Mr. President, I rise to talk again to the resolution

pending on the floor. I look forward to having the debate continue on

the other options for the resolution.

I am against the resolution on the floor because I do not see a

purpose. I do not see a purpose for a nonbinding resolution that makes

America look irresolute. What could we be thinking to try to take

something across the floor of the Senate or the House of

Representatives that would give any signal to our allies or to our

enemies that we cannot finish a job, that the war on terrorism is

important but not important enough to see it through?

I think of the young men and women who have died in this war. They

are giving their lives, the ultimate sacrifice, as part of their legacy

to our country. They are leaving something for our children and

grandchildren and their children and grandchildren.

If we pass nonbinding resolutions that undercut the mission and the

purpose for which they have given their lives, which is the war on

terror, to keep freedom in America, we would be doing a great

disservice that is undeserved for those great patriots. Our young men

and women throughout the years have been willing to go into the

volunteer service. The people who are fighting in this war are

volunteers.

We have had volunteers and even people who didn't volunteer in past

wars to make sure that America stood strong for freedom. I cannot

imagine that the Congress during World War II would have passed a

nonbinding resolution to say: We don't think our troops should be in

Europe.

We are sinking to new lows. I hope we can resist the political winds

that have caused us to get to this point. The only reason we would pass

a nonbinding resolution is to send a political message. I don't think

the Senators who have stood on this floor for decades before us would

have passed resolutions that meant nothing except to send a message

that would undercut our troops in the field.

Do the people who want to pass a resolution such as this believe this

isn't an important war? We are fighting for our children's futures

every bit as much as we have in any conflict in which we have been

engaged. We are fighting to keep terrorists from coming back to America

and threatening our way of life and the opportunity that America offers

for our children. If we look irresolute, if we look weak, if we look as

if we can't be strong, we will put a blemish on the sacrifice that has

been made already by so many of our young men and women, and we will

undercut those who are serving right now in the theater in Iraq. I

can't imagine, when we think this through, that that would be the

course that a deliberative Senate would take.

The President of the United States knows we have not achieved the

success we hoped to. For that reason, he is taking a different course.

Any one of us in Congress might have done it a different way. There is

no question that many in Congress are concerned about the mission. That

does not mean we take the step of a nonbinding resolution that says we

don't support the Commander in Chief. The Constitution didn't provide

for Congress to command our military. The Constitution provides one

Commander in Chief, not 535. It would be so wrong for 535 people to

second-guess the Commander in Chief, who has announced that the plan he

has put forward is one that was made in the military.

Many of us talked to General Petraeus. We asked questions, because

there are questions about embedding our troops in the field outside the

protected zone. General Petraeus totally defends the plan. He takes the

responsibility for the plan. He believes it will work. In fact, there

are signs things are getting better. There are signs the Iraqi

Government is strengthening its measures to crack down on insurgents,

militias, any of the groups that have been killing innocent people.

There are signs that there are ways this could succeed.

During one of the Senate Armed Services Committee hearings, Senator

Lieberman asked General Petraeus if a resolution such as we are voting

on today would give the enemy some encouragement, some clear expression

that the American people were divided. General Petraeus answered:

We have been talking about this for the 2 months-plus that we have

been in this session of Congress. We certainly talked about it all last

year. We will continue to talk about it. I hope what we say on the

floor is carefully crafted so we can disagree with people who do

support this resolution, and we can do it based on the Constitution, on

principles of war, on the relationship that Congress should have with

the President. All of these are legitimate. There can be disagreements

about what is the best approach for finding success, but what we cannot

disagree about is that we must win the war on terror, we must show

America's commitment, and we will not undercut our troops who are in

harm's way today.

I have seen all the iterations of the resolutions that have been

proposed by the majority. They have changed many times. Some of those

resolutions even set deadlines for us to withdraw troops. What do my

colleagues think that does for the troops who are there right now? If

our enemy knows we are going to start the withdrawal of troops on a

certain deadline, what does that do to their treatment of the people

who are on the ground right now? They would consider that we have put a

bull's-eye on every one of our young men and women with boots on the

ground right now. It would be akin to saying: We are going to leave

here so whoever is here now is not going to have the support needed to

finish this job. If we are not going to finish the job, why wouldn't

they step up their efforts, which is exactly what they would do.

We have to look at the reality. No matter what kind of front we would

put on a resolution that shows that we do not have the resolve, the

commitment to see this through, it will embolden the terrorists. When

the terrorists think we are going to leave or that we can't take it,

that we have to start an exit without regard to the success of the

mission, then what would keep them from beginning to take over Iraq,

make it a terrorist haven, make it the training ground from which they

could proliferate weapons of mass destruction and terrorists all over

the world? We have already seen that in many specific instances. This

would give them a bigger field in which to train, one that is not going

to be necessary to hide. It will give them more revenue to produce

weapons that could hurt even more.

I have cosponsored S. Res. 70, the McCain resolution, which renews

our commitment to defeating the terrorists in Iraq and winning the war.

That is a resolution that we should all support. Congress has the right

to cut off funds, but I cannot imagine that responsible Members of this

body would vote for a resolution that would cut off funds and say we

are not going to give the troops who are there the equipment, training,

and protection they need to do the job. That would be unthinkable. That

is one of the resolutions also pending for us to address.

Losing this war will not make America safer. This is a war that must

be fought. It must be won, not just for the sake of the Iraqi people.

It is for the sake of America. It is for the sake of freedom. It is

wiping out terrorists where they are so they do not harm innocent

people in America again.

I hope cooler heads will prevail. I hope this deliberative body that

has a great history for our country and in the world will see we should

not be taking the political position. We should not be testing the

political winds because what we say has consequences. What we say can

be used as propaganda against our troops who are in harm's way. Most

certainly, it can be used to embolden those who are training right now

to attack America.

I hope, in the end, we will defeat the Reid resolution, that we will

take up some of the other resolutions, and we will keep in mind that

what we say and the longer we talk about it, the more dangerous it can

become for our troops and for the likely success of the mission that is

before us. We want the Iraqi Government to take the responsibility for

the safety and security of the Iraqi people. What do Senators think the

Iraqi Government is going to do to make that happen, if they think

America's resolve is wavering, if they think we might set a deadline in

which to leave, if they think we might start a graceful exit before

they have the ability achieve security?

We can't let the Iraqi Government think we are going to plan for an

exit before we have won the war, secured Iraq, kept the terrorists from

having a training ground and revenue to harm more innocent people in

the world or we will not be standing for the traditions and the spirit

and the commitment to freedom that Americans have made throughout the

generations of our country.

That is not a legacy I think any Member of the Senate would want to

leave. I certainly do not want to leave that legacy for my children and

grandchildren, nor for the children and the next generation of the

State I represent and love so much, the State of Texas, nor for the

children and grandchildren of Americans, the country I am serving. I

hope we will not forget exactly what our legacy will be if we do the

political thing rather than the right thing.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.