Mr. President, we all know and understand that

Americans are deeply concerned about the war in Iraq. We all represent

the finest and bravest men and women across this great country who put

themselves in harm's way to protect our very way of life. We all want

our brave men and women who are serving in Iraq and Afghanistan to come

home as soon as possible.

Members of Georgia's military community have given mightily to our

efforts in the Middle East. In fact, members of the 3rd Infantry

Division, headquartered at Fort Stewart, GA, are heading to Iraq for

the third time as we speak, and I wish to underscore how much we

appreciate them and their families. These resolutions which the

Democrats continue to put forth undermine these men and women. Any

attempt to set a timeline for withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq, as

the latest resolution does, will embolden the enemy and tell them

exactly how long they need to wait until they are free to take over and

wreak havoc in Iraq.

I understand the desire to have the Iraqis take responsibility for

their own country and step up to the plate in terms of taking the

political, economic, and military actions necessary to secure Iraq, and

I strongly support that goal. However, this resolution is the wrong way

to accomplish it.

These resolutions--and I believe there have been about 17 put forth

over the course of the last couple of months--simply send the wrong

message to our troops, and they send the wrong message to the enemy.

Winston Churchill once said:

I think that sums up what is going on here today.

These resolutions only serve to micromanage the war by a political

body which simply is unable to do it effectively. We have a Commander

in Chief who is entrusted with managing and leading our military during

wartime, and the Commander in Chief's new plan for Iraq deserves a

chance to succeed. These resolutions are designed to ensure that the

President's plan fails, not that it succeeds.

Also, these resolutions are completely contradictory to the Senate's

support for GEN David Petraeus, our new commander of the multinational

forces in Iraq. No Senator opposed General Petraeus's nomination. I

have not heard anyone criticize him, and rightly so. We need to give

General Petraeus and his counterinsurgency campaign in Iraq a chance to

succeed. The people of Georgia, myself included, want General Petraeus

to succeed. We understand the consequences of failure, and there is no

question the latest resolution we are considering in this body will not

help him succeed.

This resolution advocates transitioning U.S. forces in Iraq to

protecting U.S. coalition personnel, training and equipping Iraqi

forces, and conducting counterterrorism operations, and calls for a

diplomatic, political, and economic strategy to stabilize Iraq. Many

people say the situation in Iraq requires a political and not a

military solution. I strongly agree with that position; however, it is

not possible to have a political solution or to make political progress

if citizens live in an unstable and unsafe society. Some level of order

and stability must be in place before a political solution can take

hold.

In America, we take order and stability for granted because we live

in a country that is extremely safe, secure, and stable. However, Iraq

is not the United States. Iraqis do not live in a secure and stable

society, and order and stability must be in place before there can be

any hope for a long-term political solution. The additional troops we

are sending are meant to create that order and stability, particularly

in Baghdad. We need to give this effort a chance to succeed, and we

need to create stability and order before we can be hopeful about a

long-term political solution.

The Reid resolution opposes the President's plan without offering any

concrete alternative. It opposes the mission which the Senate has

unanimously confirmed General Petraeus to carry out, and it will not

serve to help our troops and our commander in Iraq succeed in the

mission we have sent them on to accomplish. For these reasons, I urge

my colleagues to oppose the resolution.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.