My colleagues, as someone who opposed the invasion of Iraq

and believes it was one of the most egregious mistakes in the history

of this country, I rise today to implore you to not make a mistake

today by demanding that we begin an immediate withdrawal.

The facts on the ground are that the situation is improving in Iraq.

Courageous Americans have given their lives and time away from their

families to make that happen. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have died

in a conflict that we created. We have a chance now to try to improve

the situation.

Progress is being made. Do not let anyone today say it is not.

Violence is down. Political leaders are reaching out across the aisle.

Shias are meeting with Sunnis. Sunnis are meeting with Shias. They need

more time to succeed, and an insecure situation will undermine the

progress, not further it.

We need to have more time to debate this resolution today. We need to

take the good parts of it, keep those in, but abandon this requirement

for an immediate withdrawal.

There is a big difference between 1 year, which this measure says we

have to be out in, or a 10-year horizon. We should find the nuance now

that we can agree on.