Mr. Chairman, thank you for yielding me this time. Let

me correct that record just a bit. I have got the area just west of

Fort Hood. So I have got a lot of civilian contractors and retirees and

active duty personnel who live in my district, but serve in Fort Hood.

Absolutely. I certainly would. Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

for this time tonight.

I am opposed to this nonbinding resolution. This is a vehicle that

the majority is using to bring us to this debate tonight. The

resolution is pretty

simple in its language. It simply says that Congress disapproves of the

decision President George W. Bush announced on January 10, 2007, to

deploy more than 20,000 additional troops, U.S. combat troops to Iraq.

It says this twice, in the preamble and then once again in the

resolved.

It also says once that Congress and the American people will continue

to support and protect the members of the United States Armed Forces

who are serving or who have bravely and honorably served in Iraq. We

must assume, of course, that, because it is not stated, that Congress

and the American people will also support and protect those additional

troops that are headed into harm's way who will serve in Iraq, even

though the resolution disapproves of the decision that sends those

young men and women into harm's way.

The majority knows that this resolution will pass. They would not

have brought it to the floor if their leadership had not be assured

that they had the minimum 218 votes needed to pass this resolution.

Since passage is assured, we have to ask, why this language? Why

something so like this, that simply says what they are against, as

opposed to something that is perhaps more meaningful, like what you are

for.

It allows those who would vote in favor of this, and like I said I am

quite confident it will pass, to set themselves up in that very

enviable position to say I told you so if things do not go exactly as

planned. And no plan in war has ever done that. So our colleagues who

vote in favor of this resolution will be in that position to be able to

say I told you so across a variety of circumstances.

I do not believe that either side of the aisle believes that it is

the role of this or any other Congress to tell the President how not to

deploy 20,000 troops. I believe there is another reason for this

language. One explanation may be that it sets the stage for something

that will really have an impact on the War in Iraq, the way that war is

being fought, and I think that has to do with the power of the purse.

In spite of the language that says we will continue to support and

protect our troops, I believe we will see in the not too distant future

attempts by the majority to cut off funding for this war. I think we

got a preview of this tactic last week when we passed the continuing

resolution which cut $3.1 billion in spending for military quality of

life projects and infrastructure that is needed to support the various

BRAC decisions.

A lot has been made as to whether or not this debate will have an

impact on the morale of our troops. Last week in a hearing with the

Armed Services Committee, General Pace, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of

Staff told us, as well as Bob Gates, that this debate in and of itself

will not directly hurt or harm the morale of the young men and women

who are fighting this fight.

I think that is generous. But what Pace did tell us was that if this

Congress begins to cut funding, cut financial support, begin to go back

on the promises made to those young men and woman, that that will in

fact have a deleterious impact on the troops' morale and their families

who serve here. I think that the debate tonight and the next 4 days

will have a direct impact on the families who support these young men

and women, who allow them to do what they do on behalf of this country.

And that is certainly is regrettable, if that support is hurt and

harmed, and that hurt and harm is then transmitted to our young men and

women who are fighting this fight every single day.

I also do not believe it is the role of 535 independent contractors

that make up the House and Senate to become five-star generals and make

decisions on how to fight this fight or any other war. I do believe it

is our job to look as far into the future as we can, and make decisions

and then pass laws that lead this Nation.

I do not know of anyone who believes that a failure in Iraq is in our

national interest. Both sides have been saying this. There are no good

results for such a failure. General Petraeus has listed out a couple of

the possibilities that he talks about. One is that sectarian groups

would begin to stake out turf. This would generally involve ethnic

cleansing. The humanitarian suffering that would go on while that was

happening is totally unacceptable

He also mentions that international terrorist organizations might

gain control of Iraq, and therefore use their bases in Iraq to further

their interests.

The disruption to the oil markets and the impact that that will have

not only on our economy but economies around the world would certainly

occur if we have a failure in Iraq.

None of these guesses as to what would happen for failure in Iraq,

that failure would almost automatically happen with an untimely

withdrawal of our troops, none of them are positive, none of these

scenarios make Iraq a safer place, none of them make the Middle East a

safer place, and they certainly do not make America and the United

States safer.

There are no guarantees, of course, that any plan will work. But

telling the President what not to do is clearly not in the interest

interests of moving this debate forward. My personal view of that

future that I spoke about is that the effort in Iraq is a major part of

the overall global war against Islamic Jihadists. Other Members have

eloquently stated tonight that this war will last for decades.

I take very seriously the threats that the Islamic Jihadists have

made and are making to kill Americans and to hurt American interests. I

do not understand why they take these positions, but I certainly

believe them when they tell us they are coming to hurt us.

This fight, this global war against Islamic Jihadists is really a

fight for the heart of Islam. We must begin imploring moderate Muslims

to stand against those few who seek to hijack the religion, and who are

prosecuting this fight.

Let me preface my next remarks by saying that I am a Christian, and I

believe that God is always in the business of changing men's hearts,

and that the hearts of these Islamist Jihadists can be changed by the

God I serve. But short of that, I believe we have only two choices,

either we lock these people up forever or we kill them.

That is pretty harsh for a Christian to say, but those are our only

options. I don't believe we can compromise with them and I don't

believe they will compromise with us. I don't believe that they will

alter their beliefs to peacefully coexist with us.

So we are in a fight that will last for years and for decades. There

is no guarantee as to how this fight is being prosecuted and how we win

this fight, I just know that we cannot lose it. And this resolution

tonight does not move that process forward in a positive way.

We are in a long and hard struggle to protect freedom and liberty

here and around the world. We are blessed by men and women who are

willing to risk everything to defend you and me every minute of every

day.

This resolution does not help in that struggle. And I urge my

colleagues to vote against it.