Mr. Speaker, as a Vietnam veteran who served three tours

during Vietnam and flew 116 combat missions over there in B-52s, I rise

to oppose this resolution.

I am sure I don't speak for every Vietnam veteran, but I am sure I

speak for a lot of them when I say that when we served in combat we

detested the politicians in Washington who undermined our efforts to

win, politicians who criticized the war effort, politicians who sought

to micro-manage the war, politicians who set the rules of engagement

from thousands of miles away.

These politicians were anything but helpful. They undermined our

efforts and our morale. They made us fight with one hand tied behind

our backs. They demoralized our forces and our allies and our families.

And, their words and political efforts grated on our families back

home.

Mr. Speaker, it was wrong then and it is wrong now. Our troops need

and deserve our full support.

I don't question the proponents of this resolution's patriotism. I

question their judgment. What we are debating this week is called a

nonbinding resolution. What that really means is that this is nothing

more than a political statement. It is designed to send a message to

the voters and to the media to score political points, I guess. But

this resolution is not about President Bush or failures of his

administration, this is about America, it is about our future, it is

about our kids and our grandkids. And, unfortunately for them, this

resolution offers no plan to win the war, no plan for the future.

For months we have heard the other side criticize the President for

offering a stay-the-course strategy in Iraq. Now that the President has

offered a new strategy, the other side wants the status quo, to stay

the course. The American people want a new direction in Iraq, but not a

retreat or a defeat.

This is a stay-the-course resolution. It opposes sending in

reinforcements to help achieve victory, as the Iraq Study Group

suggested that we do on page 73 of their report.

Now, I am not suggesting that the military is the only solution to

winning the Iraq war. It is only one leg in a three-legged stool, which

also should include diplomatic, political, economic efforts as well.

But it is absolutely an indispensable part of the solution. To

undermine the military effort is wrong and will guarantee defeat.

The left wants us to fight a politically correct war. They believe

that if we stop fighting the war will end. They are wrong.

Some of us met with ambassadors from the Middle East yesterday. The

ambassadors voiced strong opposition to withdrawing troops from Iraq.

They said to do so before the Iraqi Government is able to sustain

itself would lead to catastrophe, catastrophe in Iraq and catastrophe

in the region. They are right. If we stop fighting, the consequence

will be disastrous. Our terrorist enemies will be greatly emboldened

and empowered. Countless Iraqis will be slaughtered. Genocide will

occur. The terrorists will become even a bigger threat to the region,

destabilizing and possibly igniting a regional war, and they will

surely follow us home to fight here. And our allies will never trust

our resolve again.

If we don't defeat the Islamic terrorists in Iraq, then let me ask

you, where will we do so?

Mr. Speaker, the world is watching the Pelosi Congress. Will we show

them that our determination to succeed is stronger than the terrorists?

If this war is lost, it won't be lost by our magnificent troops in the

field, it will be lost in the Halls of this Congress by politicians who

want to micromanage our military. And that is why I ask my colleagues

to consider the consequences of this vote and this war.

The long-term consequences are momentous. What will it mean for your

kids and grandkids? What kind of world will they inherit? What will it

mean for the Middle East? What will it mean for our allies in the

Middle East? What will it mean for the future of our great country?

Make no mistake about this. This resolution will harm our troops who

are sacrificing for the cause of freedom. It opposes sending in

reinforcements to troops in battle. Our troops deserve and need our

support. The arm chair generals in Congress who have never served in

combat say, We will not abandon you, while they undermine our troops

and their mission, while they deny them reinforcements.

This vote is a vote for failure in Iraq and chaos. We should insist

on victory in Iraq. This resolution does not support victory, it

supports failure. We must defeat the terrorists, we must protect

America from Islamic terrorists. Defeat this resolution.