Madam Speaker, I think we need to ask

ourselves several questions: Does this resolution make America safer?

Does this resolution send a message to our allies that draws them

closer to us? Does this resolution encourage our troops, or does it

discourage our troops?

We heard about de-escalation and when that might be appropriate, when

it may not be. But I can tell you that this resolution does not

accomplish de-escalation. In fact, it does not even support the troops

on their way as we speak. It only supports the troops who have served

or are currently serving.

Madam Speaker, in my conversations with constituents, with soldiers,

with those closest to the situation, they see hope, they see hope in a

change of strategy. We know that the status quo is not what we need to

do, and that is why a change in strategy is certainly in order.

I don't pretend to be General Patraeus, and I hope that none of us

pretend to know more about the situation than General Patraeus.

I am concerned when we hear that this resolution is the first step

for cutting funding. Why don't we just put that resolution up right

now? We can save a lot of time; we can send a more direct message. Is

that the appropriate thing to do? I hope that you will join me in

voting ``no'' on this resolution because I support our troops and their

mission.