Mr. Speaker, when

America’s freedom is threatened,

Americans respond. And in the hours

that have followed the horrific attacks

of Tuesday morning, our Nation has

done just that, and done it in ways that

bring forth deep emotions of patriotism

and gratitude and humility. Humanitarian

assistance has poured forth from

across the country, thousands have enlisted

as volunteers, and funds have

been made available to help recover

and to help rebuild.

Tonight we take the next step in responding

to this great challenge. The

resolution before us will place a unified

Congress behind the Commander in

Chief and send a clear message to

America’s enemies.

We must authorize and we must employ

all necessary force to protect our

Nation against this terrorist threat

and to destroy the capability of those

who would wage future attacks. We

know the challenge is great, but the

cause of preserving our freedom demands

no less.

In doing so, we ensure that although

our Nation never sought this conflict,

we will end it in a way and in an hour

of our choosing.