Mr. Speaker, our Constitution states that Members of

Congress must be chosen by the people of the United States and Congress

must represent the people of the United States. That means that we, as

Members of Congress, need to listen and act when the people speak.

Well, the American people have spoken. The latest Gallup poll

released last week indicates that the American people are ready for our

military forces in Iraq to begin coming home.

Nearly 60 percent of Americans believe that the United States should

bring home some or all of our troops from Iraq. Just as revealing, the

Gallup poll showed that only 36 percent of Americans support

maintaining our current troop levels in Iraq. This is the lowest level

of support for the war since it began in March 2003.

The American people have stated loud and clear where they stand, and

their numbers are increasing. They know that the only way to keep our

sons and daughters from being killed in Iraq and the only way to end

the death and destruction that occur there every single day is to start

the process of bringing our troops home. Clearly, the American people

are way ahead of Congress on this issue.

Unfortunately, the President of the United States is way behind on

the issue of Iraq. We have asked the President to come up with a plan

for ending the war. He has not; so we will.

Our efforts to come up with a plan began in January when I introduced

legislation calling for the President to begin bringing our troops

home. Thirty-five Members of Congress support this legislation.

We continued our effort on May 25 when I introduced an amendment to

the defense authorization bill calling for the President to create a

plan for Iraq; 128 Members of Congress, including five Republicans and

one Independent, voted in favor of this sensible amendment.

It is clear that the United States must develop a smarter agenda, an

agenda for Iraq, an agenda that will go beyond when we bring our troops

home from Iraq.

It is more important that we have a plan for the future than a

continued military occupation, because this 2-year war has left us

disturbingly weakened, weakened against the true security threats we

face here at home. Let us not forget that Osama bin Laden is still at

large, and al Qaeda continues to recruit new members in Iraq and

elsewhere.

Once we have a plan in place to end the war in Iraq, we can start the

long process of securing the United States and Iraq for the future. We

can accomplish this through SMART Security.

SMART Security, which has the support of 50 Members of Congress, is a

Sensible Multilateral American Response to Terrorism for the 21st

Century, and it will help us address the threats we face as a Nation.

SMART Security will prevent acts of terrorism in countries like Iraq

by addressing the root conditions which give rise to terrorism in the

first place: poverty, despair, resource scarcity, and lack of

educational opportunities.

SMART Security encourages the United States to work with other

nations to address the most pressing global issues. SMART addresses

global emergencies diplomatically, instead of by resorting to armed

conflict.

Instead of maintaining a long-term military occupation of Iraq, our

future efforts to help the Iraqi people must follow the SMART approach:

humanitarian assistance, coordinated with our international allies to

rebuild Iraq's war-torn physical and economic infrastructure.

That is what I mean when I talk about SMART Security. We can defend

America by relying on the very best of American values, our commitment

to peace and freedom, our compassion for the people of the world, and

our capacity for multilateral leadership.

Mr. Speaker, we must follow a smarter approach, and we must do this

as we work to help the Iraqi people. That means implementing a plan to

end the war in Iraq. I invite the President, all Americans, and all

Members of Congress to join me in this effort.