I thank the gentleman for yielding his time.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in very strong, strong support of this

resolution.

You know, it has been said that no battle plan survives first contact

with the enemy, and I believe that that is true. That's why our

military must constantly plan for every eventuality in warfare, because

failure to do so can cost lives.

The situation in Iraq is no different. We must prepare for every

contingency. The day is coming when our brave men and women in uniform

will leave Iraq, hopefully very, very soon. In fact, General Petraeus

in his testimony last month spoke of the possibility that some of our

troops will leave Iraq very soon, perhaps within weeks.

In order to facilitate a very safe and orderly withdrawal, it is

important that our military leaders plan appropriately, and they must

also consult with the Congress so that we can provide the needed

support to ensure that our troops are safe and that our vital national

interests are protected.

Prudent planning leads to success and provides the ability to react

quickly to events on the ground. I believe that this resolution

encourages such prudent planning. That's why I supported it when it

came before the House Armed Services Committee, when it was debated

then, and why I would urge the entire House to support it today. As was

just mentioned by the chairman, it was a bipartisan vote and it passed

55-2.

The issue of our troop presence in Iraq has caused great debate

across our country, has polarized this Congress, and I believe that

this resolution is a demonstration that a bipartisan way forward can be

achieved, that it can happen. In fact, it must happen for our Nation to

move forward.

I certainly want to express my appreciation to the sponsors of this

bill. I want to express my appreciation and deep regard and respect for

the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, Mr. Skelton, as

well as our ranking member, Duncan Hunter, great American patriots, all

of them.

Let us hope that the day is coming soon when our troops will come

home with honor, with honor, our brave men and women who so proudly and

bravely have protected and exported liberty and freedom, democracy.