Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this

resolution.

The Republicans do not want any timetables to end the Iraq war

because timetables would force the Bush administration to actually

create a workable strategy to end the war. To cover for their lack of

strategy and competence in Iraq, the Republicans are accusing others of

creating artificial solutions to the quagmire they created. This is

ironic since the Republicans have done nothing but provide artificial

facts about the reasons to go to war, the progress of the war and the

goals of the war.

Just about everything President Bush and congressional Republicans

have said about Iraq has been proven false. Initially, President Bush

and congressional Republicans justified the Iraq War on artificial

grounds. Here are just a few examples: Iraq had weapons of mass

destruction; Iraq bought enriched uranium from Niger; Saddam Hussein

and Iraq were involved in 9/11; the intelligence about Iraq was

accurate; and Congress had the same intelligence as the President about

Iraq.

Then, President Bush and congressional Republicans provided

artificial reasons on the progress of the war. Here are just few

examples: The cost of the Iraq war would be low; the United States

could use Iraq oil to pay for most of Iraq's war costs; the United

States would be welcomed as liberators; the United States has enough

troops to keep the peace in Iraq; and the Iraqi insurgency is in its

last throes.

President Bush and congressional Republicans have consistently

created equally artificial landmarks about what defines victory in

Iraq. Here are the latest artificial landmarks: Over 2 years ago,

President Bush declared ``mission accomplished'' in Iraq on the USS

Abraham Lincoln after the defeat of the Iraqi army; the first Iraq

election in January 2005; the passing of the Iraq constitution in

October 2005; and the second Iraq election held yesterday.

With the passing of these events and the insurgency still going

strong, President Bush

and congressional Republicans are now creating another artificial

definition of victory to justify the United States continued presence

in Iraq. This resolution now defines victory as the United States

staying in Iraq until Iraqis can provide their own security.

After 2 years of training Iraqis, nobody can definitively tell the

American people when this is going to happen. The GAO, think tanks and

the military itself agree that Iraqi troop readiness is low, their

loyalty and morale are questionable, there are sharp regional and

ethnic divisions among the troop ranks, and their reported numbers

overstate the real effectiveness of the troops. Such analysis does not

exactly provide confidence that continuing U.S. training efforts will

be successful or that our troops will be coming home anytime soon.

I ask my colleagues how many young American men and women have to die

for a war fought for artificial reasons and artificial goals? Our

soldiers should not have to be killed while President George Bush

fumbles around for a face-saving strategy to end the debacle of the

Iraq war.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this resolution. It is time for

America to end this mistake and bring our troops safely home.