Madam Speaker, five and a half years ago, our Nation

was attacked by terrorists opposed to freedom and individual liberty.

Our President vowed to keep Americans safe by taking the fight to the

terrorists, and holding the regimes that support them accountable. We

are currently engaged in that fight. Like any war this size, mistakes

have been made, but we must continue to progress.

The consequences of failure in Iraq would be dire. Allowing al-Qaeda

the opportunity to gain a safe hold would be dangerous to Americans.

Leaving before the Iraqi government can defend itself would only lead

to further destabilization, and open the door to outside influence from

countries such as Iran, which has called for the downfall of our

society and for the destruction of Israel, our ally in the Middle East.

With violence headlining the nation's nightly news, at times we

forget that successes have been achieved. Through successful elections

which achieved a 70 percent turnout, we know that the citizens of Iraq

have rejected the brutal rule of Saddam Hussein, and strive for peace

and prosperity. But violence supported by al-Qaeda, the remnants of

Saddam Hussein's government, and armed militias, have created difficult

conditions for diplomacy.

Our President, working with a wide range of involved professionals,

has created a new strategy to ensure progress in Iraq. James Baker and

Lee Hamilton, the leaders of the Iraq Study Group, have called for

support of the President's plan. General Petraeus supports the

President's plan. But Democrat leaders are bringing a non-binding

resolution to the floor, denouncing the President's objectives.

This resolution, without any power of law or policy objective, is

merely political gamesmanship, and it is dangerous to Americans and our

troops in harm's way. We are in the midst of an ongoing military

operation; our soldiers are engaging al-Qaeda and violent insurgents.

We have set objectives, but Democrat leaders want us to vote on a

resolution that sets us up for failure and attempts to retroactively

impede a military operation that is currently underway. General

Petraeus has stated this will only embolden the enemy, and I agree.

Many Democrats have stated this is only the first step toward cutting

the funding for our troops in Iraq, and forcing a withdrawal before

stability has been achieved. But the majority offers no plan to achieve

stability. Without any other alternative, withdrawal can only lead to

defeat.

Our troops should have every confidence their government will ensure

they have the necessary supplies and funding to achieve their mission.

Military leaders should be able to move forward with their directives

without fear that Congress is working to tie their hands. Yet this

objective has been the stated one of the majority: to precipitate a

withdrawal by slowly cutting off funding to our soldiers. I believe

this is the wrong approach to supporting our troops currently involved

in the military operation.

This resolution does nothing to win the war, and by not allowing

amendments or other measures to be considered, true debate is being

restricted. It is my hope, for the safety of our troops and for the

good of the Nation, that all members of the House may reject this

political maneuver and truly stand behind those men and women called to

duty by our Commander in Chief.