Mr. Speaker, the war in Iraq has presented numerous

hardships for our troops, their families, and by extension, our Nation.

Over 3,000 American soldiers have been killed. Every day brings news of

more explosions and more soldiers coming home with traumatic brain

injuries and other maladies. However, this war has been a particular

hardship for our Nation's courageous female troops.

In this, the first full week of National Women's History Month, I

feel it is vital that we recognize the historic trials being faced by

the women who are defending our country. As of 2005, there was a record

203,000 female troops on active duty in military, along with many

thousands more National Guard and Reserve troops activated to work in

Iraq.

Like their male counterparts, many of these female troops never

expected to fight in a war and certainly not for such an extended

period of time. Countless soldiers are mothers who joined the National

Guard and Reserves to give back to their country. Now they find

themselves half a world away from their homes and families, fighting a

war on the sun-hardened battlefields of Iraq with no resolution or end

in sight.