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 need to act when the

people speak.

Well, the American people have spoken. The last Gallup poll released

earlier this week indicates that the American people are ready for our

military forces in Iraq to start coming home. Nearly 60 percent of

Americans believe that the U.S. 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 of 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

begin 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 on the President to create a plan

for Iraq. Mr. Speaker, 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 for

Iraq than a continued military occupation, because the 2-year war has

left us disturbingly weakened against the true security threats that we

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

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

elsewhere every single day. So, we ask the President to create a plan

and bring it to the Congress that will bring our troops home. Once they

are home, we can secure the U.S. and Iraq for the future, and we can

use a smarter resolution, which is a Sensible Multilateral American

Response to Terrorism for the 21st Century. It will help us address the

threats we face as a Nation.

SMART Security will prevent future acts of terrorism by addressing

the root conditions which give rise to terrorism in the first place:

poverty, despair, resource scarcity, and lack of educational

opportunities, to mention just a few. SMART Security encourages the

United States to work with other nations to address the most pressing

global issues. SMART Security addresses global crises 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 as we work to help the

Iraqi people, which means implementing a plan to end the war in Iraq. I

invite the President, I invite all Americans and all Members of

Congress, to join in this effort.