Mr. Speaker, we should be standing together today in

bipartisan support for our troops and for the resources they need to be

successful in Iraq and the global war on terror. Instead, we have a

proposal before us today that micromanages the war from Capitol Hill

with ill-advised timelines for withdrawal that jeopardize our chances

for success.

This plan is an unruly mess, bad public policy, bad precedent and bad

politics. Those are not my words. They come from a Los Angeles Times

editorial. The Times is right on target. The editorial goes on to say

that by interfering with the discretion of the Commander in Chief and

military leaders, ``Congress undermines whatever prospects remain of a

successful outcome.''

The L.A. Times is a lot like most American people. They are unhappy

with the war. They are unhappy with the way it has been waged, but they

still want to give our generals and our troops the best chance for

success. That is in stark contrast to the defeatism we see in this

proposal today.

Some of our colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle have

quoted approvingly from the bipartisan Iraq Study Group. Here is a

quote they have not used: ``The Study Group sets no timetables, and we

set no guidelines. We believe that military commanders must have the

flexibility to respond to events on the ground.''

The National Intelligence Estimate carries a strong warning against

an early troop pullout. It said, ``If coalition forces were withdrawn

rapidly during the term of this estimate, we judge that this would

almost certainly lead to a significant increase in the scale and scope

of sectarian conflict in Iraq.''

Despite these cautions, the proponents of this legislation are intent

on taking us down a path that would lead to failure and defeat. Setting

a date certain for withdrawing from Iraq is a dangerous idea. Our

enemies will simply adjust their tactics and wait us out. The

consequences of such a withdrawal will be far-reaching. It would signal

defeat for the United States and embolden the terrorists in Iraq and

throughout the world. It would enable Iraq to establish a beachhead in

Iraq from which to operate, and it would be a catastrophe for the

people of Iraq and the region.

There are signs that the new strategy is taking hold in Iraq. General

Petraeus believes it will work, and he has our coalition forces engaged

fully in this effort to succeed. It would be a grave and irresponsible

mistake to undercut our soldiers by passing this measure before the

strategy has time to be implemented.

The message we send here today should not be one to the terrorists to

bide their time and wait for the U.S. to pull out. The message should

be one of complete and total support for our troops and for an

appropriation of the resources they need to succeed.