Mr. Speaker, I strongly support President Bush and

this resolution to authorize the use of

force to defend the national security of

the United States against the continuing

threat posed by Iraq. It is important

to note that the thrust of the

resolution is to remove the capability

from Saddam Hussein to deliver weapons

of mass destruction. The oppressive

regime of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein

is a clear and present danger to

international peace and stability, particularly

to the United States. The

threat to the national security of the

United States is real.

For 11 years Saddam has systematically

violated United Nations Security

Council resolutions. We know that Iraq

is aggressively pursuing the development

of weapons of mass destruction,

supporting international terrorism, including

harboring terrorists and repressing

minorities within Iraq.

However, I am most troubled by the

Iraqi regime’s persistent efforts to acquire

biological, chemical, and nuclear

weapons, as well as long-range missiles.

In a report released by the CIA

last week, the intelligence community

confirmed that since U.N. inspections

ended in 1998, Iraq has continued its determined

efforts to maintain a chemical

weapons capability, invested heavily

in developing biological weapons,

rebuilt missile facilities, and is working

to build unmanned aerial vehicles

as a lethal means to deliver biological

and chemical agents. Moreover, it is

clear that Saddam Hussein is intent on

acquiring nuclear weapons. Experts believe

that if the Iraq regime can get its

hands on highly enriched uranium, it is

very likely that Iraq could build a nuclear

weapon in less than a year. This

is a threat we cannot allow to mature.

Iraq’s obstruction of U.N. inspectors

and extensive efforts to hide its mass

destruction efforts seem to make it obvious

that the current regime cannot

be trusted. Let there be no mistake

about it. As the number one target of

Saddam Hussein’s wrath, there is no

question as to who these dangerous

weapons would be used against; that is,

the United States and our friends. The

cost of inaction will be paid for with

the blood of innocent Americans.

In addition to the fact that our military

is targeted almost daily by the

Iraqi military in the no-fly zones, the

Iraqi regime has engaged in despicable

acts. They attempted to assassinate

former President George Bush and the

Emir of Kuwait and have offered rewards

to the families of suicide bombers.

Not only does Iraq harbor international

terrorist organizations such

as al Qaeda, Abu Nidal and the MEK,

the Iraqi regime has direct links to

international terrorist groups and continues

to provide support, training and

resources to terrorists.

President Bush has demonstrated unambiguous

and forceful leadership in

addressing the Iraqi threat. He has

clearly explained the threat the current

Iraqi dictator poses in the world

and made a very strong case for the

need for a regime change in Iraq. The

President stated his case before the

United Nations and has reached out to

an international coalition of partners

who share our concerns about the current

regime in Iraq.

The American people can show by

support of this resolution that we

stand 100 percent behind the President

of the United States to remove the capability

of delivery of weapons of mass

destruction from Saddam Hussein. I

urge support of this resolution.