I thank the gentleman for the time, and I rise today in

strong opposition to this resolution which says Congress disapproves of

a war plan.

There are a lot of reasons to disapprove of this resolution, one of

which is I believe that war should not be waged from the floor of this

House. That is why we have one Commander

in Chief, that is why we have military leaders on the ground. They are

in charge of conducting the war. And they have said we have made a

mistake and we need a new direction, we need a new plan. And they have

proposed that plan, and it is broad and it is comprehensive. It

involves political considerations, it involves economic situations,

diplomatic considerations, and, yes, it entails additional troops to go

to Iraq. Yes, additional troops.

But it is a plan. And you can be skeptical and you can say it may be

too little, it may be too late. Maybe it is a good plan but it won't be

executed properly. But it is going to give us hope and it is going to

give the Iraqi people hope. And, if anything, we ought to be here today

trying to make that plan better, not debating a resolution that is

nonbinding, that is symbolic, that means nothing, that says nothing,

that does nothing. In fact, it has no useful purpose whatsoever, unless

maybe it is to undermine the President or perhaps to demoralize our

troops by saying to them, ``We have a new mission for you to undertake.

Go to Iraq and try to execute this mission. But, by the way, the United

States Congress doesn't believe in the mission, and we think it is

doomed to failure.'' You tell me that that is not going to have a

negative impact on our American soldiers.

Now, I know there are people in this Chamber that think the plan is

doomed from the very beginning. You don't think it will work. And if

that is your belief, you ought to do more than introduce a symbolic

resolution and then stand here and pound the podium and hem and haw and

make speeches and leap in front of the television cameras. You ought to

do something that really means something. You ought to propose a

resolution that says we believe it was doomed from the very beginning

and we are going to do everything we possibly can to stop this plan.

That is what you should do.

And if you don't think the plan is going to work, if you think it is

doomed to failure, and you don't have a viable alternative strategy and

you don't want to find a viable alternative strategy for winning, then

you ought to go even further and you ought to stand up and say, ``We

admit defeat. It didn't work. We are not going to fund the war

altogether anymore. We are going to withdraw.''

I will tell you one thing, the plan is there. It may not be perfect

and, quite frankly, it may not work. I have got reservations myself.

But it is there, and every American, Democrats and Republicans alike,

ought to hope that this plan succeeds because it may very well be our

last best chance to prevent a catastrophic failure in Iraq. And if that

happens, the disastrous effect won't just be felt in Iraq, won't just

be felt by the people of the Middle East, but quite possibly will be

felt by all Americans alike.