Madam Speaker, watching television late last

night I was reminded of the vivid contrast between Congress and the war

on terror. On the one channel I watched Members of the House

theatrically debating this nonbinding, that means pretend, resolution,

while the other channel showed an American chopper hit by a rocket-

propelled grenade and billowing black smoke, falling in the death

spiral to the ground, killing all American soldiers aboard.

Tonight our soldiers face real bullets and real explosive devices; we

debate a pretend resolution. I wish I could say this is merely a waste

of time, but it is far more damaging than that. As Lincoln warned, a

house divided itself cannot stand. Yet today our Congress stands

divided for all the world to see. Our enemies are smiling and our

soldiers are sick at heart.

Don't take my word for it. Let me read you an e-mail I received this

week from a decorated Army soldier who served in the gulf war and again

in Iraq on this war on terror.

He writes: ``The troops support the mission, support the President,

and support the surge. We are moving the brigade out of here soon. I

cannot be more adamant about the fact that partisan politics is hurting

the mission and the morale. We want to win the war not the White

House.''

I fear that some see that in the other order. The troops want to

complete this mission. Congress wanted a change in the strategy, they

got a change, now they don't want to support the change. That is

exactly why Vietnam vets complained about politicians not allowing them

to win. And this is not Vietnam all over again, but the politicians are

making the same mistakes they did back then.

Let the generals run the war; you guys handle immigration. Well,

listening to this debate, perhaps we should just turn the running of

the war over to Congress. Unbeknownst to America, apparently the most

brilliant, articulate military strategists have to be here in Congress.

But a word of caution to my fellow MacArthurs and Pattons. It is easy

to run a war when you are 6,000 miles from Baghdad and hold a

microphone for a gun.

There can be only one Commander in Chief. The moment Congress begins

interfering in battlefield decisions is the moment we are assured of

losing this war and that moment is dangerously near.

I support this surge. If our military leaders and the Commander in

Chief need these extra soldiers, I am behind them 110 percent. Am I

certain the surge will work? No. But I am certain the consequences of

failing in Iraq will ultimately cost us many more innocent lives and a

much darker future, not just for Iraq but for my family and yours.

In Iraq and Afghanistan we are in a battle of wills. Should America

retreat, should we withdraw prematurely, we will not only cement our

reputation as a Nation that talks big and acts boldly, but at the first

sign of difficulty shows no will, no backbone, no strength to keep our

word.

The world saw our lack of will in Vietnam, they watched us run from

Somalia, and today they see our backbone disintegrate over Iraq. They

watched us for a quarter of a century, we wished away the terrorist

attacks in Khobar, the USS Cole, and the first World Trade Center

bombing.

Finally it hit home and already some in Congress are flying the white

flag. Think. Nations like Iraq and Afghanistan who oppose terrorism are

faced with a choice. They can live with terrorists among them or live

in a free society with the protection and the backing of the world's

greatest democracy. That is us. With their lives and the future on the

line who will they choose? Is it not sad that today the world has just

about decided that America will not keep its word, America cannot be

counted on?

Terrorists know that while they can never hope to defeat our military

on the battleground, they are assured if they just hold out, they can

defeat us in Congress one opinion poll at a time. This is a test of

wills, and whether we got here for the reason you agree with or not, it

is a test. I believe we are here for the right reasons, and it is

incredibly naive to believe that all of the terrorist organizations in

the world were conveniently gathered in Afghanistan, like a Rotary

Club.

We are wrong to pursue terrorist safe havens other than those that

harbored al Qaeda on the some wobbly theory we should not pursue drug

cartels other than the ones we believe smuggled in the drug that

destroyed your child.

Due to technology and financing, terrorists are not limited to states

and regions, and we have to pursue them. But whether or not you agree

with how we got here, we are there in Iraq. And the nation of Iraq and

our Nation have everything riding on the line. Eliminating Iraq as a

safe haven for financing, training terrorist groups in the Middle East

is a mission we must complete for our sake.

Thomas Edison once observed many of life's failures are people who

did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up. If we

fail in Iraq, we sentence our children to a lifetime of fear, of fear

of going to the mall safely, going to work each morning and returning

home safely, the fear of going with friends to a sports stadium without

being torn apart in an explosion.

If we believe the price of war is high, wait until we endure the

price of terror here in America. Our soldiers are giving their blood,

what are we giving them? A resolution.