I rise today in support of H. Res. 861 and our

efforts in Iraq. Democracy's biggest strength is also its biggest

weakness. Democracy is the strongest form of government when the people

and allied governments are united in a common goal. Because the United

States worked hand-in-hand with Europe, we were able to defeat fascism

in World War II and the totalitarian threat of Hitler and imperial

Japan.

Conversely, democracy's weakness arises when the people do not

wholeheartedly believe in the cause. For example, Vietnam included a

hazy mission and the drafting of unwilling participants. Policy was

diverted due to powerful public opinion.

We are not in Iraq and Afghanistan today because the President seeks

for us to be. We are there because the public was outraged after the

attacks of September 11, and rightly so. We were deliberately attacked

by a terrorist regime seeking to cripple the United States. It was the

dramatic escalation of decades of terrorist attacks. We felt these

attacks deeply in our financial center of New York, at the Pentagon,

and were almost hit at the heart of our Government, the Capitol

building, were it not for the brave passengers of Flight 93.

But as a nation, we chose to not lie dormant anymore. We chose to

show the resolve of America and defeat the enemy of terrorist regimes

and the countries that harbor them. I support the policy of not giving

into totalitarianism or terrorist threats. And I support the military

if force becomes the necessary method of resolution. Progress is being

made in Iraq, and our troops will be successful in supporting this new

democratic government. We are not propping up a dictatorial regime; we

are working to help democracy take hold in the Middle East. And our

efforts are paying off.

The idea that all people desire to be free is a powerful one. This

idea is our single biggest weapon, and will ultimately bring success to

this fight. The government that allows its citizens to steer their own

course is undeniably stronger and more peaceful. I believe our troops

are making incredible progress and so are the people in Iraq who are

working for an inclusive, stable government. I remain committed to

supporting all of their good works.