I thank the gentleman, my distinguished friend, the

chairman, for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, it's time to get our troops out of the middle of an

Iraqi civil war. It's time to start bringing our troops home.

My friends on the other side of the aisle are essentially saying

``stay the course.'' At what point, I would ask my friends, do we say

that the administration's policies in Iraq have failed and it is time

to change course? I think that time is now.

Even the Bush administration's interim assessment of whether the

Iraqis are meeting basic benchmarks shows that they have failed to

achieve any level of political and economic success. Here we are in the

fifth year of the war, longer than World War II, more than half a

trillion dollars and 3,600 American lives lost, and Iraqi politicians

seem further apart than ever. Indeed, the evidence that our soldiers

are involved in an Iraqi civil war is mounting and a solution seems

even further from our grasp.

Young American service personnel cannot solve the problem of Iraq,

because, ultimately, Iraq is not a military problem anymore; it is a

political crisis. And if the Iraqis cannot solve their political

problems, we cannot do it for them. Only Iraqi politicians can bring

about a solution, and our military personnel should not be dying to

hold together the collapsed Iraqi state.

Mr. Speaker, this war has turned into a great strategic fiasco, from

the lack of planning to insufficient number of troops, to incompetent

management of reconstruction projects, to the use of torture in

military prisons. Our blunder in Iraq will affect our ability to

succeed in the Middle East and elsewhere for years to come.

Therefore, I strongly support this bill, which requires that we begin

redeploying American troops home within 120 days of enactment and

ending by April 1, 2008.