Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate the gentleman

from Georgia on his legislation, and I look forward to working with him

on those efforts with many others here in the House.

When the American people and this Congress stand in unity, great

change is possible. Last fall from every corner of our Nation, we spoke

loud and clear to demand an end to the Bush administration's open-ended

stay-the-course policy in Iraq and start a new direction. That unity

has changed control of this very Congress, led to the departure of

Secretary Rumsfeld, helped drive the bipartisan consensus behind the

Iraq Study Group recommendations.

Yet the Bush administration, in response, proposes another

escalation, a so-called surge. As I said last month on this floor, the

escalation plan flies in the face of military experts, of the

bipartisan Iraq Study Group, Democratic and Republican leaders in this

Congress, and the American public. This Congress has a solemn duty to

listen and take action.

Recently, the mother of a young soldier being deployed back to Iraq

told me, Congressman Carnahan, I am one of those mothers who is against

the war in Iraq. But my son volunteered to serve his country. Please be

sure they get the support and equipment they need to come home quickly

and safely.

That mother's heartfelt request is a powerful example of our national

unity and resolve to support our troops and oppose the escalation

policy that is not making the Iraqi Government more self-reliant, not

making the Middle East region more stable, and not making our country

safer.

Next week, after this Iraq war has extended longer even than World

War II, this Congress will have an historic, long, and thorough debate

about the escalation plan. I believe the result will be a bipartisan

vote reflecting the reality that a fourth U.S. escalation is the wrong

direction for our country.

When this Congress acts in unison with the American people, great

change is possible. In the weeks and months ahead, I believe this

Congress will undertake its constitutional responsibilities with all

seriousness and dispatch to continue this solemn debate, to exercise

detailed oversight, and to use the tools available to us to change the

direction of the war, to support our troops, to de-escalate the war,

and to escalate the political solution in Iraq.

Working together, great change is possible.