Mr. Speaker, today Representative Woolsey, Representative

Lee and I introduced a bill that would conclude our involvement in Iraq

and bring our troops home. The bill, H.R. 508, is entitled, Bring Our

Troops Home and Sovereignty of Iraq Restoration Act of 2007. The bill

has 16 original cosponsors. Representative Woolsey was on the floor a

moment ago, and she shared with you some of the provisions of that

bill.

I will reiterate, I will repeat, if enacted, the bill would repeal

the use-of-force authorization passed by Congress in 2002 and requires

a complete withdrawal of U.S. troops and contractors hired by the U.S.

Government within 6 months of the enactment of this bill.

The bill authorizes the President to support an international

stabilization force in Iraq, if the Iraq government requests such a

force, but U.S. troops would not be permitted to participate in the

international force.

It would turn security activities and military operations in Iraq

over to the elected Iraqi government within 6 months of the date of

enactment.

It would prohibit the U.S. from establishing permanent bases in Iraq.

It would cap the number of officers and employees of the United

States assigned to the U.S. embassy in Iraq at 500.

It would accelerate the training and equipping of Iraq military and

security forces, and pursue security and stability in Iraq through

diplomacy.

It would provide assistance to the Iraqi government in recovering

cultural and historical artifacts that have disappeared since the U.S.

invaded in 2003.

It will do a number of other things, but let me wrap this up by

saying it would fully fund veterans' health care, including mental

health care, for our returning veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I am spending an inordinate amount of time on this

issue, along with many of my other colleagues, and I have chosen to be

a major cosponsor on this bill because I feel it is absolutely my

responsibility to not only articulate what is wrong with this war, but

to do everything that I can to encourage the President of the United

States, the commander in chief, to bring our troops home.

I think it is important to do this because we have lost over 3,000

American soldiers. As a matter of fact, I think it is about 3,034.

I look at the continuing devastation in Iraq, and I see that just day

before yesterday I believe over 100 Iraqis were killed and maybe twice

as many was injured and we lost four more American soldiers.

This has got to stop. We are in control. We can stop this. I am

encouraging our Commander-in-Chief to bring our troops home, and to

pursue diplomacy, save lives. Because I believe if they continue down

the path that they are going, we are going to have a real blood bath in

a short period of time.

This surge, this expansion of the war that has been advocated and

pursued and pushed by this President is absolutely the wrong thing to

do. I know that he has been advised and he has accepted the advice that

he is to go into Sadr City and he is to confront al-Sadr, who is the

head of a tremendous militia. They have over 50,000 signed up in that

militia and more coming each day. I don't want our American soldiers to

confront that militia. I don't want our American soldiers in the middle

of this civil war. I don't want these young boys who come from our

cities and our towns and these young girls who come from our villages

and our hamlets of America to be caught in between Sunnis and Shiites

and Kurds. They don't know a Sunni from a Shiite. We don't speak the

language. We haven't trained people. Even the soldiers that are

supposed to be embedded doing the training can't speak the language.

They are depending on interpreters. And let me tell you, even some of

the soldiers that we are training in Iraq are turning their backs on

us. They desert our soldiers in the middle of a conflict, in a

confrontation. These are the ones that we are training, that we are

depending on to take over the security of Iraq somehow. It is not going

to happen.

We have to leave, and we should not be deterred from the mission of

leaving because someone is going to accuse us of cutting and running.

We know how these sound bites take place. We know what people do when

they want to promote their position. They will mischaracterize what is

being done. We have got to have the courage to stand up and stand up

for our American soldiers.

I support and cosponsor this new bill. I would ask my colleagues to

support it.

Today, Representative Woolsey, Representative Lee and I introduced a

bill today that would conclude our involvement in Iraq and bring our

troops home.

The bill, H.R. 508 is titled ``Bring the Troops Home and Iraq

Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2007.''

The bill has 16 original cosponsors.

If enacted, the bill would:

Repeals the use of force authorization passed by Congress in 2002.

Requires the complete withdrawal of U.S. troops and contractors hired

by the U.S. government within 6 months of the enactment of this bill.

The bill authorizes the President to support an international

stabilization force in Iraq, if the Iraqi government requests such a

force, but U.S. troops would not be permitted to participate in the

international force;

Turn security activities and military operations in Iraq over to the

elected Iraqi government within 6 months of the date of enactment.

Prohibit the U.S. from establishing permanent bases in Iraq;

Cap the number of officers and employees of the United States

assigned to the U.S. embassy in Iraq at 500;

Accelerate the training and equipping of Iraqi military and security

forces;

Pursue security and stability in Iraq through diplomacy;

Provide Iraqi government assistance in destroying/cleaning up land

mines, unexploded ordnance and depleted uranium shells;

Provide assistance to the Iraqi government in recovering cultural and

historic artifacts that have disappeared since the U.S. invaded in

2003;

Provide compensation for Iraqi noncombatant civilian casualties--

except for those individuals that participated in the armed insurgency

after May 1, 2003; and

Fully fund veterans healthcare, including mental health care, for our

returning veterans.

This bill stands in stark contrast to President Bush's proposal to

send more than 20,000 additional troops to Iraq.

The President proposes more of the same, while we provide a way to

remove our troops from the sectarian civil war in Iraq, return our

troops to their loved ones and begin the process of restoring our

credibility throughout the world.