Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill to change

the mission of the United States Armed Forces in Iraq and undertake

their redeployment. It is time to set a real plan to end this war,

fought courageously by our troops on the ground, but recklessly

mismanaged by our administration at home.

2007 has been the deadliest year for American troops since the start

of the war in Iraq; 860 U.S. casualties since January. And almost 1

year after the President announced a so-called surge, the Iraqi

Government has made no progress toward political reconciliation and is

nowhere near taking responsibility for security in all of its

provinces.

Without any progress or end in sight, the cost of the war continues

to rise. The recent Joint Economic Committee report estimates the cost

of the war at $1.3 trillion from 2002 to 2008; yet just this week the

President vetoed critical funds for education, job training and health

care, and, yes, he vetoed the children's health care bill.

With its latest $200 billion request for wars in Iraq and

Afghanistan, the administration has asked for a total of $800 billion,

all paid for with the government's credit card.

Mr. Speaker, with this bill we put forth a plan and a clear path

toward change. We require the start of the redeployment of U.S. forces

within 30 days of enactment, with a goal for completion of redeployment

by December 15, 2008.

It prohibits the deployment of U.S. troops to Iraq who are not fully

trained and fully equipped, and changes the mission of U.S. forces in

Iraq to diplomatic and force protection, targeted counterterrorism

operations, and limited support to Iraqi security forces. And notably,

the bill prohibits torture once and for all.

We provide $50 billion to meet the immediate needs of the troops in

Iraq and Afghanistan and defer consideration of the remainder of the

President's request.

The President and his stubborn Republican allies in the Congress have

acted recklessly in Iraq and with our Nation's standing in the world.

And the American people pay the price. Our young men and women are

paying the price.

The Bush administration rushed to war and never had an exit strategy.

If we, in the Congress, do not provide one, who will?