Secretary of State Powell told the

Committee on International Relations

that his hand at the U.N. would be

strengthened by a strong congressional

authorization for action against Iraq,

one, in his words, that was not watered

down. I know that Secretary Powell

has been working hard to gain support

at the U.N. To kick the congressional

authorization he seeks down the road,

to grant it or even not grant it, based

upon the U.N. Security Council’s

schedule and political landscape, is a

big watering down.

It is the judgment of the gentleman

from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), the chairman,

and the gentleman from California (Mr.

LANTOS), the ranking member, and the

majority of Committee on International

Relations members that the

bipartisan resolution we are considering

this week is the one Secretary

Powell needs. That is why I urge the

rejection of this amendment.