Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to this resolution

this evening.

The resolution we are debating this evening is a nonbinding

resolution. It has no effect of law. It does nothing to change our

direction in the war on terror. For those who oppose the war, this

resolution does nothing to end it. For those of us who would like to

debate the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group, this does nothing.

For those of us who would like to continue to show our support for

the funding of the troops, it does nothing. For all of the chest

pounding from the majority about a new direction or redeployment, this

does nothing. This resolution could pass 435-0 and it still would do

nothing.

Madam Speaker, there has been no opportunity for a free exchange of

proposals this evening that could be useful in moving us forward. In

fact, just this morning, one of Ohio's largest newspapers, the Columbus

Dispatch, said it best in their lead editorial: ``Empty gestures.

Democrat's resolution on Bush's Iraq war policy is political

posturing.''

That says it all. Madam Speaker, your party has the majority in the

House and in the Senate. Yet we have tonight before us a resolution

that does not do anything. If the majority wants to exercise real

leadership, let's have a true debate. Let's make real decisions, tough

decisions, that is for sure, but real decisions.

Madam Speaker, let me tell you about a young marine corporal in my

district. His name is Matt. Matt represents the best and brightest in

America. Matt had a scholarship to go to college. He turned it down. He

enlisted in the United States Marine Corps after Iraq was liberated.

Matt was on his second tour of duty just last month when he was shot.

He returned home a few weeks ago. Matt will receive a Purple Heart.

Weeks before he was shot, Matt sent an e-mail back to his family and

friends in Ohio. In it he says: ``We have done a lot of good in Iraq,

but on the homefront we likely will not see that reported.'' Matt said

he has watched his fellow marines' hearts grow heavy when they talk to

their family and friends, and that this is a tough part of war and a

tough part of fighting for freedom.

I spoke with Matt a few days ago as we began debate on this

resolution. Matt asked me to oppose the resolution and give him and his

fellow soldiers the tools and the support that they need to help Iraqis

help themselves take control of their own country, and together fight

and defeat radical extremists.

Matt supports the mission. Matt does not want to see his children and

grandchildren going back to Iraq to handle what can and should be done

now. Our constituents elected us to lead, Madam Speaker. Our brave

servicemen and -women look to us for leadership. We must not disappoint

them.

Matt, God bless you and your fellow troops for your great and

wonderful service to our country. I will vote against this resolution,

this nonbinding resolution tomorrow, and will do all I can to support

you and your fellow soldiers in your mission to fight and defeat

radical extremists who seek to destroy our way of life.