Mr. Speaker, I think the moment is here, a moment that

we have been debating over the last 2 1/2 months and an issue that I

think the American people care deeply about.

It is an historic moment, and I thought to myself this morning how

will history judge what it is that we are doing on the floor of the

House today. What will they write 50 years from now about the decisions

that we are making here today?

When I handed Ms. Pelosi, our new Speaker, the gavel back in January,

I said that the battle of ideas should be fought on the floor of the

House, but as we do it, we should respect each other's opinion. We can

disagree without being disagreeable.

I have great respect for Mr. Murtha and Mr. Obey, those that have

brought this bill to the floor today, along with Mr. Young and Mr.

Lewis, and we should respect all of our opinions and each other's

opinions when we get into this difficult decision.

All of us wish that Iraq had gone better. We all wish that the

mistakes had not been made and that the terrorists would not have shown

up and made this a central front in our war with them.

The fact is, we are in Iraq. We are in the midst of a fight with an

enemy that is just not in Iraq, that is all over the world, and we are

there. You begin to think about the bill that we have before us to pay

for the war in Afghanistan, and the war in Iraq. Somehow we have room

for $10 billion worth of nonmilitary spending.

I don't need to go through all the details for the money for spinach,

the money for the Capitol Hill power plant. That is a real emergency,

things that don't belong in this bill.

But I think all of us know what the greater issue is here, and the

bigger issue. That is that the ideas of our friend from Pennsylvania,

to put his benchmarks in there, which are very different than the

benchmarks that I proposed. The benchmarks I proposed were to measure

progress, for trying to help ensure that we win. The benchmarks I see

in this bill are intended to bring about failure, to bring about

stumbles.

If you look at all of the handcuffs, all of the hoops and hurdles

that are in here, I believe there is only one outcome, only one outcome

if we support all this brings and the handcuffs, and that outcome is

failure. I don't believe that failure in Iraq is an option. There is a

lot riding on this.

Just think for a moment what signal, what signal this sends to our

enemies. What does it say to them, we are not willing to stand behind

our troops, that there is a hard deadline out there, that we are going

to withdraw our troops; what signal does it send to them?

Our enemies understand what happened in Vietnam. When this Congress

voted to cut off funding, we left Vietnam. We left chaos and genocide

in the streets of Vietnam because we pulled the troops out and didn't

have the will to win.

Our enemies know what happened in 1983 after the Marine barracks were

bombed in Lebanon, and we pulled out. What did we see? Chaos and

genocide all through Lebanon, and continuing to this day. Then in 1993,

we decided to pull out of Somalia; left chaos and genocide in our wake

that continues to this day.

Who doesn't believe, who doesn't believe that if we go down this

path, we are going to leave chaos and genocide in Iraq, and we are

going to tell our enemies all around the world that you can take on the

United States, you can push them to the edge? At the end of the day,

they will just go home.

The spread of radical Islamic terrorism is a threat to our Nation and

is a threat to the free world, not just in the Middle East. They are in

Asia, they are in Europe, they are in Africa. Cells are growing right

here in America, people dedicated to killing Americans, killing our

allies, and ending freedom and wanting to impose some radical Islamic

law on the entire world.

I ask you, what are we to do, just walk away from the fight? What

message does this action that we take

today, what does it send, what kind of message does it send to our

allies, to people who have worked with us over the course of the last

50 years, 100 years, to bring freedom around the world, to end tyranny

around the world? What message do we send to them, that we are there as

long as it doesn't get too tough?

Think about what Franklin Roosevelt must have felt like in the midst

of World War II when things weren't going so well either in Europe or

over in the South Pacific. I am sure there was a big debate here in

Congress, the same way, same time. But Franklin Roosevelt knew that the

world had no choice but to stop Imperial Japan and to stop Hitler's

Germany, because he knew that the consequences of failure in World War

II were going to lead to more tyranny and less freedom all around the

world. He didn't shrink from that challenge.

But more importantly, think about what this message sends to our

troops. Our troops are on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan doing

their duty to protect freedom and to end tyranny. They are there

watching this debate that we are having in the House today and

wondering, will Congress do its duty? Will Congress stand up and

support the mission that I am in?

Think about the soldiers right this moment who are on a mission

somewhere in Baghdad trying to bring safety and security to those

people while this debate goes on and this vote is about to occur as to

whether we are going to support what they are doing. This is an

important moment.

Our forefathers, our forefathers had this moment many times before.

Whether it was George Washington or Abraham Lincoln in the middle of

the Civil War, when it wasn't going very well, they had a decision to

make. Was failure an option for any of them? No, it wasn't.

I know this is difficult, and I know there are deeply held opinions

on both sides of the aisle and amongst both sides of the aisle, but I

would ask all of my colleagues, is failure an option? Do we want to

give victory a chance?

We sent General Petraeus over there, 84-0, was confirmed by the

Senate. The plan is under way. What this bill will do will be to

undercut his opportunity at success.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am here to say to you that we have no choice

but to win, because if we fail in Iraq, you will see the rise even

further and faster of radical Islamic terrorism all around the world.

We will see chaos in Baghdad. We will see genocide there. We will

provide safe haven for our enemies. We will destabilize the moderate

Arab countries in the Middle East. If anybody doesn't believe that this

won't end Israel as I know it, you are kidding yourself. If you don't

believe that these terrorists won't come here and fight us on the

streets of America instead of the streets of Baghdad, I think you are

kidding yourself.

So we have our moment of truth. We have our opportunity to do what

our forefathers have done, and that is to stand up, support our troops

and to win, because the outcome of failure is actually too ominous to

even think about.

So I ask my colleagues today, let's not vote for spinach, let's not

vote for more money for the power plant and all the other silly things

in here. We all know what this bill is about, and it is about whether

we have got the courage to give victory a chance, or whether we are

just going to bring our troops home and give up.