Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for

yielding.

I consider this an extraordinarily important moment. And, Chairman

Skelton, I just want to share my tremendous respect for you in

marshalling out a bipartisan beginning to something that can lead to

more. That is what I think we all think that this is the beginning. So

the Tanner-English-Abercrombie bill, congratulations to all three of

you, becoming the Abercrombie-Turner bill in committee. It is a

bipartisan, effort that says we can agree on something and build on the

little and then have it be more significant.

It makes sense to ask the Secretary of Defense to submit a plan to

Congress that tells us specifically how they intend to fight this war

and the factors involved in their anticipation of what can happen in

the future. It makes sense to let them have 60 days to do this, because

they already know right now what they intend to do, and it should not

be all that difficult to describe it and then explain it to Congress.

It makes sense for every 3 months, every 90 days, for this plan to be

updated and for individuals in Congress to understand whether we are

ahead of schedule or behind schedule.

We went into Iraq on a bipartisan basis, two-thirds of the House,

including Mr. Skelton and Mr. Lantos, who lead the two most important

committees dealing with this issue; and the Senate, three-quarters of

the Senate voted to go into Iraq. We need to leave Iraq on a bipartisan

basis. It's called ``compromise.'' It's what our Founding Fathers

practiced when they created the Constitution of the United States.

Compromise is not a bad thing. Bipartisanship is not a bad thing. Our

troops are hungry for their leaders in Washington to work together.

It is my hope that we will have a time line, a time line that is

sensible, a time line that tells the Iraqis we are not going to stay

forever and a time line that tells Iraqis we are not going to pull the

rug out from under them and leave tomorrow. We need a sensible time

line, it seems to me; and I hope this becomes part of that ultimate

report.

So I will just conclude by saying something I have already said.

Congratulations to Members on both sides of the aisle. Congratulations

again to Mr. Skelton for beginning on that side of the aisle to preach

and work for a bipartisan approach. And I thank Mr. Turner for his work

and Mr. Castle and Mr. Gilchrest and Mr. Israel for what they have

done.

This is the beginning, I think, and our troops should be very hopeful

it will lead to a lot of good for them and for the Iraqi people.