Mr. Speaker, 9 years ago on this floor,

Congressman Floyd Spence, the Republican Chairman of the Armed Services

Committee, had this to say about the bill withdrawing American forces

from Bosnia: ``The time is long overdue for Congress to express its

will on behalf of the American people.''

I couldn't say it better myself. In this place, the People's House,

the will of the people must mean something. Elections must mean

something. And if the 2006 election represented anything, it was that

the American people were tired of the lack of oversight and

accountability from this Congress, and they were tired of a war with

growing numbers of casualties, and mounting costs with no end in sight.

They asked for a new direction from this Congress, and The U.S. Troop

Readiness, Veterans' Health, and Iraq Accountability Act, is the answer

to their call.

There are many of us who feel uncomfortable giving this President

another dime to spend to perpetuate this misguided and shortsighted

strategy in Iraq. But I come here to support this legislation because

for the first time since the start of this disastrous engagement,

Congress is making sure that any further spending on this war comes

with unprecedented support for our troops and veterans, and a real plan

to redeploy our forces and resources to fights that we can still win.

This Administration has been wrong on just about everything about

Iraq--there were no weapons of mass destruction, we were not welcome as

liberators, the country has plunged into a civil war, and we have no

exit strategy.

The days of issuing a blank check to this Administration with no

questions asked are over. As we enter the fifth year of this war,

people in Connecticut and across the country demand a change in our

policy in Iraq. This bill is the change that they asked for.