Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution and commend

the Republican leadership of the House of Representatives for

facilitating this extraordinary debate over the war on terror and our

military efforts in Iraq.

I have made three trips to Iraq over the last 3 years. I have led

delegations to Baghdad, Basra, Ramadi, Balad and Mosul, and I have two

messages to contribute to this discussion.

In the course of those trips, I have met with our soldiers in mess

halls. I have flown in the belly of C-130s. I have talked with soldiers

far away from anyone with any brass on their shoulders, and I have

never met a soldier that did not believe in the effort in Iraq. Let me

say again, Mr. Speaker, in all of my three different travels throughout

the lengths and bounds of Iraq, I have never met a U.S. soldier in

uniform who did not believe in the mission. Each and every one I met

believed in the nobility of the cause.

Each of them expressed the view of an Indiana soldier by the name of

Jim Newland from Washington, Indiana, in Baghdad. I will never forget

the day I said to Jim, what do you think, Jim; are we doing the right

thing here? He looked me in the eye and he said, Congressman, we are

out on patrol every day on the streets of Baghdad. We look this enemy

in the eye every day, and he said to me very solemnly, we have got to

stop these people right here. They kill Americans because they like it.

That is the sentiment I heard from our soldiers.

My other message is very simply and plainly and humbly, while it will

be hard for some around this country to hear, we are winning the war in

Iraq. We are defeating the enemy in every engagement. The enemy has

never taken down so much as a full platoon in any military engagement.

It is an extraordinary credit to our soldiers.

We have had three national elections. We have stood up a quarter of a

million Iraqis in uniform, and there is now a freestanding elected

government in Iraq. We are winning the war in Iraq, Mr. Speaker. It is

a message that I would deliver and from the hearts of the soldiers that

I met. I would also say I believe in this mission.

Support the resolution.