Mr. Speaker, the majority brings to the House floor

today a resolution wrapped in a process that is offensive to the very

essence of democracy. This resolution provides a dictated take-it-or-

leave-it vote without the opportunity for our side to offer amendments

expressing differing views of the elections in Iraq and the U.S.

presence there. The substance of this resolution has all the appearance

and wording of a campaign slogan.

While applauding the beginnings of democracy in Iraq, the majority

has stifled democracy at home by denying Democrats the opportunity to

offer our own resolution for consideration and an up-or-down vote on

it.

Certainly, Democrats and Republicans congratulate the Iraqi people

who drafted and by vote ratified their own constitution, and who voted

this week in defiance of radical elements who sought to deter the Iraqi

people from voting.

It is appropriate for the House to congratulate the Iraqi people on

this step toward democratic governance, and we share the view that this

election and the continued training of Iraq's security forces will make

it possible for the United States to redeploy our troops and leave

Iraqis in charge of their own destiny.

That is as far as this House should go in expressing support for the

Iraqi democratic process. However, this resolution goes further. It

raises the strawman of ``achieving victory in Iraq'' and it is critical

of ``setting an artificial timetable for the withdrawal of U.S. Armed

Forces from Iraq, or immediately terminating their deployment in

Iraq,'' policies that House Democrats have not proposed. Nor does this

resolution define what is meant by ``victory in Iraq.''

I want to express my support for the Iraqi people and this further

step toward democracy, but I will oppose this resolution because I find

it offensive that the majority has advanced a resolution that pretends

to celebrate democracy by adding divisive and partisan language that is

clearly designed for use in a domestic political campaign.