Mr. Speaker, I speak in support of this bill because it

would change our strategy in Iraq towards the successful outcome, while

ensuring that America will be more secure. It

does so by providing, most importantly, a date certain by which we will

not be in Iraq, approximately 9 months from its enactment, that serves

as the sole remaining leverage we have to change the structure of

incentives in that country and in the region toward stability.

Presently, the Iraqi ministries are personal fiefdoms where the

leaders pursue their personal ambitions while we provide them political

and military cover in what is now principally a civil war.

Political reconciliation. How? When their very top Shia and Kurdish

leaders recently told Senator Hagel and me that the re-Baathification

law is only appeasement to the Sunnis. But our U.S. leaders in Iraq say

it is critical to success and stabilization.

A date certain finally forces the Iraqis to make the difficult

political compromises they are presently avoiding; more importantly, it

changes the incentives and therefore the behavior of Iran and Syria

from being involved destructively in this war because we are bleeding

towards working for stability.

As our top political leader in Iraq said, Iran does not want a failed

state if we depart.