I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this Iraq supplemental bridge

fund. While no one is declaring victory in Iraq, the tide is turning.

But nothing changes here on Capitol Hill. And here we go again, by some

estimates, the 41st effort by the majority to come to this floor and

force a precipitous and reckless withdrawal of forces from Iraq,

another Democrat plan for redeployment from Iraq tying $50 billion in

necessary combat funds for our troops to a Democrat plan for

withdrawal.

With unambiguous evidence of progress on the ground filling the

newspapers of America, the Democrats in Congress seem to have decided

to add denial to their plan of retreat and defeat in Iraq. And the

newspapers speak for themselves.

The Washington Post last week wrote, ``The number of attacks against

U.S. soldiers has fallen to levels not seen since before the February

2006 bombing of a Shia shrine in Samarra that touched off waves of

sectarian killing.'' The death toll of American troops in October fell

to 39, the lowest since March 2006.

And on Thursday last, The New York Times noted, `` `American forces

have routed al Qaeda in Mesopotamia, the Iraqi militant network, from

every neighborhood in Iraq,' a top general said today, `allowing

American troops involved in the surge to depart as planned.' ''

The Washington Times would say, ``Responding to the good news,

Speaker Pelosi has unveiled her newest legislative strategy to damage

the war efforts. House Democrats this week,'' they wrote, ``will try to

enact a bill calling for immediately beginning to withdraw U.S. troops

from Iraq. The surrender language will be attached to a 4-month, $50

billion funding.''

``The contrast could hardly be more striking,'' they said. ``American

soldiers performing heroically and successfully, risking their lives on

the battlefield in Iraq, Speaker Pelosi and the Democrat leadership by

contrast look for ways to advertise American weakness to the enemy.''

And I say from my heart, with great respect to the good and patriotic

Americans with whom I differ on this point, I urge my colleagues to

reject this Democrat plan for withdrawal. But I also urge my countrymen

to give our soldiers a chance. I know things have not always gone as we

had all hoped in Iraq.

In my role as the ranking member of the Middle East Subcommittee and

before, I have traveled to this war-torn country five times over the

last 4 1/2 years. I have seen success and I have seen less than

success. I have seen advance and I have seen failure. But today, we are

seeing hope spring. Freedom and stability are beginning to take hold in

Iraq. And I say from my heart, we cannot lose faith in ourselves. We

cannot lose faith in freedom. We must reject this latest plan for

retreat and defeat.