Mr. Speaker, I am here today in support

of the rule and the underlying resolution, in very strong support. I am

here as a Member of Congress. I am here as a 31-year veteran of the

Army Reserves and the National Guard.

I am also proud to be the father of a son who served for a year in

Iraq. I know firsthand of the progress that is being made there, along

with other Members of Congress.

We should be proud that Chairman Hunter, his son served in the

Marines for a year in Mosul. Mr. Skelton had a son serve in Afghanistan

in the war on terrorism. Mr. Taylor of North Carolina, Mr. Akin of

Missouri, Mr. Kline of Minnesota, Ms. Ros-Lehtinen of Florida, and Mr.

Saxton of New Jersey, all of us have had family members who have

participated in the global war on terror, and we are so proud of their

successes.

Additionally, I would tell you that I disagree with Democratic Leader

Pelosi. I believe that her position is wrong. I believe that proposing

a withdrawal is giving your game plan ahead of time. You do not do it

in football; you do not do it in politics. And you do not do it in a

time of war. It is my view that we should understand that war is

unpredictable.

Of all times, this week 61 years ago we found out the

unpredictability of war and that is the Battle of Bulge. Tens of

thousands of German troops secretly were located in the Ardennes

Forest, attacked our troops in Luxembourg, in Belgium, and in Germany

itself, and we lost 17,000 Americans. This could not be projected, this

surprise attack.

We need to be prepared. So I am very proud that indeed progress is

being made.

Our President has a wonderful plan of developing the Iraqi Security

Forces, developing the Iraqi economy and the political situation, as we

saw yesterday with the historic turnout of millions of Iraqis to build

a civil society. And the bottom line is, it protects the American

people.

This is exactly what America did after World War II, developing the

democratic society of Japan which now is one of our great allies. We

have the same potential to protect American families now.