Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution

on behalf of the 32,000 men and women from my State of New Jersey, and

all the other servicemen and women that have been deployed since 9/11.

I am so proud of their sacrifice and service to our Nation, and I will

continue and always support them. After all, I am standing in front of

you as a product of the sacrifices our soldiers have made in the name

of liberty and freedom throughout the history of this country.

I also rise on behalf of my constituents, the people of New Jersey,

and the people of this Nation whose tax dollars are paying for this war

in Iraq. Since the beginning of the war, $379 billion has been

appropriated. Another $235 billion is slated for the upcoming

supplemental appropriations. We are currently spending $8 billion a

month in Iraq, and the American people are footing the bill.

All this money could have been used to declare war on some of our

domestic problems here at home such as poverty, improving our schools,

ensuring access to health care and investing in affordable housing.

This money could have been used to invest in our children, our family,

our veterans, and especially our elderly. But it wasn't.

Instead, American taxpayers have also committed more than $38 billion

to Iraq reconstruction. About 33 percent of this money is targeted for

infrastructure projects like roads, sanitation, water, electric power

and oil production. However, I am concerned that only 25 percent of the

Iraqi population has access to drinkable water.

I am concerned that of the 136 sanitation and water projects, only 49

are said to be completed. I am concerned that the residents of Baghdad

only have 4 1/2 hours of electricity per day. And I am concerned that

the current oil production in Iraq is half of what it was prior to the

war.

Since the reconstruction project started, the Coalition Provisional

Authority can't account for almost $9 billion of the taxpayers' money.

Every year, $4 billion has been lost because of lack of oversight.

There have also been many problems with poor project and quality

management. For example, the Baghdad Police College cost $75 million,

and it was built without the proper plumbing for waste water. It has

become a health and a structural hazard. The Basrah Children's Hospital

is running $48 million over budget and is a year behind schedule. And

after spending $186 million, Parsons has only 6 of the 150 planned

health care centers completed and only 14 more will be finished. The

list goes on and on.

Madam Speaker, the Iraqi Government says $100 billion is needed over

the next 4 years to rebuild the country's infrastructure. Madam

Speaker, the Iraqi Government seems to think they have open access to

U.S. dollars. The Iraqi Government and the Iraqi people must take

responsibility and help rebuild their country. Our support is not open-

ended, and neither are our tax dollars.

Madam Speaker, I support this resolution and this debate because our

troops and our constituents can no longer afford to have this Congress

support the administration's failed Iraqi policies. They failed to give

us the necessary oversight for Iraq reconstruction efforts, they failed

to listen to the advice of the military commanders, they failed to

listen to the American people, and, as a result, they failed to provide

a plan to success in Iraq.