Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2956, the

``Responsible Redeployment from Iraq Act.''

This legislation mandates that we begin withdrawing our troops from

Iraq within 120 days of enactment. This redeployment would have to be

completed by April 2008. This is a commonsense measure to bring an end

to our military involvement in Iraq. Frankly it is mindboggling that

American troops are still fighting there in the first place.

For over 4 years we have worked to establish a secure, safe, and

peaceful democracy in Iraq. Our military has done a valiant job in

doing everything we asked of it. We have lost over 3,600 soldiers and

more than 26,000 have been wounded in this effort. We have spent about

$450 billion. Unfortunately, death and destruction still reign in Iraq.

President George W. Bush's plan is not working and the evidence of

failure is mounting. President Bush announced his troop

``surge'' 6 months ago. During that time about 600 troops have been

killed, 3,000 have been wounded, and $60 billion has been spent. The

recently released White House interim report shows there to have been

unsatisfactory progress by the Iraqi government in meeting many of the

benchmarks laid out by President Bush back in January.

With respect to President Bush's political benchmarks, the Iraqi

government has made unsatisfactory progress on all of them. What this

Iraqi civil war requires is an Iraqi political compromise, but the

available evidence suggests that no one within the government is

willing to make the sacrifices needed to make that happen. Why should

American soldiers continue to sacrifice under such circumstances? Not

one more drop of American blood should be shed in pursuit of President

Bush's failed Iraq policy.

The American people agree. Recent polling shows that over 60 percent

of the American people now believe sending troops to Iraq was a mistake

and 71 percent support withdrawing our forces by April 2008, just as

H.R. 2956 would require.

Despite the views of the American public and the clear evidence on

the ground that our continued military presence in Iraq is not the

solution, President Bush stubbornly refuses to change course and bring

our troops home. Congress has the power and obligation to do what is

right and force a new policy. Passing H.R. 2956 is the first step on

that road, and I encourage all of my colleagues to vote in favor of

this reasoned legislation.