Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to H. Con. Res 63. Our

troops have made tremendous sacrifices in waging war against Islamic

extremists who not only want to deny freedom to their fellow countrymen

but remain committed to attacking America and our way of life.

We have lost some of the bravest, most dedicated and committed

Americans we have been honored to know, love, and mourn. They deserve

the highest honor and respect from this Congress and the American

people for their service. Those brave men and women still in harm's way

have earned the right to come home as quickly as possible.

This does not mean, however, that we should abandon this mission and

leave Iraq to certain failure by prematurely pulling out our troops,

nor should we cut military funding or adopt nonbinding resolutions that

embolden our enemies and undermine our troop morale.

Now, that last statement has been accused by many speakers on the

Democrat side as being a red herring to chase the American public away

from the attention of this addition of 20,000 troops. But I read their

authored resolution. And the words are that you support and protect

members of the Armed Services who are serving, are serving or have

served, which means that they will not support our troops, any

uniformed member that is newly sent to Iraq, whether it is for training

the Iraqi troops, whether to be embedded and help them, or any

capacity. So the next logical step from their own wording of this

resolution is to cut funding. That is the only way to stop supporting

any new military member that goes to Iraq.

So we have to ask, how will they do that? Now, I believe the Iraqi

Government needs our assistance to restore security and prevent a

descent into anarchy and civil war, or, worse yet, a heightened foreign

insurgency that results in terrorist control of that nation.

The situation in the Middle East is a powder keg that will explode if

the United States abandons it. The resolution under debate today offers

no military or diplomatic solutions apart from expressing disapproval

over the plan to increase troops that will help train the Iraqis to go

to the front and take more responsibilities to securing Iraq.

The U.S. military personnel will be working closely with and training

Iraqi soldiers. Pentagon leaders tell us that embedding these highly

trained U.S. troops have been highly effective in making the Iraqi

military better.

In anticipation of the American withdrawal, 23 Sunni clerics in Saudi

Arabia have already expressed support for sending their Sunni fighters

to Iraq as have Shiite clerics from other areas of the Middle East in

anticipation of the U.S. leaving Iraq.

The Jordanian ambassador has described it well, saying that it is

like the U.S. has stepped on a land mine, only that this is the other

type of a land mine that will explode when you take your foot off of

it. We will see an explosion if we do as this Democrat resolution sets

up and stop supporting our troops and begin withdrawing them.

This Congress must not repeat the mistakes of Vietnam. War should not

be conducted by 535 self-proclaimed generals. Politicians should not be

dictating troop levels or planning missions. Our duty is to conduct

effective and responsible oversight while giving our soldiers and

military commanders the resources that they need to get the job done.

This resolution specifically says you will not do that.

Premature withdrawal or a forced gradual withdrawal, which this

resolution seems to endorse, from Iraq, through cutting funds, may

appease those who oppose the war, the base of the authors who wrote

this resolution, but it surely will produce more bloodshed and

sectarian violence far exceeding the level currently reported by

newspapers today.

I am not willing to gamble with those lives of future Americans of

our generations to come. This resolution runs away from the best option

we have been presented to provide security in Iraq. I am open to

alternatives, better plans, including those from our colleagues on the

other side. It is just that we are not able to engage in that

discussion today.

I will vote ``no'' on this resolution, and hope that the majority of

my colleagues will join me.