Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for

yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, thanks to the leadership of President George W. Bush,

the valor of the American military and the courage of our coalition

partners, 1 year ago this week the liberation of Iraq started marking

the beginning of the end of Saddam Hussein's brutal regime.

My gratitude for this historic success is as a Member of Congress. I

had the opportunity to go with the gentleman from Missouri (Mr.

Skelton) and visit our troops in Iraq. Additionally, I am grateful as a

veteran myself. I retired last July after 31 years of service with the

Army National Guard, and I am so proud of what our active Guard and

Reserve forces have done. But additionally, I am proud and grateful as

a parent. I have three sons who are in the military of the United

States, and one of my sons began his deployment in Iraq this week. We

are very proud in the Wilson family of our contribution and the success

of the American military.

Some today have incorrectly accused the administration of saying Iraq

was in imminent threat. In reality, the case for the war with Iraq was

made precisely because Iraq was not yet an imminent threat. After the

hard lesson of September 11, we can no longer wait until our enemies

grow stronger and more deadly before we take decisive action to prevent

future tragedies.

Saddam Hussein posed a unique danger to the people of the United

States and the world. He ignored 17 United Nations resolutions for over

a decade, harbored and supported terrorists, and had used biological

and chemical weapons on his own people, had a history of violent

aggression against his neighboring countries, and attempted to

assassinate a President of the United States.

Today, Saddam Hussein's regime of terror has ended and the world is a

safer place for it; yet we know the war of terrorism is not over. We

need to remain vigilant to protect America's families by promoting this

resolution today, and I urge its support. In conclusion, God bless our

troops. We will never forget September 11.