Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support

of H.J. Res. 114, which expresses the

support of Congress for the Administration’s

efforts to enforce the United Nations Security

Council resolutions mandating the disarmament

of Iraq. Passage of this measure by

the Congress will authorize the President to

use American military forces to defend the national

security of the United States against the

continuing threat posed by Iraq.

Let me state at the outset that it is my judgment

that the situation in Iraq is very serious

and very perilous. I have served on the Defense

Appropriations Subcommittee for 24

years, and on the Intelligence Committee for

eight of those years. I have thus had a continuing

interest in the campaign of deceit

waged by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein

ever since the day he agreed to abandon his

weapons of mass destruction following the

Gulf War. Based on the briefings I have had,

and based on the information provided by our

intelligence agencies to Members of Congress,

I now believe there is credible evidence

that Saddam Hussein has developed sophisticated

chemical and biological weapons, and

that he me be close to developing a nuclear

weapon. And furthermore, I believe he will not

hesitate to use these and any other weapons

he has in his arsenal against America and

against our ships and bases in the Middle East region.

The CIA’s most recent report on Iraq clearly

indicates that, after the ejection of weapons inspectors

in 1998, Iraq continued its chemical

weapons program, energized its missile program,

and invested more heavily in biological

weapons. Furthermore, Iraq’s growing ability

to sell oil—despite the ban—increases Baghdad’s

capabilities to finance weapons of mass

destruction programs. Using these funds, it

largely has rebuilt the missile and biological

weapons facilities that were damaged during

Operation Desert Fox and has expanded its

chemical and biological infrastructure under

the cover of civilian production. The Iraqis

have also exceeded UN range limits of 150

kilometers for their ballistic missiles and they

are also developing unmanned aerial vehicles,

which would allow for a more effective and

more lethal means to deliver biological and

chemical warfare agents.

Beyond these weapons programs, there is

the question of nuclear weapons. In 1991, inspectors

from the International Atomic Energy

Agency uncovered a secret Iraqi effort to build

nuclear weapons after they intercepted a shipment

of trucks loaded with huge electromagnetic

isotope separators used to make

weapons-grade uranium. These inspectors remained

on the ground, working with U.N. arms

inspectors, until the day they were thrown out

of Iraq by Saddam Hussein, flagrantly violating

the terms of the disarmament agreements he

signed to save himself in the Gulf War cease

fire. Since 1998, there is credible evidence

that he has attempted to purchase uranium

and the hardware necessary to produce the

kind of weapon that could inflict infinitely

greater damage than any of the destruction

we witnessed on September 11th of last year.

There can be no doubt that Saddam Hussein

represents a growing menace. In the four

years since he expelled United Nations arms

inspectors from Iraq, he has become an

emboldened dictator whose hatred of the

United States has only grown stronger as he

has regained his military capability.

I believe that it is extremely important that

we continue our diplomatic efforts to gain

international support for action. Saddam Hussein

has blatantly violated 16 important UN

Resolutions as he has continued the arms

buildup he pledged to curtail. With the growing

threat of those weapons, with the assistance

Iraq is providing to terrorist groups—including

al Qaeda—and with the compelling need to

assert the authority of the international community,

President Bush has appropriately

urged the UN to enforce the sanctions that its

members have approved over the last 11

years. I believe H.J. Res. 114—by showing

Congress’s strong support for the President’s

position on the issue—will substantially

strengthen our effort to develop a consensus

at the United Nations for a new and stronger

resolution demanding the verifiable removal of

Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction.

I believe that it is important, in the language

of our Joint Resolution in Congress, to emphasize

that we are determined in this cause: that

if these efforts to build an international coalition

within the United Nations are not successful,

we believe that the United States must still

take action, joined by the British and other nations

who support us already, to ensure that

Iraq is never able to use the weapons of mass

destruction it has and those it is actively developing.

In my judgment, the possibility of

Saddam Hussein using these weapons

against U.S. targets or our allies in the region

justifies the commitment of American military

forces, however much I truly hope that diplomatic

efforts can succeed and that war can be avoided.

Mr. Speaker, for our own safety and national

security, I believe that we should support

the position that the President expressed

at the United Nations last month. It is time for

action. We can no longer ignore the reality of

what Saddam Hussein is doing and we should

no longer postpone our response to the growing

dangers of this weapons programs. I urge

my colleagues to vote for H.J.Res. 114.