Madam Speaker, I hope we all can recognize the profound

importance of our mission in Iraq. History surely will. The mission in

Iraq will impact our national security for decades to come.

The United States seeks a region of stability and peace to create a

more secure world for our children and grandchildren. Al Qaeda seeks a

region of terror and bloodshed.

The President believes victory in Iraq is key to victory on the war

on terror. Al Qaeda believes our defeat in Iraq is key to its vision of

violent Islamic rule. Our security is clearly at risk.

Americans are frustrated by the current situation in Iraq. We have

witnessed the removal of a historic dictator, yet our men and women in

uniform remain at risk. We have witnessed historic democratic

elections, yet those elected have not yet brought security. We have

been told about the progress we have experienced in training Iraqi

security forces, yet violence continues to rage.

With growing uneasiness, we have watched a back and forth tug of war

between progress and setback, and we mourn the loss of every single

brave American who has fallen during this mission.

Madam Speaker, I share this frustration and sorrow. Yet I believe we

must not allow our frustrations to blind us to the need for victory

over radical jihadists. This House must work together in addressing the

challenges in Iraq, because the outcome will be closely linked to our

own national security for years to come.

Regrettably, the resolution before us does nothing to enhance this

security. It does not offer a solution to the challenges in Iraq. It

does not recognize the magnitude of the failure. And it does not

recognize the nature of our enemies. For these reasons I strongly

oppose it.

Madam Speaker, we know terrorists friendly to bin Laden are among the

enemy in Iraq. Even before the fall of Saddam's regime, the terrorist

mastermind Zarqawi had sought refuge in Iraq. His network of terror

grew rapidly. Bin Laden's top deputy applauded his actions and

counseled him on achieving dominance in the region. Although Zarqawi

himself can no longer do harm, al Qaeda in Iraq remains a threat to our

security.

An American defeat in Iraq would embolden the terrorists like no

event before, bolstering bin Laden's view that America is weak. Al

Qaeda would enjoy more than just a morale boost; they would have a new

operational base to plot attacks against Americans and train new

recruits. An American defeat in Iraq would almost certainly bring forth

a government that turns a blind eye towards terrorism. This, Madam

Speaker, would be catastrophic to our national security.

An American defeat in Iraq would also generate unspeakable chaos in

the Middle East. The dangerous regime in Iran is already seeking to

capitalize on what it perceives as our weakness. Iran is well on its

way to developing nuclear weapons, and its fanatical president has

publicly said that he wishes to destroy America and Israel. Syria would

also take advantage of a power vacuum in Iraq, further destabilizing

the Middle East. What is good for hostile regimes like Iran and Syria

can be devastating for America's security.

In closing, Iraq is a central front in the war on terrorism, and its

future will greatly influence our future security. An American victory

would foster stability in a volatile region and provide a resounding

defeat for terror.

For these reasons, we must give the President's new plan in Iraq a

chance to succeed. Our resolve must override our frustrations. Our

support for the remarkable members of our Armed Forces must be

unwavering. And our determination in fighting radical jihadists who

want to kill us and our families must never run dry. Madam Speaker,

that determination must never run dry