Mr. Speaker, today marks an historic vote, one that will go

down in history and signal a turning pointing in the war in Iraq. Much

like the vote authorizing the President to go to war in 2002, this vote

will be a defining moment, and one that will be discussed and debated

for years to come.

While I do not believe this is a perfect bill, I personally would

vote to bring our troops home today if that was an option, in fact this

bill is the best compromise that could be adopted. Finally, there is an

end in sight to this ill-conceived war, and Congress is sending a

message to the Iraqis, that our sons and

daughters will not continue to shed blood to defend their country

indefinitely.

We are sending the Iraqi government a message, that the time to step

up their own efforts to bring peace and stability to their own land is

fast approaching.

Mr. Speaker, this vote is one of conscience and the decision to vote

for or against it is deeply personal. But let us make no mistake, the

consequences of our actions here today will be widely felt and the

impact will be broad and far-ranging. The American people are watching

closely, and the eyes of the world are on us as well.

Today's vote is an example of what makes America great and what makes

our democracy so strong. The fact that we, as elected Members of

Congress, can express the will of the American people and compel the

Administration to alter its misguided policies of war, demonstrates the

essence of American society.

After years of having a free reign, with no accountability,

consultation, or oversight from Congress, the President will now be

compelled to listen to the will of Congress, and therefore the will of

the American people.

Winning the war in Iraq will require a political and diplomatic

offensive, not sending more of our men and women into harm's way to

facilitate a civil war. With a clear conscience, but a heavy heart I

cast my vote for the Iraq supplemental. My only solace is that we

finally can see an end to this ill-fated war.