Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to House

Concurrent Resolution 63, the non-binding Iraq War Policy resolution.

We are being asked today to vote on a non-binding resolution that

stands as nothing more than a political statement on an issue that

greatly transcends the politics of the Nation's capital. The importance

of ensuring our troops have the supplies and equipment they require for

battle is clear. Unfortunately, we haven't been able to use valuable

time during this legislative week to address true tangible needs that

exist for those with enough courage to stand up for the freedoms our

country affords.

The importance of a stable and secure Iraq should not be

underestimated, given the responsibility to assist the Iraqi people to

further their personal freedoms. Sadaam Hussein's brutal dictatorship

is one that cannot be soon forgotten. Those who share his world view of

oppressing fundamental human rights must know that we Americans will

continue to support policies that will protect all citizens from these

radical and militant Islamic terrorist cells. This battle is only one

front on the larger war on terror, and today's non-binding resolution

does nothing to achieve more stability in the international community.

To me, supporting this resolution only serves the purely political

purpose of second-guessing a decision already made to move forward by

the Commander in Chief. Those voting in favor of this resolution appear

only to have a hunger to score meaningless political points, while

lacking an appetite for pursuing the larger goals of keeping our brave

soldiers equipped as they strive to ensure the safety of our country

and citizens abroad.

I would like to make clear that I have grave reservations regarding

the current situation in Iraq. For too long, circumstances have limited

our ability to reduce the sectarian violence plaguing this region,

especially in Baghdad. It is critical that we see a greater commitment

from the Iraqi government and the citizens of Iraq to help quell the

insurgency. I question whether or not this increased level of force

will accomplish the desired goal but I also respect the need to explore

all options to stabilize the situation in this troubled country. My

hope is that General Petraeus, given his extensive direct experience in

training our troops on the ground, will have a strong sense of what can

be achieved on the ground given the challenges of the future.

My vote today is not an open-ended endorsement of the policy in Iraq.

Rather, I will continue to monitor closely the situation and encourage

continued Congressional oversight of the war. Today's debate displays

the different views that we hold on this matter, but we should be

unified in our support of those

who are moving forward to complete the mission at hand. Recognizing

that continued difficulties lie ahead, we should again not be voting on

a resolution that will achieve a political end, rather we should be

looking for ways to help those soldiers who continue to carry out this

mission or have returned from battle.

Our vote today is one that will be remembered as either for or

against a decision already made by the Commander in Chief. In the short

term, though, we should remember this nonbinding resolution serves no

practical purpose in our larger fight against the war on terror.