Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a veteran who served in the

101st and 82nd Airborne Division in support of H.R. 2956, the

Responsible Redeployment From Iraq Act.

This war is a failure, and it's time to bring back our troops. We can

no longer stay the course.

Mr. Speaker, the President's policy has been a complete failure. We

have lost too many lives. There are too many wounded who will never

have normal lives.

We're proud of our troops and the service they have provided to our

country. But our troops are now trapped in the middle of a civil war

that we cannot end.

This is something that the Iraqi people must do for themselves. Our

military presence in Iraq is not making our country safer. Instead, the

war has taken the lives of 3,610 soldiers.

In my district alone, we have lost 13 brave men and women, and when I

see their faces and their families that have to deal with these

individuals that have lost their lives, we're proud of them, but

they've lost their lives, and the families who continue to suffer.

As a veteran, I say that this war was wrong because you could not

convince me why we were there in the first place. The President sent

our troops away without proper training or equipment or proof of

weapons of mass destruction.

The President believes that Iraq is making our country safer. This is

not true. It has put more of us in greater risk. Our military is

stretched too thin. We are at risk of not being prepared for any future

emergency.

The Iraq war has cost billions of dollars, $650 billion, $10 billion

a month. The money could be used to defend homeland security, for

police officers, for highway patrol officers, for fire fighters, for

sheriffs, for education, for health care and our seniors.

A change in course in Iraq is overdue. We must bring our troops home

now. It's time for a new direction. We must support this resolution.