Madam Speaker, 3 months ago the American

people sent a resounding message for change. They voted for a new

direction in Congress and new direction for the war in Iraq.

In solemn tribute to the sacrifices of the men and women of the Armed

Forces in Mississippi's Second Congressional District who have served

in Iraq and who have paid the ultimate sacrifice, I would like to

recognize some of Mississippi's Second District heroes:

Staff Sergeant Kenneth Bradley. Hometown: Utica, Mississippi; 39

years old; died May 28, 2003, in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Larry K. Brown. Hometown: Jackson, Mississippi; 22 years old; died

April 5, 2003, in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Rapheal S. Davis. Hometown: Tutwiler, Mississippi; 24 years of age;

died December 2, 2003, in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Captain Kermit O. Evans. Hollandale, Mississippi; 31 years old; died

December 3, 2006, in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Joshua S. Ladd. Port Gibson, Mississippi; 20 years old; died May 1,

2004, in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Master Sergeant Brian McAnulty. Hometown: Vicksburg, Mississippi; 39

years of age; died December 11, 2006, in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Staff Sergeant John McGee. Cary, Mississippi; age 36 years; died May

2, 2005, in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Staff Sergeant Joe Wilson. Crystal Springs, Mississippi; 30 years of

age; November 2, 2003, in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Madam Speaker, the Department of Defense reports that as of February

15, 2007, 3,126 U.S. military servicemembers have died as a result of

their service in Iraq. More than 25,000 have been wounded.

This bipartisan resolution before us today asks Members a

straightforward question: Do you approve of the President's announced

proposal on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional

United States combat troops to Iraq?

There is no question that the way forward in Iraq is one of our

greatest challenges. The open debate offered here today allows us all

an opportunity to express our sentiments on the administration's

proposal. The sacrifices, dedication, and patriotism of our elite

military and their families deserve no less.

I oppose the President's proposal. Until the President is willing to

sit down with Congress and provide accurate data on what is really

going on in this war, I cannot in good conscience support putting more

men in harm's way.

This administration used bad intelligence to justify the rationale

for war, and I fear that they are using bad judgment here today in

their call for sending 25,000 more troops into harm's way.

The administration keeps calling this proposal a troop surge. Let us

call it what it is. The proposal is a troop increase. Rather than a

troop surge, what we need from this administration is a truth surge.

The incompetence and misinformation that has gotten us into this mess

is not the competence it will take to get us out.

The President and this administration must remain faithful and

truthful to Congress and the American people by openly discussing

appropriate measures to resolve the situation in Iraq that is worsening

daily. The President must allow Congress to do what it was formed to do

under the Constitution. His decision to continue in this direction is

not democratic and, therefore, does not demonstrate the best example of

what we are fighting for in Iraq. We must not allow the President to

escalate the Iraq War without specific congressional approval.

Madam Speaker, we must send the President a message he cannot ignore.

We must pass the Skelton-Lantos-Jones resolution.