Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 2956.

The battle in Iraq has left many of us frustrated, and rightly so.

Progress is not as fast as most of us would like it to be.

Some in this House believe that we have lost the war and should

withdraw immediately. Okay, so what happens then? We leave, then what?

Does al Qaeda leave us alone? Can we disband the Department of Homeland

Security? Can we announce that the threat from radical jihadism has

ended?

These are the questions that aren't being discussed. Why? Because the

answers are difficult. We need a long-term strategy that goes against

the political pandering that is preventing us from achieving long-term

national security.

As cochair of the House Antiterrorism Caucus, I have heard warnings

that a withdrawal will only embolden al Qaeda and other radical Islamic

jihad groups. They will carry out more suicide bombing attacks, behead

more innocent Iraqi people, intimidate and suppress and ultimately

recruit peace-loving Muslims around the world to their cause. And what

happens to those Muslims who resist the radical jihadists? They will be

killed.

This is not just my view. This is what the Islamists have been

saying, and, more importantly, doing for the past few years. Muslims in

the Middle East do not have freedom of religion and expression, as we

do here. And while it is convenient to blame America for the problems

in the Muslim world, we are afraid to place the blame on those who have

caused those problems.

I believe passage of this bill will be a huge mistake in our long-

term national strategy and security interests, and it must be defeated.