I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in total opposition to the

President's plan, a plan that escalates the number of our young men and

women, American troops, being sent to Iraq. But what are we talking

about? What are the words in this resolution? It says, Resolved by the

House of Representatives that, one, Congress and the American people

will continue to support and protect the members of the United States

Armed Forces who are serving or who have served bravely and honorably

in Iraq; and, secondly, Congress disapproves of the decision of

President George W. Bush announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more

than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq. That is

what we speak to.

I did not vote for the war resolution, and I do not believe that

sending more young Americans to Iraq and putting their lives at risk

will change the situation. Since the beginning of the Iraq conflict,

our valiant men and women in uniform have not received the adequate

training nor the proper life-protection equipment required to ensure

their safety. I visited one of the armories where 2 years after the

Iraq war had started. They were still making the doors for the Humvees

to protect them from those bombs that were killing and maiming our men

and women.

The President's proposal to put more troops in harm's way, into the

middle of a civil war, whether you like it or not, it may be local, but

it is a civil war, where neither side backs our continued occupation,

further endangers our troops.

My constituents are not in favor of the escalation by a margin of 50

to 1. We have had phone calls, e-mails, messages. They want our young

men and women back. They do not want to escalate it any more. Families

have suffered enough already. There is no justification for causing

more pain and adding to the suffering of the mothers and of the fathers

and of the husbands and the wives and the sons and the daughters and

other loved ones. We speak of the soldiers who have lost their lives in

Iraq in this war. We speak not of the thousands of injured and the

suffering they and their families are being put through. The

consequences of the war in Iraq extend far beyond the awful tally of

the 3,100 killed and the 23,000 wounded.

The Nation's economic consequences of the escalation are profound.

Point one: every portion of our budget has been cut and continues to be

cut except for defense spending. The worst budget cuts are taking

funding away from our veterans, the very men and women who put their

lives on the line in Iraq and in other wars. We regularly receive

letters and phone calls, e-mails, from constituents who ask me to fund

vital, successful, necessary programs for their communities; but we

cannot support our communities with the funds they truly need as they

are instead being diverted to a war we did not seek. Vital social

services, critical to the well-being of the people of my district and

certainly of all other districts, are again being cut.

Other consequences of the war are the social consequences. These

soldiers fortunate enough to return home alive and in good physical

health suffer long-term mental health problems, Mr. Speaker, as a

direct consequence of their deployment, not one, not two, but possibly

three and more deployments in Iraq.

Yet our services to them and their families not only are sadly

lacking and underfunded; they are being cut. We have not enough money

to be able to deal with the devastation in the minds of not only these

men and women but their families to be able to deal with the

consequences when they return home and try to regain a normal life.

Families are being torn apart more so by this war than any other war.

There are suicides. There is divorce. There is homelessness now. Their

children are forced to grow up without their father or their mother.

Parents are losing children. No mother should have to bury a son or a

daughter.

I urge the President to work with Iraq's neighbors and the

international community to ensure other countries' commitments to

Iraq's security situation, the training of Iraqi troops and police,

and, of course, financial support. Escalation is certainly not the

answer and I cannot and will not support such a policy.

I certainly want to say thank you to our brave men and women in

uniform for your bravery and your service. Our prayers are with you and

your families