Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of

the resolution which requires our support for our brave troops and the

American military, yet also expresses disapproval of President Bush's

decision to deploy additional troops to the area.

My colleagues, the most serious vote any Member of Congress will ever

take will be to send men and women to war. I support the troops 100

percent. Yet when you have your head in the lion's mouth, how do you

get it out?

I did not vote for the war when it came before the House of

Representatives back in 2002. I never supported

this war. Yet, I do not blame my colleagues who did because their vote

was based on false, twisted information provided by President Bush.

From the very beginning of this conflict, President Bush has

intentionally misled the American public by supplying them with false

grounds for going to war, and now he is inventing reasons for us to

stay there.

As President Bush begins to lay out his case for expanding this

terrible war into Iran, we see the false rhetoric, the same war

drumbeats in the background, drumming up support for the attack on

Iran. Since we have never found a link between al Qaeda and Iraq, we

are trying to hide our failure to control the civil war in Iraq by

blaming Iran for supplying weapons to Iraqi insurgents. There is no

proof and no one is certain this is under the direction of the Iranian

leadership. Again, the President is telling the American people this is

true, but why should we believe him? I know what the Bush

administration is capable of doing. They will use any means necessary

to achieve their ends, even if it means doctoring up the information

supplied to Congress and to the international community to wage a war

over oil.

They have provided all the justifications, all the sanctimony,

frightening the American people into supporting a $600 billion war in

Iraq, supposedly to deter terror, but in reality it is having the

opposite effect. My colleagues, this war needs to come to an end. The

American people want the troops home. This was the message sent loud

and clear to the Bush administration during the November elections. Yet

they for some reason just didn't get the message. Nearly 70 percent of

the American people want us out of Iraq. Yet, President Bush continues

to ignore that. We have already spent over half a trillion dollars over

there. Let me repeat. $600 billion. There was even a period between

2003 and 2004 when our military was carrying huge wraps of $100 bills

over to Iraq.

Look at this cruise ship. I want you to imagine a cruise ship full of

$100 bills. We sent it over to Iraq. Now, let me tell you something,

folks. A billion dollars is even a lot of money here in Washington.

$100 bills, a billion dollars. Let me tell you what that would pay for

our veterans. $1.7 billion would fund over 1.5 million veterans in

category 8 that we are not funding today. Let me repeat. Over 1.5

million veterans we could serve if we could recoup just $1 billion, and

we have sent over about $9 billion that we cannot account for.

Folks, I am going to give the Bush administration an F, and I am

going to give the past Congress an F for giving him a blank check.

We all have the opportunity to have a serious vote for our troops and

a vote for the American people. I say vote ``yes'' on the resolution.