Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, that makes it very clear that in fact even if there is

no objection to including the brave men and women who operate, often

without weapons, who operate behind enemy lines, who in fact are part

of our Intelligence Community, they cannot be included in this

resolution. It is a sad day when democracy does not even include that

which there is no objection to from being considered.

Notwithstanding that, Madam Speaker, I think it is extremely

important that we deal with the limited strict language we have been

offered, and, in the spirit of that strict language, I must oppose it.

I must oppose it because in fact on a strict basis this resolution, if

heeded by the administration, says stay a failed course of action.

Madam Speaker, it is amazing that the election very clearly told us

in November that the American people were not comfortable with the

conduct of this war; that in fact on both sides of the aisle, people

were calling for a bolder vision, a vision that was more aggressive

diplomatically and militarily. In fact, two Presidential candidates,

Senator Hillary Clinton and,

in fact, Senator McCain, are and have been saying we should have had

more troops early, we should have more troops now. It is amazing that

in fact the one thing this resolution is saying is stay the course,

make no changes.

Further, regardless of what my Democrat colleagues would say today,

the next step after ``Mr. President, we will not send more troops,''

is, ``Mr. President, we will not send more tanks; Mr. President, we

will not send further personnel and intellectual gatherers to

understand our enemy; Mr. President, we won't send more translators;

Mr. President, we cannot and will not support more body armor; Mr.

President, we will not support this war on terror throughout the

region.''

Those are the next steps, because you can't simply say, as this

resolution tries to, stay the course. Do nothing. No increases, no

decreases. Support the troops, but send them no more.

That makes as much sense as telling the people at the Alamo, stay the

course. That wasn't the right solution at the Alamo. At the Alamo they

should have either increased their forces so that they could have

sustained the bombardment, or withdrawn.

We, in fact, are in a position where the President has made a

multitude of new initiatives, one of which includes additional troops

to help relieve those tired troops, to help bring the force level up to

a level similar to exactly what Presidential candidates on both sides

of the aisle were clamoring for just a few weeks ago and throughout the

election.

Madam Speaker, one of the other things that just amazes me, today I

took a little time and I checked out how many Members of Congress

served in the military. It turns out it is less than one-third. I

checked out how many Members went to Iraq in the previous Congress. It

turns out less than one-third.

The fact is that we are considering a resolution as though we were

General Petraeus, a man who was unanimously confirmed in the Senate

just a few days ago, and deployed to support and defend our troops and

this effort, who is solidly convinced that we have to do more and do it

better and who is there to do it and was unanimously confirmed.

In closing, Madam Speaker, only here, with less than one-third of the

Members having gone and seen what is going on in Iraq, less than one-

third having served in the military, even at a minor level of

lieutenant or captain or private, have the hubris to say that we have

to not add, not subtract, just keep the exact same number that we and

the American people believe is not getting the job done. That is

exactly what this resolution is claiming to do. We are not given an

alternative in any way, shape or form.

So, Madam Speaker, there is no choice on either side of the aisle.

Whether you believe we should have more or we should have less, nobody

believes that we should stay the exact course with no change, and that

is what this is asking for.

So I call on my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to realize that

in fact this resolution calls for the one thing that the American

people most object to, and that is unchanged staying the course at this

level. The American people called on us in November to do something

bolder, to bring peace in the region, and I call on you to vote down

this resolution just exactly to do that