Last night, the President addressed the Nation about the

war in Iraq. No one is happy that we are at war, but we must remember

that we were attacked by the terrorists; that the war in Iraq is

critical to the global war on terror, and we must continue to fight and

defend against the terrorists there as much as at home.

We must maintain our efforts to provide security and stability for

the Iraqi government and its people until they are able to do so

themselves. We cannot walk away or we will face increased bloodshed at

home and abroad.

I applaud the President for recognizing the need for a new direction

in the Iraq war in order to achieve this and presenting tangible

alternatives to the problems we currently face there.

I support making sure that the Iraqis take the lead and act

aggressively and swiftly against any violence. Prime Minister Maliki

has issued a commitment to meet these challenges, and the President

must hold him accountable to this pledge. It is my hope the proposals

put forth will lead to success in Iraq.

Our troops deserve unwavering support, and this new direction the

President has implemented must show progress. Now is the time to unite

as Americans and not as partisan politicians.

I look forward to the day when a free and democratic Iraqi government

and its people can defend themselves and be a model for others in the

Middle East.