I thank the gentleman for yielding. And I

especially thank you for your leadership on the floor through this very

important debate, a hard debate for us here in the House of

Representatives and a hard debate for this country.

But, Mr. Speaker, a new plan is being implemented, a new plan with

political, economic and military components. Reinforcements are on

their way even as we speak. The Iraqis do need to do their part, we

know that. President Maliki tells us that they will. And if we

reinforce now, they will take it over. They will stand up because they

must, and then we will come home.

Mr. Speaker, not everyone believes that this is a good plan. It is

sophisticated, it is comprehensive, but not everyone agrees that it is

the right plan, and I understand that.

This war certainly hasn't achieved its intended results. The

President said ``stay the course,'' and some said no. The President now

says, ``change the course,'' and the same folks say no. That's fair; we

have room in this great Nation to disagree. But if that is the case,

that you don't want to stay the course or change the course, then use

the tools and the powers available to you to stop the course.

The tools are at your disposal, the power of the purse to defund the

effort. You could repeal the authorization that most of us voted for

this in 2002. You could require troop withdrawal. You have that power

and you have that right. But, Mr. Speaker, with the world watching,

with Islamic fundamentalists, jihadists, just waiting, and with

our troops working tirelessly to protect and defend us, don't pass this

pointless resolution.

If it meant anything, it would be a different argument, but it won't

bring one soldier home sooner and it won't change the course of this

war. It has no teeth, no muscle; but most of all, it has no positive

value whatsoever for us as a Nation at war. Some people say it sends a

message to our Commander in Chief, and I believe that that is true. But

that message pales compared to the message it sends to our enemies; our

enemies, who pledge that their jihad will last until their religion

prevails in the world; not until we are out of Iraq, until their

religion prevails in the world; our enemies, who believe it is their

religious duty to bring hostility to the West and to America. They are

tuned in today, Mr. Speaker, you better believe it, and no doubt they

are cheering.

But what this message says to our enemies and to the President and to

everybody else in the world is nothing compared to what it says to our

troops. This resolution says, Your cause is lost. This impatient

Congress says, Thanks, but we have had our fill. This resolution says

to our troops that your cause is no longer worthy and your friends have

died in vain. And today we learn that this is only the first step in

the slow-bleed strategy.

We can't say in the first paragraph that we support them and in the

next paragraph that we can't reinforce them. We can't say that first we

honor our troops and their service, and in the next breath say that

their cause really isn't worth it after all.

Mr. Speaker, our military leaders have a plan. They don't have

guarantees, there are no guarantees in war. General David Petraeus

asked for these troops. I met him when I was in Iraq. He is one of the

country's most qualified, brilliant military leaders. He says this is

what is needed.

This plan gives our troops the help they need and gives the Iraqi

Government a last chance to stand up and take over. This resolution

rejects the only plan on the table. If we reject this plan, then what

should we do? We will be at the status quo. What should we do to keep

this country free from terror for another 5 years? What should we do to

show solidarity? Nothing? What we should do, Mr. Speaker, is defeat

this resolution. Don't demoralize our troops.