Mr. Speaker, over the past 5 years, the Bush

administration has repeatedly asked the American people to put their

faith and their judgment in the judgment of the White House, especially

as it pertains to our position in Iraq.

But as we have seen, and we have seen it time and time again, that

judgment is based on ignoring voices of dissent and the reality on the

ground in favor of a stay-the-course mentality.

When General Petraeus presents his report on Iraq next week, we

cannot allow the voice of the American people to be ignored. We watched

this administration relaunch its public relations campaign to sell

``the escalation'' to the American people, and now they insist that the

escalation is working. All this in spite of the Iraqi Government's

failure to achieve most of its key benchmarks for military and

political progress and the dramatic increase in American and Iraqi

casualties since the escalation began.

The administration continues, Mr. Speaker, to resist all attempts

supported by the overwhelming majority of Americans to bring our troops

home. In essence, we are in the middle of another PR campaign, this one

to stifle the will and undermine the judgment of the American people

again.

Today Congress is again faced with the choice of trusting its own

judgment or the claims of the Bush administration. Unfortunately, the

past miscalculation and failed predictions of the administration have

resulted in tragic consequences.

In 2003, the administration insisted that an invasion force of

130,000 troops would be enough to secure Iraq and restore peace after

the invasion. They claimed Saddam Hussein was amassing weapons of mass

destruction to use against our country. They promised that we would be

greeted as liberators, and in May 2005 we were told that the insurgency

in Iraq was in its last throes. Time after time, they have been wrong,

wrong, wrong.

Earlier this year when Congress passed the emergency spending bill

for Iraq, the Bush administration argued that benchmarks are the only

way to measure progress in Iraq. As a result, the Government

Accountability Office

released a report this week showing that Iraq has failed 11 out of 18

benchmarks. And those seven that did not fail were barely, barely

worked upon at all. In response, the administration now claims that

these benchmarks should no longer be used to measure progress. It is

clear that the administration will never accept the reality about Iraq.

The only way to end the violence is to fully fund a safe and orderly

redeployment from Iraq.

The shallow fortune-telling of the Bush administration cannot replace

what every American knows: The only right course in Iraq is to bring

our troops home by fully funding a safe redeployment of our troops and

military contractors. The American people want bold leadership, and

they have called on the Congress to take action, action now. The

occupation has been a total failure and the American people will not

accept taking a wait-and-see attitude. They know that the only sensible

moral and responsible course is to fully fund the redeployment of our

American troops and military contractors. And they want us to get

started on it now.