Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague. Thank

you, Congressman Farr, for those nice words and for standing here with

me this evening.

Mr. Speaker, tonight I come to the floor again, for the 165th time,

to discuss the costs of the occupation of Iraq. Unfortunately, we all

know too well the human cost of the occupation. More than 2,550 of our

brave fighting men and women have died. Nearly 100 Iraqi civilians are

killed every day.

One might be able to justify these losses if the cause were

justified, if Americans were safer because of our action in Iraq.

Instead, the architect of the September 11 attacks, Osama Bin Laden, is

still at large. The Middle East is literally going up in flames.

Terrorism is increasing throughout the world.

And when we turn our eyes home to America, we see so many squandered

opportunities as a result of the Iraq occupation. If we hadn't been

spending nearly $.5 trillion in Iraq, just think of what we could have

done to strengthen our economy and our very own people. Think of the

investments we could have made in our future right here at home.

Think about the unmet needs of our children. For the cost of 15 days

of the Iraq occupation, we could immunize every child in the United

States against serious childhood diseases with all recommended vaccines

for the cost of $4 billion.

For the cost of almost 2 months of the occupation in Iraq, we could

hire 460,000 teachers across America to lower average class sizes to 18

students, at the cost of $15 billion.

For the cost of just over 2 months of the occupation of Iraq, we

could provide basic health insurance to every American child currently

making due without coverage. That cost would be $17 billion.

For the cost of little more than 2 months of the occupation of Iraq,

we could pay 1 year of tuition and fees at a 4-year public university

for the 3 million high school seniors who graduated this spring.

For the cost of just over 5 months of the occupation of Iraq, this

could provide a 20 percent pay raise to 3 million public school

teachers.

Mr. Speaker, when will we learn?

Congress, over my objections and those of many of my colleagues, gave

the President the authorization to go to war. We did not give him

permission to occupy Iraq, nor did we give him permission to neglect

American children and jeopardize their future.

It is time to bring our troops home from Iraq. It is time to focus on

the education and health care of our Nation's children. The Congress

can do this by passing my legislation, H.R. 5875, a bill to repeal the

President's Iraq war powers. Tonight, I urge my colleagues to cosponsor

this legislation. And I urge the leadership to consider this bill

before we head home for the August break, before one more penny is

wasted on occupying Iraq.