Mr. Speaker, democracy is based on the free exchange of

ideas, debating issues to find a solution reasonable people can agree

upon. However, when it comes to discussing the most important issue

facing our Nation, the Senate Republican leadership is more concerned

with giving the President political cover than engaging in a democratic

debate of ideas.

The Republican Senate leadership is even blocking the voices in their

own party by filibustering debate on any resolution dealing with the

war in Iraq, including the McCain-Graham resolution supporting the

President's troop surge and the Warner-Levin resolution in opposition

to it. The consideration of these resolutions, especially the

bipartisan Warner-Levin resolution, would serve as the basis for the

first real debate on the President's flawed Iraq war policy since the

war began nearly 4 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve a democratic discussion of

ideas on the issue that is most important to them. Next week we will

have a debate here in the House that will allow each of us to speak our

minds on the President's plan, and I would hope that the Senate

leadership would allow the same debate over in the other Chamber.