Mr. Speaker, I rise against the resolution, and I rise in

support of the Iraq Study Group.

Most Americans favor the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group. In

fact, most Members of this body also favor the Iraq Study Group, but

all would favor its consideration. I have asked the Rules Committee on

three different occasions to make the Iraq Study Group recommendations

in order, and I have been denied.

Let me say that we ought not blindly follow the White House, nor we

ought not blindly follow the Democratic leadership in Congress. The

American people have a very low opinion of this institution, as Mr.

Thornberry just said, because all they see us doing is attacking,

dividing, and using political rhetoric.

The American people want us to come together. A majority of your side

have said they support the Iraq Study Group. A majority of my side have

said they support the Iraq Study Group. Lee Hamilton, Jim Baker, Leon

Panetta, and Ed Meese have done an outstanding job. They have 41

experts of all political views that have come together.

This body ought to be voting and debating the Iraq Study Group and

not a resolution that is preordained that it will be vetoed.

Let's come together. Let's bring it up for a vote, but to blindly

follow the White House or to blindly follow the Democratic leadership

that will not give this up, we will continue to have the lowest opinion

poll this Congress has ever had. The American people deserve better.

The men and women who are serving in Iraq and Afghanistan deserve

better, and their families deserve better.

The 79 recommendations of the Iraq Study Group provide a

comprehensive blueprint for dealing with the war in Iraq. Its

conclusions were the result of consensus, and most people favor

implementing the bipartisan panel's recommendations.

Members of the administration, albeit anonymously, have been quoted

as saying the ISG is the way to go. Members of the military have looked

favorably on the report. And so have both sides of the aisle here in

Congress.

H.R. 2574, which would codify the recommendations of the report, and

whose lead sponsor is a Democrat, has 58 cosponsors. 34 Republicans are

on the bill; and there are 24 Democrats.

Look who served on the panel: Jim Baker, Lee Hamilton, Lawrence

Eagleburger, Vernon Jordan, Ed Meese, Leon Panetta, Sandra Day

O'Connor, Chuck Robb, Alan Simpson and Bill Perry. Secretary Gates

served until being appointed Secretary of Defense.

The panel took nearly 9 months to come up with its 79

recommendations--which were all agreed to unanimously.

The ISG met with military officers, regional experts, academics,

journalists and high-level government officials from America and

abroad.

Congress should have opportunity to debate--and discuss--the merits

of the Iraq Study group's recommendations.

It is not adequate to just blindly follow the whims of the White

House or the Democrat Leadership in Congres. We need to be working

together toward building a consensus on this issue rather trying to

score political points.

The American people expect more. The men and women serving in uniform

deserve more. So do their families.

They want to see us the Congress, the administration and the nation

working together; not fighting each other.

Implementing the 79 recommendations of the Iraq Study Group is the

one thing we can do that could have an impact.

I have tried three times now to get this Congress to adopt the

recommendations of the ISG. Each time my efforts have been rebuffed by

the Rules Committee. If we had acted back in January, we wouldn't be

here today. I realize the war has created a bitter divide in our

country. The ISG allows us to come together.