Mr. Speaker, over the recess I had the opportunity to

have several public hearings back home, and Iraq was one on everyone's

mind. The overwhelming consensus was that we need a new strategy in

Iraq, a view shared by national security experts and illustrated by

continued violence in the region. Today, we can chart a new path so

that we can finally bring our troops home.

Americans know the Bush strategy isn't working, and today's Iraq

status report confirms the lack of progress. The Iraqi Government has

failed to promote political reconciliation, and our military is paying

the price. Our troops have done a superb job, but they were not sent to

Iraq to referee a civil war.

Today's bill requires our military to start redeploying out of Iraq

within 120 days, to be completed by April 1, 2008. We will not abandon

Iraq, but we must implement a new strategy based on political, economic

and diplomatic initiatives.

I want to thank Chairman Skelton for his leadership on this measure,

and I urge all my colleagues to support it.