Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose this bill because

it is the wrong debate at the wrong place at the wrong time; and most

importantly, it sends the wrong message.

It is the wrong debate because it serves no useful purpose. We know

this bill will never become law. If it passes, it will be vetoed, and

that veto will be sustained. We are wasting the time and trying the

patience of the American people for no useful purpose.

It is the wrong place because it is what happens in Iraq, not here,

that will determine the outcome of the current struggle. Our forces and

those of the Iraqi Government are in a tough fight. We should reinforce

them, not undercut them, and we should encourage the Iraqi Government,

not abandon it.

It is the wrong time because it is too early to debate the outcome of

the current effort in Iraq. I have great respect for the author of this

bill, but it is General Petraeus's report and assessment that should

guide our deliberations in this body. He has asked us to wait until

September before he offers us an assessment of the progress and

prospects of the current effort. Having given him a tough job, we owe

it to him to adhere to the timeline he has requested.

It is the wrong message, most importantly, because it strengthens

rather than weakens our enemies.

They know they cannot defeat our forces, but they can and they do

believe they can outlast this Congress. This debate and this bill will

only strengthen them in that belief.

By strengthening our enemies, we undercut the best efforts of our

forces, the forces of Iraq and the Iraqi Government. The best way to

undo the damage that this bill has already done is to defeat it, and I

urge my colleagues to do so.