Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the gentleman from

Massachusetts, for yielding.

I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 63 and in opposition to the

proposed troop surge in Iraq.

When I visited Iraq in 2005, like the soldiers I met there, I was

hopeful that democratic elections would allow Iraq to move forward as a

unified sovereign nation. While the elections demonstrated a commitment

from the Iraqi people to do that, the situation on the ground has

instead worsened, sectarian violence has increased, and the escalating

death toll for American and Allied troops and the Iraqi people demand

serious scrutiny of our strategy in Iraq.

When I met with the President's military and national security

advisers last month to learn about their new plan, I anticipated that a

new course would be proposed. Regrettably, this surge does not

constitute a new course.

We have tried multiple troop surges. After the most recent surge last

summer, conducted in Baghdad, the U.S. military declared that it had

``not met our overall expectations of sustaining a reduction in levels

of violence.'' In fact, attacks increased by 22 percent, and already

after 20 percent of the current surge has been deployed, violence has

not decreased.

Instead of sending more troops, our military mission in Iraq must

shift from attempting to secure Iraq to better equipping and training

the Iraqi Security Forces so they can secure their own country. Like

most Americans, I have supported the President's objective that we will

stand down as the Iraqis stand up. We have already trained nearly

325,000 Iraqi Security Forces toward that end.

For 4 years Americans have seen the brave men and women of our Armed

Forces perform their duty courageously. We have seen over 3,100

American husbands, wives, mothers, fathers, sons, and daughters make

the ultimate sacrifice, including 116 servicemen and women from my

State of Illinois. We have seen $400 billion in hard-earned tax dollars

invested in this effort to support those fighting. What we haven't seen

is real accountability for results.

That is why I have joined my colleagues in the Blue Dog Coalition to

introduce the Iraq War Cost Accountability Resolution. This resolution

requires accountability in four ways: spending accountability;

contractual accountability; budget accountability; and, importantly,

Iraqi accountability.

To ensure spending accountability, this resolution requires the

Department of Defense Inspector General to provide an accounting of all

military and reconstruction spending and to report to Congress every 90

days, including how and where our tax dollars are being spent,

transparency in contracting and procurement methods, and levels of

participation from other countries, additional funding required, and,

importantly, sanctions applied for fraud, abuse, and war profiteering.

To enforce contractual accountability, a select committee akin to the

Truman Committee would be created to investigate the awarding of

contracts and their execution to protect our tax dollars. To provide

budget accountability, this resolution requires funding requests for

the war in Iraq in fiscal 2008 and beyond must come through the regular

appropriations process, not continued emergency supplementals. And to

demand Iraqi accountability, the administration should firmly condition

further American financial and military support upon steady and

measurable improvement in Iraqi progress towards principal

responsibility for internal security in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, increasing the number of troops without increasing the

level of accountability perpetuates the same policy that has led to

this crisis in Iraq.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support both of

these resolutions. Instead of sending more troops, let us provide the

high degree of accountability that the American people demand and that

our valiant men and women serving in Iraq deserve.