Madam Speaker, I rise tonight in support of the

resolution before us that disapproves of the President's recent

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

to Iraq.

As a member of the Armed Services Committee, I am committed to

supporting our troops and making sure that they have the resources they

need. I always have and I always will. There is no debate about

supporting our troops. This resolution clearly and unequivocally states

that both the Congress and the American people support our valiant men

and women in uniform. Our troops have been and are continuing to do an

excellent job, and they deserve our support.

Yet, overall, our military is being stretched thin, and now we face

the prospect of not only sending over 20,000 more combat troops into

Iraq, but also another 15,000 troops on top of that, at minimum, to

support those troops, with additional military police, intelligence

units and supply function personnel. In fact, the Congressional Budget

Office estimates that it might take even more troops than that. So

reality is that we are now looking at a total of 35,000 or more troops

actually involved in this potential surge.

We need to be moving toward a successful conclusion in Iraq; not with

a timetable, but with definite benchmarks of accountability that are

meant to ensure that the Iraqis are taking control of their own

security and future. The Iraqi army, the national police and the local

police in Iraq must take responsibility for their own country and

communities, and only by lessening the American footprint in Iraq will

we empower the Iraqi people to take responsibility for their own self-

governance and ultimately their own destiny.

Is not just my opinion or the opinion of some here, it is exactly

what General John Abizaid, our U.S. Commander said, when I visited Iraq

and when he testified before Congress.

We cannot continue to increase troop levels in Iraq at the expense of

allowing the Taliban to come back into power in Afghanistan. The Global

War on Terrorism is exactly what the name says. It is a global war, not

just an Iraqi war, and we cannot let our troop strength be so focused

on what is becoming a civil war in Iraq that we lose focus on threats

that face us elsewhere in the world.

Previous surges have not solved the problems in Iraq. Let us not be

fooled into thinking that this one will.