Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today, first and foremost, to praise the courage,

performance, and commitment of our troops stationed in Iraq and

elsewhere. We are immensely grateful for their sacrifices.

Because of this war in Iraq, today the lives of the 135,000 military

families are disrupted, and 125,000 civilian contractor families are

divided. Nearly 4,000 U.S. soldiers and civilian contractors have

already given their lives. We have lost over 140 young New York

military men and women in Iraq.

I voted against this war from day one. It was a mistake then, and it

is a mistake today. This week, we have a chance to act. Escalation is

wrong, and we must take it upon ourselves to make things right by

seeking a political solution to this war.

This administration's flawed foreign policy has damaged our

relationship with our allies. The public opposes this war, Iraqis

oppose this war, the world opposes this war, and this Congress should

speak loudly against this war, too.

Our military has been stretched to the brink of breakdown. Our

actions in Iraq have set back the war on terror and made problems in

the Middle East much worse.

This war has distracted us from our responsibilities at home, too.

Poverty is raging. Millions have lost their jobs and health insurance.

Families struggle to pay for the cost of transportation, energy, and

housing. Yet we choose to spend $8 billion of hard-earned money every

month in Iraq, not at home.

While the cost of the war escalates, our most important social

programs for our kids, the elderly, and the poor get slashed to pay for

it. We have dug a deep hole of debt to finance this war in Iraq, and we

will ask the children of working families to pay off that debt.

These priorities are misplaced. We should be investing in our children,

not borrowing against their future.

Our young men and women return from Iraq with all sorts of health

problems, both physical and psychological. The trauma of this war will

affect the lives of our veterans forever. This resolution expresses our

commitment to supporting our veterans' needs. We must honor the

sacrifices that our veterans have made for this Nation. We must provide

for them from the moment they get home to their families.

I believe this war is more wrong today than ever before. We must

stand forcefully for what is right, for our troops, for the victims of

this war, and for the priorities we are neglecting at home.

Let this body send the world a powerful message that the United

States is changing course in Iraq. We must end this war.