Thank you, Mr. Ross.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor to have the chance to speak here

again in the House.

Almost $9 trillion in debt. I just came back from a month in my

district, as Mr. Ross had indicated, going to see constituent after

constituent, talking about issues of critical importance to them. And I

met a good friend of mine named Jim Fleming from LaPorte, Indiana. And

Jim's company makes defense aerospace products. And he said, Joe, we

try everything we can. We employ hundreds of people. We work

extraordinarily hard. And, Joe, we get beat out by China on bid after

bid. Not even competitive with our prices but below our cost of

production. And, Joe, what saddens me so much, Mr. Fleming said, is

that we have over $1 trillion in debt to China. So I know when it is

time for you to stand up, it is only made more difficult because of the

debt that we have, a debt that we assumed because it was easier to do

than to make the hard choices like the PAYGO system that we put in.

We look at Iraq now. We have lost $12 billion that came in in

currency in a plane, shrink wrapped, Mr. Davis, on pallets, never to be

seen again once it came off of that plane. Think of what $12 billion

could have done in help creating the Hoosier Heartland Highway in my

district.

We paid a gentleman Ahmed Chalabi and his group, the Iraqi National

Congress, $300,000 every month for information that they basically made

up in the back room over a Coca-Cola.

Just one more example: instead of probing and finding the answers, we

just threw money away. And, Mr. Ross, think of what $300,000 could do

in your district every month, or to my good friend, who you will see,

Mr. Michael Arcuri, in his district in Utica. $300,000 could provide

health care for an incredible amount of Americans.

So we have come to this Congress to try to make sure, through our

PAYGO system, that the debt goes no higher, that we start to reduce it,

that in Iraq we get answers, answers that, instead of letting $12

billion disappear, that those funds be used either in our district, or

to provide up-armored Humvees and MRAP vehicles that will save our

soldiers lives. Appropriate armored vests, the kind of things that will

protect our soldiers, not feather someone else's nest.

Mr. Ross, I'm proud to stand here with you tonight and have this

opportunity.

There is no question, Mr. Ross, that when we look at

our soldiers, nothing but the best is acceptable.

As you mentioned the soldiers in your district, we just had, about

three weeks ago, our South Bend, Indiana, National Guard unit head over

to some of the most dangerous duty in Iraq. And, again, they went with

their pride and with a determination to do well. And our job, my job,

your job is to make sure they have the very, very best. And it's not

appropriate to see money disappear, to see it wasted at the tune of

$300,000 a month it was. To some gentleman who is making up stories in

the back room when we think he's providing information. Our job is to

make sure that the young men and women of Arkansas, New York, Indiana,

Delaware, Pennsylvania and all our States have the very, very best

armored equipment, armored vehicles. Their safety and their return home

to their loved ones is the utmost importance.