Madam Speaker, as a veteran of the United States Navy, I

am very, very honored to be a Member of this House of Representatives.

And today I am very proud and pleased to stand here in support of this

very important resolution, which needs to be adopted as the final first

step of this Congress in dealing with this unjust, illegal, unnecessary

invasion of Iraq and the subsequent disastrous occupation.

In October of 2002, when the resolution authorizing this invasion

came to the floor, 133 Members voted against it. 127 Democrats and six

Republicans voted against it. Most of us voted against it because we

knew that the so-called logic or rationale that had been presented by

the administration was untrue, that there was no connection between

Iraq and the attack of September 11, that there was no evidence that

there were chemical or biological weapons left in Iraq, even though we

know that previous administrations of this country had supplied those

weapons.

We knew that the rationale presented for the development of a nuclear

weapon in Iraq was completely falsified. The documents were forged.

On the 19th of March, this administration carried out an illegal,

unnecessary, unjustified invasion of Iraq. We will soon mark the fourth

year of that action. In all of that time, this Congress has done

nothing significant or substantial to stand in the way of the illegal,

unjustified actions of this administration, in spite of the fact that

they have caused the death of now more than 3,000 American servicemen

and women, more than 23,000 physically injured, unknown numbers

psychologically injured, hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians

killed.

In spite of all of that, and in spite of the fact that, increasingly,

every Member of this Congress has begun to understand with greater and

greater clarity, how the information was falsified, how what the

Intelligence Committees told the White House, the Department, the State

Department, and others in this administration, had been twisted and

distorted and turned around purposely and specifically to carry out

this disastrous invasion and subsequent occupation, nothing has been

done.

The previous leadership of this Congress failed to step forward and

take any kind of action against this administration. And we hear people

on this side of the aisle, tonight, speaking against this resolution

saying it doesn't do anything significant. It doesn't do enough.

Well, let me tell you something. This is the first step of a new

majority in this Congress taking the right kind of action on the basis

of our obligations and responsibilities under the Constitution to stand

up to the actions of this administration and to put this country back

on the right track. Not just in the case of what is going on in Iraq,

even though that is so terribly disastrous, but the consequences here

in our own country, the intimidation of people, the internal spying,

the elimination of habeas corpus, all of the impingements on the

American Constitution, based upon the culture of fear cultivated

purposely by this administration for their own personal and political

objectives. No one in the previous leadership, no one in the previous

majority, stood up to this administration in any kind of a constructive

way.

So, if you want to correct the failures that have existed in this

Congress since that resolution came to the floor and since the 19th of

March in 2003, when this administration carried out that illegal,

unnecessary and unjustified invasion, then you will support this

resolution, recognizing that it is the first important step taken by a

new majority here in this Congress to deal with the consequences of all

of that falsehood.

If you fail to do so, you will continue to leave the door open for

further violations of law and constitutional principles by this

administration, perhaps next in Iran, because that may be the next

illegal step of this administration.

If you want to make up for what you failed to do, if you want to do

the right thing for this country, for our people, and for our military

personnel, please, support this resolution.