Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.

Res. 861. Republicans aren't interested in debating or discussing the

merits or conduct of the War in Iraq; they only want to play politics

with it.

Republicans wrote this resolution. Democrats were not consulted or

allowed any input. Republicans then rigged the process and outlawed any

amendments, so that the only real choice in voting was not yea or nay,

but take it or leave it.

There are serious issues we have to discuss that are being ignored.

The war in Iraq has cost our country $320 billion so far--money we

have had to borrow--and it will no doubt cost hundreds of billions

more. It has cost the lives of 2,500 American service men and women and

more than 18,300 have been wounded. The needs of our veterans are being

shortchanged. Some of our troops are on their fourth deployment since

2001. Our military readiness is affected because we are wearing out

both our equipment and our troops. And House Republicans are still

pretending that the war against terror somehow has to be fought in the

same basic way we fought in Korea and Vietnam.

The American people deserve better than a sham resolution and a

staged debate.