I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I

rise in strong support of this rule and the underlying resolution as

well, because this House must show our troops, the Iraqi people, and

our terrorist enemies that we are committed to achieving victory in

Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, just a couple of days ago, I spoke with a constituent of

mine named PFC Josh Sparling. Josh serves

in the 82nd Airborne Division with the 3rd of the 504th, also proudly

known as the Blue Devils. Josh was wounded by an IED while serving with

his unit in Ramadi, Iraq. He is currently at Walter Reed Hospital

recuperating from surgery, with doctors working literally to save his

leg.

When I talked to Josh, he did not want to complain about his wounds

nor the pain that they were causing him. No, this American hero wanted

to talk to me about the progress being made on the ground in Iraq, and

how well the new Iraqi troops performed in the field, and how committed

the Iraqis were to reclaiming their country from the terrorists.

His proudest day in Iraq was when he provided security in the Iraqi

election last October. He watched thousands of Iraqis singing and

celebrating on their way to polling stations. It made him proud that

the American military was accomplishing their mission to spread peace

and hope and freedom and democracy. He was disappointed that he was not

in Iraq right now with his unit providing security for yesterday's

election and watching the left flank of his buddies.

Mr. Speaker, that is commitment. That is dedication, what we expect

and what we get from our brave men and women in uniform. Yesterday's

election was a great victory for the Iraqi people, more proof of an

historic pivot in that part of the world, and now is not the time to

wave the white flag just as our Iraqi allies begin the difficult

business of forming a new democratic government.

We cannot redeploy troops based on political concerns instead of

needs on the ground to secure victory. We must not let down all of our

brave men and women in uniform who have served so remarkably. We cannot

let down over 11 million Iraqis who yesterday stuck a finger in the eye

of the terrorists as they stuck their finger in that blue ink. We

cannot give our terrorist enemies a victory which they cannot achieve

on the battleground.

We need to send a message, this House needs to send a message, today

that we are committed to completing the mission. Vote ``yes'' on the

rule and the underlying resolution.