Madam Speaker, I rise

in opposition to the resolution, and I

yield myself such time as I may consume.

I just listened to my chairman—I am

very fond of her—make a very compelling

case for the national security interests

we have in seeing through this

operation that is now going on against

Qadhafi and Libya.

In detail, with specifics, I completely

support it. The only thing I didn’t hear

was, ‘‘Mr. President, while you didn’t

consult with us enough and you

haven’t provided us all the information,

I want to thank you, as our President

and our Commander in Chief, for

pursuing America’s national security

interests in this current operation.

Great job, keep it going, be a little better

on the information, a little more on

the consulting, but stick with it.’’

That’s what I didn’t hear.

I want to compliment Mr. KUCINICH

for offering this resolution. We disagree

on the President’s policy. My colleague

wants to withdraw forces, while

I support the ongoing operations in

Libya. But unlike the majority, Mr.

KUCINICH is taking seriously this body’s

fundamental responsibility to legislate

on the use of force.

The President commenced combat

operations in Libya to prevent a humanitarian

catastrophe, a massacre at

the hands of Qadhafi’s forces. There

was bipartisan support for this effort

and the President prevented massive

loss of life through the decisive use of

force. We don’t have to speculate about

that. Qadhafi told the entire world

about his plans for Benghazi, to go

door to door, closet to closet to find

and eliminate his opponents.

I continue to believe the mission in

Libya is relevant and necessary, as

does my chairman and as does the

Speaker, and I believe it’s achieving

success. Qadhafi’s forces have been

driven out of eastern Libya and out of

Misrata in the west. High-level defections

are on the increase. Demonstrations

are once again breaking out in

Tripoli, suggesting a weakening of government

control. Progress is slower

than we would like, but it is steady.

Efforts to force a withdrawal of

forces would reverse this process and

thousands of Libyans now benefiting

from the NATO operation. And this

resolution demands not merely withdrawal;

it demands withdrawal within

15 days.

Think about what a removal in 15

days, as required by this resolution,

would mean. We would be giving Qadhafi

a free hand to maintain control

in Libya and continue his campaign

against civilians. We would be thumbing

our nose at our NATO partners

whose support on the ground has been

and continues to be so crucial in Afghanistan.

We would likely threaten the stability

for the very Arab nations where

democracy has its best hope of success:

Egypt and Tunisia, each of which flank

Libya and are inevitably affected by its

internal developments. And we would

send a message to Assad of Syria and

dictators everywhere that our support

for freedom and humane governance is,

at best, lukewarm and transitory:

Hang in there for a few weeks, Mr. Dictator,

and we’ll go away.

And as the families of the victims of

Pan Am 103 know better than any of

us, a Qadhafi who is unleashed to commit

acts of terrorism around the world

will do so with unspeakable barbarity.

He might even reconstitute his weapons

of mass destruction.

We need to give the President more

time to pursue this mission. To do otherwise

would be to alienate our allies,

to damage our regional interests, and,

once again, to invite a horrible massacre

of Libyan civilians.

I urge my colleagues to join me in

opposing this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, just in

closing our time in the debate, I would

take up Mr. KUCINICH’s comments.

If you think there has been an inappropriate

abuse of power here, voting

for the Boehner resolution does not

cure that. But the Constitution doesn’t

say the President must come to Congress

and get a declaration of war. It

says Congress must declare war.

I agree very much with the thinking

of my friend, the chairman of the Intelligence

Committee, Mr. ROGERS, that

there are national security issues involved

here as well as humanitarian

issues, and that’s why I oppose

Kucinich. But the notion that the

President has to come to Congress

when Congress has the authority to address

this issue directly through a declaration

or through an authorization or

a limited authorization is the right

way to do it.

I urge a ‘‘no’’ vote on both the

Boehner amendment and the Kucinich

amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in

opposition to this resolution.

If the Members of the House choose

to pass the Speaker’s one-Chamber resolution,

it should add one finding: that

we declare ourselves to be one big constitutionally

created potted plant.

This resolution casts all kinds of aspersions

on the President. It states the

President has failed to provide Congress

with a compelling rationale for

operations in Libya. It implies that

there has been a withholding of documents

and information from this body.

Could the President provide more information

to the Congress? Of course.

But we need to look not just at the

President’s failure to seek an authorization,

but the refusal of this body to

exercise its authority in this area. The

onus rests with us to recognize the sacred

duty of authorizing the use of

force.

A resolution like this, with no operative

language, with no invocation of

the War Powers Resolution and which

was presented to Members for the first

time just 14 hours ago, simply perpetuates

a dynamic of congressional acquiescence

and acquiescence that, for

the most part, has gone on truly since

the Korean War.

There are two choices here. If the

majority thinks that the President’s

initial efforts to stop a humanitarian

catastrophe were wrong or that current

operations in Libya do not have a compelling

national security rationale, it

should support Mr. KUCINICH’s approach

and offer a concurrent resolution pursuant

to section 5(c) of the War Powers

Resolution requiring the removal of

U.S. forces.

If the majority has concerns with Mr.

KUCINICH’s approach, as many of us do,

and believes terminating military action

would have grave consequences for

U.S. national security, it should simply

authorize the use of force in Libya, incorporating

the restrictions on ground

forces that this resolution has, that the

Conyers language in the DOD bill had.

I would gladly join the Speaker in cosponsoring

such an authorization of

the limited use of force.

