Mr. Speaker, I thank

the gentleman for yielding me the

time, and I rise in support of this resolution.

The threat from Iraq is very real and

increasingly dangerous. Saddam Hussein’s

belligerent intentions, and his

possession and ongoing development of

weapons of mass destruction to fulfill

those intentions, make him a clear and

present danger to the United States

and the world.

Particularly worrisome is the evidence

of Iraq’s UAV capability. Iraq’s

ability to use uninhabited aerial vehicles

to deliver biological and chemical

weapons far outside its national borders

represents a qualitative increase

in the danger it poses. History demonstrates

Saddam Hussein’s willingness

to use such weapons against unarmed

civilians, including his own people;

and it demonstrates his

unhesitating instincts to invade his

neighbors, Iran and Kuwait, and to attack Israel.

That he appears to quote Director

Tenet’s recent letter, ‘‘to be drawing a

line short of conducting terrorist attacks’’

does not persuade me that he

will not. He is impulsive, irrational, vicious

and cruel. Unchecked, he will

only grow stronger as he develops capability

to match his disdain for America

and his Middle East neighbors.

History shows that had Israel not destroyed

Iraq’s nuclear reactor in 1981,

Saddam Hussein would now have nuclear

capability, but he did not cease

his nuclear ambitions. Had coalition

military forces not swept through Iraq

in 1991, he would have possessed nuclear

weapons by 1993.

The CIA now reports that Iraq is 1

year away from a functional nuclear

device once it acquires fissile material.

Waiting 1 hour, 1 day, 1 month in such

an environment, as some suggest, is

too risky.

The resolution we are considering is

greatly improved from the draft the administration

proposed, and I commend

Leader GEPHARDT for negotiating these

improvements. This resolution narrows

the scope of action to the threats to

national security posed by Iraq and enforcing

compliance with U.N. resolutions.

This resolution stresses a strong

preference for peaceful and diplomatic

action, authorizing the use of force

only if peaceful options have failed.

This resolution requires the President

to comply with the War Powers

Act and report regularly to Congress

should military action become necessary,

as well as after the use of force

is completed.

This resolution addresses post-disarmament

Iraq and the role of the United

States and the international community

in rebuilding.

And of crucial importance, this resolution

requires the President to certify

to Congress that action in Iraq will not

dilute our ability to wage the war on terrorism.

Removing WMD from Iraq is an important

priority, but it cannot replace

our counterterrorism efforts at home

and abroad. We must ensure we do not

divert attention from protecting our

homeland, beginning with the creation

of a Department of Homeland Security.

We must also strengthen and expand

programs and policies aimed at stopping

the proliferation of weapons of

mass destruction and their components.

Sentiment in my district is high,

both in favor and in opposition to this

resolution. I thank my constituents for

sharing their views with me. I have listened

carefully, learned as much as I

could; and now it is time to lead. Like

all my colleagues, I fervently hope that

the U.S. will not need to use force, but

the best chance to avoid military action

is to show the U.N. and Iraq that

we will not flinch from it.

Giving diplomatic efforts every

chance is the right policy, and this resolution

gives diplomacy its maximum

chance to succeed.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution.

The threat from Iraq is very real and increasingly

dangerous. Saddam Hussein’s belligerent

intentions and his possession and ongoing

development of weapons of mass destruction

to fulfill those intentions make him a

clear and present danger to the United States

and the world.

Particularly worrisome is the evidence of

Iraq’s UAV capability. Iraq’s ability to use unmanned

aerial vehicles to deliver biological

and chemical weapons far outside its national

borders represents a qualitative increase in

the danger it poses.

History demonstrates Saddam Hussein’s

willingness to use such weapons against unarmed

civilians, including his own people. And

it demonstrates his unhesitating instincts to invade

his neighbors—Iran and Kuwait—and to attack Israel.

That he appears, to quote Director Tenet’s

recent letter, to be ‘‘drawing a line short of

conducting terrorist attacks’’ does not persuade

me that he won’t.

He is impulsive, irrational, vicious, and cruel.

Unchecked, he will only grow stronger as he

develops capability to match his disdain for

America and his Middle East neighbors.

History shows that had Israel not destroyed

Iraq’s nuclear reactor in 1981, Saddam Hussein

would now have nuclear capability. But

he did not cease his nuclear ambitions. Had

coalition military forces not swept through Iraq

in 1991, he would have possessed nuclear weapons by 1993.

The CIA now reports that Iraq is one year

away from a functional nuclear device once it

acquires missile material. Waiting one hour,

one day, one month in such an environment,

as some suggest, is too risky.

We have to act now because the U.N. resolutions

following the gulf war have not contained the Iraqi threat.

With the passage of time, international resolve

to enforce United Nations resolutions has weakened.

This resolution will demonstrate to the U.N.

American resolve to act if necessary, but preferably

in a peaceful and multilateral way.

The strong and forceful language in this resolution

will help Secretary Powell persuade his

counterparts at the U.N. and around the globe to join us.

The resolution we are considering is greatly

improved from the draft the Administration proposed

and I commend Leader GEPHARDT for

negotiating these improvements.

This resolution narrows the scope of action

to the threats to national security posed by

Iraq and enforcing compliance with U.N. Resolutions.

This resolution stresses a strong preference

for peaceful and diplomatic action, authorizing

the use of force only if all peaceful options have failed.

This resolution requires the President to

comply with the War Powers Act and report

regularly to Congress should military action

become necessary, as well as after the use of

force is completed.

This resolution addresses post-disarmament

Iraq and the role of the United States and

international community in rebuilding.

And of crucial importance, this resolution requires

the President to certify to Congress that

action in Iraq will not dilute our ability to wage

the war on terrorism.

Removing WMD from Iraq is an important

priority, but it cannot replace our

counterterrorism efforts at home and abroad.

We must ensure that we do not divert attention

from protecting our homeland—beginning

with the creation of a Department of Homeland Security.

We must also strengthen and expand programs

and policies aimed at stopping the proliferation

of weapons of mass destruction and

their components. The ready availability of

matieral for chemical, biological and nuclear

weapons, and the know-how to make them,

has allowed Iraq to rebuild rapidly since 1991

and the expulsion of inspectors in 1998. But

nonproliferation programs have been underfunded

at a time when they need to be expanded.

If we don’t stop the flow of scientists and

materials for weapons of mass destruction, we

will soon be faced with another Iraq. The axis

of evil will grow to include more states. We will

encounter the nightmare scenario of nucleararmed

terrorist groups, capable of blackmailing

or attacking our cities and citizens

from within, with little hope of deterrence or diplomacy to stop them.

Sentiment in my district is high—both in

favor and opposition to this resolution. I thank

my constituents for sharing their views with

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as I could, and now it is time to lead.

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