Mr. Speaker, I rise today in fervent support of

the brave men and women of our Armed Forces currently serving in Iraq.

While American soldiers and Marines courageously risk their lives to

confront a determined enemy in Iraq, the Democrat leadership in

Congress offers this resolution. The spineless resolution under

consideration would undermine our military commanders' plan for victory

in this ongoing struggle.

This act of political posturing strikes me as inconsistent with

pledges of support for our troops. We cannot simultaneously claim to

support the troops while calling into question the validity of their

mission. The question, Madam Speaker, quite simply, is this: to fund or

not to fund. If this Congress intends to provide our service men and

women with the funds they need to achieve their mission, and we must,

it follows that funding ought to go hand-in-hand with resolute

commitment in support of their current mission.

If not this plan, what plan? Before you answer that, recognize that

Congress is not, and has never been, tasked with administering a war.

No successful war in the history of mankind has ever been managed by

the legislative branch of any government. And no credible alternative

for victory in Iraq has emerged from any member of this institution.

I find it curious that not a single Senator opposed the confirmation

of General Petraeus as Commanding General of our troops in Iraq.

General Petraeus is the coauthor of the Army's new official

counterinsurgency doctrine that this resolution seeks to undermine.

Yet, only weeks later, this body seeks to pull the rug out from under

General Petraeus through this resolution. Such political posturing is

shameful, but unfortunately it is anything but petty, as the

consequences could be deadly.

Members of Congress may be able to convince themselves of all sorts

of contradictory positions and logical inconsistencies through double-

speak, but our service members know weakness when they see it. Thank

God our troops are men and women of resolve and integrity. If you want

to endanger even more Americans in the field and usher in an American

defeat in Iraq, the surest way to do so is to demonstrate a lack of

commitment from this House, and therein embolden the enemies our troops

are battling right now.

I don't believe that's what anybody in this body wants, so I urge my

colleagues to consider the consequences of support for this ill-

conceived resolution. This is a time of war, one that is not of our

choosing. Militant Islamists have been at war with America for decades,

and they have grown more dangerous each year, as we tragically learned

a little more than five years ago.

With overwhelming bipartisan determination, we voted to authorize

military action in Iraq in 2002. Retreat from our current mission would

communicate to Al Qaeda and jihadists around the world that the United

States is fainthearted, and we could expect more horrific attacks on

American soil than we saw on 9/11.

Let me be clear--I am troubled by the last year's increased level of

violence in Iraq; we all are. But this resolution can only exacerbate

the problem. Our service men and women deserve better from us. And we,

Madam Speaker, regardless of party, are better than this.

May God bless our troops.