Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution

for the transfer of sovereignty to the Iraqi people on June 30. June 30

will be the start of a new Iraq. Life for the people of Iraq will be a

world away from the cruelty and tyranny of the regime that once ruled

them for decades. A new sovereign, interim Iraqi government--

representing the diversity of Iraq--will assume power, provincial

governments will be put in place, courts will be overseen by Iraqi

justices, political parties will be formed and preparations for

national elections will be made.

After June 30, the U.S., under the leadership of Ambassador John

Negroponte, will provide support to the new Iraqi Interim Government as

it assumes control of managing day-to-day operations, preparations for

new elections, and rebuilding the country's infrastructure and economy.

Leading up to June 30, infrastructure improvements--led by coalition

forces--and the shift to self-government have already completely

transformed the face of Iraq. Schools,

medical clinics and hospitals have been reopened. An army and more

effective police force have been rebuilt. A fair judicial system has

been constituted. And an interim constitution has been signed--laying

the foundation for democratic elections.

The ability to transfer authority to a new sovereign Iraq only 14

months after liberation efforts began is a major step forward for

freedom. We should be proud of our young servicemen and women and

civilian contractors in Iraq for their work in liberating 25 million

Iraqis from the grip of Saddam Hussein's regime and rebuilding a

country that was in disrepair for nearly two decades. America

appreciates their sacrifice and commitment to the security of our

Nation. Those who have made the ultimate sacrifice to protect our

freedom and defend America will never be forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, July 1, 2004 will be the dawn of a new day for the men,

women and children of Iraq. This day will not mean an end to terrorist

violence, but it will be a radical departure from the decades of

governmental and personal abuse that existed under Saddam's ruthless

regime.