Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 557.

A year ago this week a remarkably successful military campaign began

against Saddam Hussein's brutal dictatorship. As we honor the brave men

and women of our Armed Forces who waged this battle and the Iraqi

people who strive to establish a free and open society, we reflect on

the tremendous sacrifice they have made and on the hard work that

remains to be done.

We knew ridding the world of Saddam Hussein and introducing democracy

to Iraq was not going to be easy. During four trips to Iraq since

April, I have seen the strength and courage of our forces as they

worked alongside Iraqis rebuilding schools by day, and risking their

lives patrolling those same streets by night.

At the 1-year anniversary of military action, we extend our heartfelt

thanks to the men and women of our military who continue to sacrifice

in Iraq. We also honor the Iraqi people who, by signing an interim

constitution, have taken a bold step in the pursuit of freedom.