Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for

yielding. I often get confused with my good friend from Pennsylvania.

Let's just touch for one minute, before I address the resolution on

the question that our friends from the other aisle brought to us today

and that Mr. Ryan was so good enough to talk about as well, that is

this notion that in order to support the troops, you have to support

the commander of the troops.

Well, having spent the last 2 years walking around talking to every

sector of the constituents of the Fifth District of Connecticut, having

a sense of where the American people came down in November on this

question, the American people seem to agree with folks on this side of

the aisle, which says this: There is a difference between supporting

the troops and supporting the commander.

It is not an issue of patriotism necessarily, it is an issue of

differentiating between the brave men and women who are over there

fighting and dying for this country, and the man who sends them into

battle. You can disagree with him and you can support the troops. You

can do that out in the public as a matter of your private advocacy, and

you can do that here on this floor.

That is where the American public came down on election day. They

said loud and clear that day, ``We support the troops.'' They go every

day to celebrations of those troops when they leave and when they come

home. They go to much more somber ceremonies when they don't return

home. And then on election day they come out and they say this: ``I

support those troops. I don't support the man who put them into harm's

way in the manner that he did that.''

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Speaker Pelosi and Leader Hoyer

for allowing us to be here this morning. It is late at night, and I

will be brief in my remarks on the resolution before us.

Amidst the embarrassing overabundance of thorny foreign policy

questions before this House currently, the question before this Chamber

tonight is a fairly simple one: Do we agree with the Nation's military

establishment, with the country's foreign policy community, with

popular opinion, and reject this President's very wrongheaded plan to

send 21,000 more troops into Iraq? Or do we remain silent in homage to

Congress' past and allow this potentially disastrous escalation to move

forward?

I think the question answers itself. And I am proud today to stand

here in support of this resolution, and register my strong support of

our troops and my strong opposition to escalating this war.

As we finish the debate tonight, I have been joined in these final

remarks by some of the younger colleagues in the House of

Representatives. And I think our unity is significant. I should remind

other Members of this House that we are discussing the fates of many

young men and women, my classmates, my friends, that are this hour

fighting and dying in a country halfway around the world.

As younger Members we also serve as reminders that our duty here is

not just to set policies to secure the safety of our country in terms

of months or years but also in terms of decades.

Mr. Speaker, I have never fought in a war. I haven't shot another man

on the battlefield nor have I been wounded myself. But I have been

allowed the privilege to represent my constituents in this body because

of the selfless bravery of those men and women around this country that

made a different choice than I did, those that volunteered to go

overseas and fight and defend this country. It is my duty to stand here

today and thank them for their service, thank their families for their

service, but also to be their advocate here tonight. Because the

President is asking a cadre of our bravest young men and women to go

house to house in Baghdad to root out an insurgency while he does

virtually nothing to address the systematic causes of that insurgency.

One hundred thousand troops may not be able to do the job that the

President is asking 21,000 to do. Escalating the number of troops in

Baghdad hasn't worked in the past and it most likely won't work here.

Through his actions, the President is putting our soldiers' lives at

unnecessary and unconscionable risk. There is a resolution in Iraq but

it's a political solution. It's not a military resolution. And we owe

it to our soldiers who have done everything that we have asked them to

do to stand up to a President who would ask them to do a job that

they cannot and should not do. And beyond our duty to our current

generation of troops on the ground, our responsibility, quite frankly,

also lies with the generations to come. I decided to seek a seat in

this House at a relatively young age because I was fearful that the

decisions that were being made here today would have dramatic

consequences for the world that my future children and grandchildren

will grow up in. And I came here to begin a conversation that

acknowledges that what will make this Nation safe for generations is

not a Nation built on bullying, not a strategy based on scattershot

military intervention but a comprehensive foreign policy that combines

American might with American diplomacy. In order to secure this Nation

for the next generation, we need to acknowledge that the most important

question we must ask is not who do we attack next, but instead how do

we reset our place in this world in a way that would prevent the forces

who would do America harm from becoming stronger?

Mr. Speaker, we need to come to grips with the fact that we live in a

world in which our own supposed allies create societies that foster

extremism and violence amongst their most marginalized members. At the

same time our Nation often strangely views cultural and political

global detachment as a virtue rather than a weakness. This combination

causes those that speak different tongues and those that worship

different gods to look upon our great Nation with undeserved derision.

This must change.

For my mind, we do that in three parts. First, we must pass this

resolution in order to pivot to a much broader conversation. And in

that conversation in the coming days and months, we must redeploy our

troops both to home and to fights that are central to the war on

terror, such as in Afghanistan. The gentlemen from the other side of

the aisle are right. This battle with terrorists who may do harm to

this country does not end no matter what happens on the ground in Iraq.

But we must focus on our energies there. Lastly, we need to begin,

going forward from today, to renew that multilateral spirit that once

made this country great by proving ourselves in the future to be both a

strong America and a humble America.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here today in support of this resolution.