Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman Lantos for

the time and Chairman Skelton for bringing this important resolution to

the House floor.

Mr. Speaker, the American people have called for bold action to bring

our troops home, and today we are debating a first step, setting a date

certain to bring them home.

Over the next weeks, we will vote to prohibit permanent bases in

Iraq. We will continue the drumbeat to fund the safe and complete

withdrawal of our troops.

But, Mr. Speaker, despite calls--no, actually pleas--from the

American people, some at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue and many

right here in the House are just fine with staying the course. In fact,

they are once again changing the conversation. They are trying to focus

on gut feelings about an upcoming terrorist attack. But the American

people will not stand for changing the conversation, and they will not

stand for staying the course, nor should we in this Congress.

The costs are just too high: $10 billion a month, and worst of all,

the deadliest 3-month period since the escalation; 3,600 troops dead;

at least 26,000 wounded; and tens of thousands of Iraqi refugees

leaving Iraq every day. This is not only unacceptable; it is immoral.

Today, the Congress must take a bold step to bring our troops home.

We must stand up today with the American people. We must say, enough is

enough. End the occupation, bring our troops home.