Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of

this important resolution and with great hope that this debate and vote

will signal an important step towards the end of the Iraq war, a war so

ill-conceived, so ill-planned for, and so ill-executed that it has cost

our Nation almost $400 billion, ignited a civil war, and further

destabilized an already fragile Mideast region. Most importantly, this

war has

resulted in the deaths of over 3,000 of our bravest military men and

women. These men and women enlist in the Armed Forces trusting that

their Commander in Chief will send them into harm's way only as a last

resort and only with a clear plan for victory.

Madam Speaker, on both of these counts, the President has failed our

soldiers.

It is time for us to redeploy our troops and redeploy them now. We

have an opportunity to send a loud and resolute message to the

President that his misguided judgment must cease, this war must now be

subject to intense scrutiny and accountability by this Congress; and

that he must heed the will of the American people, the overwhelming

majority of whom now strongly disapprove of his handling of this war.

Sadly, however, this President is tone-deaf when it comes to the most

pressing issue of the day.

For the past 4 years, the President repeatedly stated that troop

strength in Iraq would come from recommendations by generals on the

ground. Yet by moving forward with his escalation plan, the President

is ignoring solid military advice. General Abizaid, CENTCOM commander,

stated: ``I do not believe that more American troops right now is the

solution to the problem. I believe that the troop levels need to stay

where they are.'' Additionally, according to various reports, General

Casey repeated to the NSA Director his warnings that to send more

troops to Iraq would be counterproductive. He believed it might make

the Iraqi Government less likely to defend itself.

That concern was shared by the Iraq Study Group. In one of their

recommendations they stated that the Iraqi Government must make

substantial progress on national reconciliation, security, and

governance. Without progress, we should reduce our political, military,

and economic support for the Iraqi Government.

Tragically, the Iraqi Government has shown no progress on any of

these fronts. We must not be a security blanket for an ineffectual

government. But the President's escalation plan is exactly that, asking

little of Iraq's Government while putting the lives of our soldiers

squarely in the crosshairs of Sunni extremists and Shiite militias.

Many in the military leadership have stated that the solution to the

Iraqi quagmire at this point must be 80 percent political and 20

percent military. This escalation plan is 100 percent military with no

significant political breakthroughs either having been reached or even

on the horizon. Rather than implement a rigorous diplomatic strategy,

the administration has instead begun escalating the rhetoric with Iran,

causing many people throughout the Nation and the world to fear another

misguided military action.

Our soldiers have done everything that has been asked of them, and

more. They have served bravely and honorably. They have trained Iraqi

forces to the best of their abilities. But they cannot be asked to calm

the sectarian violence ripping Iraq apart without leadership from Iraqi

politicians. Yet the President is asking exactly that.

Last year, after visiting Iraq, I called for a phased redeployment by

the end of 2006. That time has come and gone. Today I call on the

President to finally listen to the American people. Today I call on the

President to finally listen to the Congress. It is time to move our

troops out of the middle of this civil war.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and send a clear

message to the President that the time for this war is over