Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

There is not a Member of Congress who isn't tormented by the war in

Iraq. There is not a Member of Congress that has not attended a funeral

of a brave man or woman who has lost their life and seen the family's

torment. So I just want to say for the record, all of us wrestle with

this, Mr. Murtha, as you wrestle with this issue. We come to a

different conclusion than you do, but it is as sincere and heartfelt as

yours is.

I have been to Iraq 16 times. I try to go every 3 to 4 months. I

think we made huge mistakes in 2003. I don't think we turned things

around and started to move forward until June of 2004, when we

transferred power to the Iraqis. I saw the rest of 2004 and all of 2005

as pretty stunning.

And then in 2006 we had this new government. It took them 4 months to

become a government. And as you are going upstream and you are not

making progress, you fall behind. The Samarra bombing was a

catastrophe. For most of 2006 this government did not take decisive

action. But on my last trip, the one we took just a few weeks ago, I

started to see something that gives me hope, and it runs in the face of

the resolution in the supplemental. I am seeing Anbar province turning

around because the Iraqi Sunnis have come to us and said, we want to

confront the insurgents in our province.

I spoke to 40 Iraqi soldiers in the Red Zone, not in the marketplace,

and asked them, do you feel safe when you go home? Only about three or

four told me they didn't feel safe. And, remember, they work 20 days,

then they go home for 10. I saw their feeling of safety encouraging.

The Baiji oil refinery, which we took back with five batallions from

the Iraqi Security Force is no longer a source of income for the

insurgents. We have gotten at the corruption at the refinery; and now,

instead of 20 trucks a day, we are having 200 trucks a day, and we feel

fairly certain the oil is going to the right places and the insurgents

aren't getting these dollars.

I am not against timelines; I am just against timelines in the

supplemental. January 1, 2008 is one of them; April 1, 2008 is another;

and, if the best happens, September 1, 2008. I am not against a

timeline; I am against those timelines.

We need to give the Iraqis timelines that give them the time to

resolve their differences. We attacked them; they did not attack us. We

abolished all their security forces. How could we possibly leave before

we give them the chance to have their Army stand up, their police stand

up, their border patrol stand up? We attacked them. It is a moral

obligation to give them the opportunity to defend themselves.

If we want to talk about timelines, let's work it out together. Let's

establish timelines that give Iraqis time to do what they need to do.

I am voting against this resolution. It is harmful to Iraqis and

harmful to Americans.