Mr. Speaker, the majority of Americans do not support the

President on Iraq. Yet he persists.

Our caucus is united in our desire to end this war and bring our

troops home safely despite our genuine disagreements as to how and when

to bring this about. Within this disagreement, we reflect the broad

spectrum of opinion in our country. Yet, as Members of Congress, we

must take action to change the trajectory of this war, to come closer

to the goal of ending the war.

By setting deadlines for the President to meet his own articulated

benchmarks, this bill places us firmly on that path.

This bill is not perfect. There will be ``no'' votes because there

are deadlines and ``no'' votes because the deadlines are too distant.

The ``perfect'' bill that all of us can support will not materialize

and we will be no closer to ending this war.

At the same time, until their safe return, we must support our troops

and provide them with the equipment and protective gear they need while

they are in harm's way.

With this bill, Congress for the first time since the war began is

not handing the President a blank check or rubber stamping his failed

conduct of this war.

I strongly urge passage of this bill.