Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for yielding

me this time.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution claims to honor our troops, but it is

nothing but a thinly veiled attempt to run a political campaign on

taxpayers' time.

We have the best military in the world. I am honored to represent the

men and women of Travis Air Force Base in Congress, and I will always

be grateful to all of our men and women in uniform for their

patriotism, courage, sacrifice, and devotion to our great Nation. As

Members of Congress, we must support them in word and deed.

I have been to Iraq and the Persian Gulf twice in the past year to

talk to our troops serving there and learned firsthand what they need

to get the job done and return home safely. Forty thousand American

troops were sent to Iraq without bulletproof vests, and many more still

do not have reinforced Humvees to protect them from daily roadside

bombs. But this resolution does nothing to get this critical lifesaving

equipment to our troops.

I am very disappointed this resolution does not offer condolences to

the families of the 564 Americans killed in Iraq thus far, nor mention

the 2,500 wounded in action.

It is also hard to believe that these congressional leaders would

consider a resolution that categorically reaffirms that the United

States and the world are made safe by the removal of Saddam Hussein and

the Ba'ath Party from power just days after the Spanish people buried

more than 200 of their citizens in the worst act of terror in European

history, and on a day, today, when a bomb blast killed dozens in Iraq.

Instead of patting ourselves on the back, it is time to ask whether

this administration's approach to the war on terror and the war on Iraq

have made us safer. Two and one-half years after the September 11

attacks, al Qaeda is more dangerous than ever. The war in Iraq removed

a dictator, but has created a new front on the war on terror that did

not exist before and has pinned down a large amount of our troops in

the Middle East for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I will vote ``no'' on this resolution. I urge my

colleagues to support our troops with action, not shameless political

ploys, and do the same.