Mr. Speaker just a little over a week ago I

traveled to Fort Bragg in North Carolina to see yet another 100 men and

women of the Virgin Islands National Guard off to Iraq.

Among those who left on Sunday and are now deployed, there are

several who are doing their second tour as well as a father and his

daughter.

It was not easy, but I put my best face forward while there because I

knew that it was much harder--extremely difficult--for their families.

Mr. Speaker, the only reason I could smile and be upbeat in my

message to them is because I knew Democrats would be here today,

passing this measure to set a time limit for our troops to be deployed

in Iraq and to begin their return home.

And so Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this resolution as the first

step to ending U.S. involvement in the civil war that Iraq has become.

And I will be here in full support on the efforts that will follow to

close Guantanamo and to ensure that the White House responds in a

timely and appropriate manner to what they are being directed to do in

H.R. 2956 today.

And I hope we will insist that he does so long before January 2008.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to once again applaud

your leadership and that of Chairman Ike Skelton.

Because of H.R. 2956, ``The Responsible Redeployment from Iraq Act'',

and the measures that will follow, I am confident we will see a day, in

the not too distant future, when no other American or son or daughter

of our allies will die for a war we cannot justify.