Madam Speaker, as we come to the end of this debate, I

want to commend every participant on both sides for conveying

powerfully and eloquently their deeply held views.

I started this debate in the firm belief that escalation is a flawed

idea. After listening carefully for the past 4 days to all of my

colleagues, I am more convinced than ever that escalation is a flawed

idea.

Escalation is not only the wrong policy for the United States, it is

also the

wrong policy for Iraq. If Iraq is to succeed as a stable and prosperous

state, it must learn to take responsibility. It must learn to make

difficult decisions. It must amend its constitution in the interests of

Iraqi reconciliation. It must devise an equitable law for sharing its

oil and gas revenues. And it must take primary responsibility for its

own security.

Unless we de-escalate, Iraq will never step up to the plate. But that

is not the only reason we must de-escalate. Unless we do so, our great

Nation will be unable to fulfill its many far-flung global

responsibilities. Unless we de-escalate, we will simply lack the

resources for critical tasks here at home and overseas.

All of us, Madam Speaker, are passionately committed to supporting

and defending our troops. In the coming weeks, my fellow Democrats and

I will bring forth specific proposals to enhance this Nation's support

and defense of our brave troops.

Madam Speaker, the American people are not well-served by the surge

and our present course in Iraq. This omelet cannot be unscrambled.

There have been far too many mistakes made to undo the damage.

For the sake of Iraq, for the sake of our own national interests and

for the sake of our incomparable troops, de-escalation must begin, and

it must begin now.

I strongly support the resolution and urge all of my colleagues to do

so.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.