Mr. Speaker, yesterday in this House, we

took a great first step forward, I think, in finding bipartisan common

ground on the way forward in Iraq with the passage of H.R. 3087.

The issue of our troop presence in Iraq has caused great debate

across our country; it has polarized this Congress and our Nation. I

believe this first step is a demonstration that a bipartisan way

forward can happen. In fact, it must happen for the good of our Nation

and our ultimate success in Iraq. We can draw that day closer if we in

this Congress and we in America continue to work together to forge

consensus instead of resorting to partisan attacks.

The report of General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker last month has

given us reason for hope that progress is being made and our troops can

begin returning home. As our troops so bravely continue their mission,

let us continue ours and build upon the momentum that we started

yesterday in this House. Let us all hope that the day is coming soon

when our troops, who have protected our Nation and exported liberty,

freedom and democracy, will come home. We owe them nothing less than

our best effort to make this hope a reality.