But pursuing a nonbinding House

Resolution that takes potshots at the

President and amounts to nothing

more than a sense of the Congress is

just an exercise in political gamesmanship.

It is a pedantic effort to embarrass

the President without taking any

ownership for the policy of the intervention.

The majority, not the President, puts

this body in a position of powerlessness

through such toothless efforts. We are

60 days into this operation. Either we

should authorize this action or terminate,

not play around with reporting

requirements.

The resolution is also confusing. It

states that the President shall not deploy

or maintain the presence of U.S.

military units on the ground in Libya.

But as the majority well knows, U.S.

military activities are limited to air

operations and nothing more. So does

this language mean the majority is

okay with the current intervention in

Libya? The majority seems to be raising

a fuss while winking at the White

House. That’s not the way to legislate.

Finally, I object to the resolution because

it is downright inaccurate. The

resolution implies that there is no

compelling national security rationale

for operations in Libya. But U.S. interests

are clear. They have been forcefully

articulated by the administration

and, ironically, by conservative advocates

like Bill Kristol.

We are in Libya because we are

averting a probable massacre against

civilians. We are in Libya because our

NATO partners need our help. Refusal

to act there would send a message to

NATO allies, who are putting their

forces on the line in Afghanistan, that

we are not a dependable partner. We

are in Libya because our friends struggling

for democracy in the Middle East

are watching events there. If we failed

to act, or worse, seek withdrawal

today, what will we be saying to the

activists in Tunisia and Egypt, whose

fragile movements for democracy could

be stifled by the destabilizing effect of

a Qadhafi-led government remaining in

power? And what message would we be

sending to Assad and to other dictators

and enemies about our staying power?

Let’s not kid ourselves. A Qadhafi

who is unleashed to commit acts of terrorism

around the world will do so with

unspeakable barbarity. We know Qadhafi’s

record of bloodshed, and we

know his readiness to use terror, especially

now that he has nothing to lose.

I cannot think of a more compelling rationale

for current operations in Libya.

I object to the characterization that

U.S. national security interests and

humanitarian objectives are incompatible.

In Libya, it is quite clear that

stopping murder and preventing a refugee

crisis very much correspond with

U.S. national interests.

The Republican sponsors of this resolution

are trying to have it both ways.

They want to criticize the President

for taking the very action that many

of them called for 3 months ago. And

they want to do so without taking any

responsibility. In the process, they are

offering nothing but criticism, obstruction

and endless second-guessing.

President Bush once accused the

Democratic Party of becoming ‘‘the

party of cut and run.’’ Well, it seems

the running shoe is now on the other

foot. It is a Democratic President that

is taking on a brutal tyrant, and it is

the Republican Party that refuses to

back him.

I urge my colleagues to take seriously

U.S. military involvement in

Libya and vote ‘‘no’’ on this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, I

yield myself such time as I may consume.

I think it’s important to get the

record straight on what we’re doing

and what we’re not doing. ‘‘No boots on

the ground’’ did not come because of

this resolution we are considering now.

This was the decision of the President,

the Commander in Chief, at the time.

But the figures given by my friend

from Indiana don’t reflect the reality

of our participation.

What are we doing now? While we’re

not in the lead, the United States is

contributing significantly to the operation:

fighter aircraft for the suppression

of enemy air defense, ISR aircraft,

electronic warfare aircraft, aerial refueling

aircraft, one guided missile destroyer

and predatory armed unmanned

aerial surveillance systems.

Twenty-four percent, not two-thirds of

the total aircraft; 27 percent of the

total sorties flown; over 75 percent of

all refueling sorties; 70 percent of intelligence

surveillance and reconnaissance.

Now there’s no boots on the ground,

but to me that involvement implicates

the War Powers Resolution. This is

within the meaning of that bill. And,

once again, only KUCINICH has before us

a proposal that seeks to deal with the

requirements of the War Powers Resolution.

I just think we should get the record

straight about what our involvement

is. It’s not as large as the previous

speaker said, but it is significant. And

in my opinion, it’s within the terms of

the War Powers Resolution.

I’m now pleased to yield 2 minutes to

my friend from California, the gentlewoman

from California (Ms. LEE).

Madam Speaker, I

yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to respond to my friend’s

arguments. I agree with every word he

said except that this is a manifestation

of the Congress exercising its authority.

This is an abdication of Congress

exercising its authority, because nowhere

in this resolution is the authorization

for the operations that we want

to authorize, that we should be authorizing

if we think they are appropriate.

The gentleman from Ohio doesn’t

think they are appropriate. Some of us

do think it is appropriate, and this

isn’t about buying time. We are not a

supplicant to go to the executive

branch and ask for them to request of

us authorization. We have the institutional

power to decide what to do, and

this resolution fails to take that option.

I think the gentleman makes a wonderful

case for why this resolution is

not sufficient to step up to our responsibilities

under the Constitution and

the War Powers Resolution.

With that, I would like to yield 4

minutes to the gentleman from California

Madam Speaker, I

yield myself 15 seconds in response to

the previous speaker.

What I’m curious about is what the

resolution doesn’t tell us. If the President

doesn’t provide us the information

within 14 days, what are we doing? The

resolution is silent. This is a resolution

filled with things we want and are asking

for and demanding and are

harumphing about with no consequences.

I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman

from California (Ms. WOOLSEY), former

member of the committee.