I thank the gentlewoman from Florida.

Mr. Speaker, I think most of us understand we must succeed in Iraq if

we are to win this global war on terror. Like any war, we may not want

to be there, but now we must successfully complete the task before us.

It is not and will not be easy. But as one said, there is no

substitute for victory. We must prevail. But at the same time, we also

need to make it undeniably clear to the Iraqi Government that our

patience and support are not blank checks that can be cashed with

American lives and tax dollars ad infinitum.

To do that properly and effectively, it is imperative that the

Congress do its job to proactively and comprehensively evaluate the

current level of progress of the Iraqi Government and clearly report

its findings on an ongoing basis to the American people.

By doing so, we would be firmly pushing the Iraqis themselves to

continue their efforts to stand up and take charge of their destiny.

The American people are looking to us to answer their questions on how

much progress is being made, what are the Iraqis themselves willing to

do to fight for their freedom, and when will the men and women come

home.

For this very reason, I recently introduced a resolution calling on

certain House and Senate committees to evaluate and issue specific

findings and conclusions on the progress of the Iraqi Government to

take over operational control to maintain proper civil order, to foster

economic growth and self-sufficiency and preserve the Iraqi people's

freedoms as set forth in their Constitution.

It is my firm belief that if this fact-finding and reporting process

is undertaken, it will set the stage for further evaluation and

consensus-building both inside and outside of Congress on our role in

Iraq and will go a long way to ensure that our future involvement there

continues to be the right policy, both for Iraq and America.