Thank you, Mr. Hunter, for your

leadership, your military service, and your son's military service.

Mr. Speaker, complete discussion regarding the way forward in Iraq is

certainly appropriate. In fact, it's our duty as elected public

officials. It is sad that the resolution before us offers no solutions.

It is contradictory to say in one paragraph that we support the troops

and in the next paragraph oppose reinforcements for them. As the parent

of a son who served proudly in Iraq and three others in the military, I

want to fully support the troops.

Al Qaeda spokesman Zawahiri has made it clear that Iraq is the

central front in the global war on terrorism. In a January 22, 2007

transcript, Zawahiri boasted, ``The backing of the jihad in Afghanistan

and Iraq today is to back the most important battlefields.'' The enemy

know Iraq is the central front of the global war on terrorism.

We must put our trust in the commanders on the ground who are living

the situations we are merely debating. General David Petraeus in

Baghdad is an accomplished general with a proven record of success. He

has expressed his confidence that victory in Iraq can be achieved--

provided he has the personnel required to do so. General

Petraeus has just been unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate to lead

our troops in Iraq. We need to support him with reinforcements.

In my six visits to Iraq, I have gone to encourage our troops, but

each time it is them who have encouraged me. They know firsthand that

the enemies fighting us today in Iraq want to fight in the streets of

America tomorrow. We must face them today to protect American families.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget

September 11.