Mr. Speaker, the largest humanitarian crisis in the

world continues to unfold in Iraq. Over 4 million displaced people,

more than the crisis in Darfur, two million or more, have fled their

country; and the rest are displaced within. They have fled to Syria, to

Jordan, throughout the Middle East and beyond. It is brutal, not just

for the refugees themselves, and the displaced people, but it places a

great strain on the host country.

If the 110th Congress, 1st Session, adjourns sine die on or before

December 21, 2007, a final issue of the Congressional Record for

the 110th Congress, 1st Session, will be published on Friday,

December 28, 2007, in order to permit Members to revise and extend

their remarks.

All material for insertion must be signed by the Member and

delivered to the respective offices of the Official Reporters of

Debates, Monday through

Friday, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. through

Thursday, December 27. The final issue will be dated Friday,

December 28, 2007, and will be delivered on Wednesday, January 2,

2008.

None of the material printed in the final issue of the

Congressional Record may contain subject matter, or relate to any

event that occurred after the sine die date.

Senators' statements should also be formatted according to the

instructions at http://webster/secretary/cong\_record.pdf, and

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statement, or by e-mail to the Official Reporters of Debates at

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Members of the House of Representatives' statements may also be

submitted electronically by e-mail, to accompany the signed

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By order of the Joint Committee on Printing.

ROBERT A. BRADY, Chairman.

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Late last summer, Ambassador Ryan Crocker pointed out the problems

that this refugee crisis is posing for the United States itself when he

expressed deep concerns that if we don't do a better job of helping to

protect the people whose lives are at risk because they have worked for

the United States, if we turn our back on them when they flee the

country, than people will be less willing to work with us, and we won't

be able to rely on those who make such a difference in terms of

services of interpreters and guides and others providing essential

services for United States activities in Iraq.

I have been deeply concerned about this problem over the course of

the last year, finding out how far we have fallen short of the mark

when I was working with a group of high school students in Oregon and

returning U.S. Oregon National Guard troops. They were fighting to

bring to the United States their interpreter, a young woman who had

been marked for death in Iraq because of her cooperation with the

United States. It was frustrating over the course of the months that we

worked with them because I really had no good explanation for these

young people, the Guard and the high school students, about why it

should be so hard for the United States to help people who helped us.

It is not just people who had helped the United States who have fled

the country, it is not just those that are concerned about Sunni and

Shia violence; the Mandean, an ancient people, a small Christian sect,

are caught in the crossfire of this civil war in Iraq, and they are at

risk of being wiped out in their entirety for all time.

Having been inspired by these young Oregonians, having been inspired,

by other dedicated advocates, for example, Kirk Johnson, a former AID

staff member, who chronicled the plight of over 600 people at risk, of

whom less than 10 had been resettled, we introduced legislation to deal

with the mismatch between the scope of the problem and the limited

resources the United States Government has put into addressing it.

Indeed, after we ``won the war in Iraq,'' the situation became worse

on the ground, and we witnessed the explosion of this crisis. For 2005

and 2006, the numbers of people we helped were miniscule. Out of the 4

million people who have left their homes, we allowed 198 Iraqis in the

United States in 2005, and 202 last year, almost entirely people who

were being reunited with their families, who had been made refugees in

1991.

There were glimmers of hope this year, with the administration

promising, to allow 25,000 people into the United States, which was the

same number of refugees that the Prime Minister of Sweden told me that

Sweden was willing to accept. Later, the U.S. number fell to 7,000, and

then ultimately we only let 1,800 Iraqis in throughout the entire last

fiscal year. Even that was after a last-minute rush, because the first

6 months we had only allowed 69 Iraqi refugees.

There is good news, however, because due to an amendment by Senator

Kennedy that was adopted in the Senate for the Defense authorization

bill, largely taken from provisions in our House legislation, we are

actually going to be able to make some real progress. We will be able

to process some of these refugees in their own country. Until now,

people had been forced to leave Iraq. Even though we have the largest

embassy in the history of the planet, they had to leave Iraq before

they could apply for refugee status. We have an opportunity to increase

to 5,000 a year those people who are at risk because they have helped

us. These are important steps, and I hope they are approved.

But much more needs to be done. First, we have to actually do what is

authorized. Second, we need to put some real money into it, not just

the $250 million for refugee assistance that is currently pending. That

is rounding error, given the billions that we have spent in Iraq that

we can't even account for.

It is important for us to scale our commitment to make sure that we

meet the humanitarian crisis in the aftermath of our war in Iraq.