Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the time here tonight.

There has been so much discussion today about the resolution on which

we will vote tomorrow that we wanted to address that. And I have a

friend with whom I went to Iraq in April, Congressman Shays from

Connecticut, who will also be assisting in this hour.

I would just like to clarify for those who are interested what this

resolution involves. Because the time is short remaining, I won't read

all of the whereases, but I will go straight to what is normally

referred to as wherefores.

Resolved that the House of Representatives honors all of those

Americans who have taken an active part in the global war on terror,

whether as first responders protecting the homeland, as service members

overseas, as diplomats and intelligence officers, or in other roles.

Honors the sacrifices of the United States Armed Forces and our

partners in the coalition and of the Iraqis and Afghans who fight

alongside them, especially those who have fallen or been wounded in the

struggle, and honors as well the sacrifices of their families and

others who risk their lives to help defend freedom.

Number 3, declares that it is not in the national security interests

of the United States to set an arbitrary date for the withdrawal or

redeployment of the United States Armed Forces from Iraq.

Number 4, declares that the United States is committed to the

completion the mission to create a sovereign, free secure and United

Iraq.

Five, congratulates Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki and the Iraqi

people on the courage they have shown by participating, in increasing

millions, in the elections of 2005 and on the formation of the first

government under Iraq's new Constitution.

Number 6, calls upon the nations of the world to promote global peace

and security by standing with the United States and other coalition

partners to support the efforts of the Iraqi and Afghan people to live

in freedom.

And 7, declares that the United States will prevail in the global war

on terror, the noble struggle to protect freedom from the terrorist

adversary.

And I think that last point, Mr. Speaker, is the one on which there

is so much dissension from the other side and there are a few Members

on our side that are concerned, but it declares, we actually believe,

and a positive vote tomorrow will indicate, we believe we are going to

prevail in the global war on terror. And the truth of the matter is we

don't have a choice. It is either prevail on the global war on terror,

or be prepared to give up so many freedoms that I do not want to see

this Nation give up. Far too many people have given their lives to get

us what we have.

Now, one note I would like to address that has been brought up time

and time again, well, the President lied to us about WMDs. There are no

weapons of mass destruction. Well, we know there were at one time. But

to hear it said over and over, and hear again today, during the day

today, over and over, well, the President lied to us about weapons of

mass destruction. The President lied to us about weapons of mass

destruction. His administration lied to us about weapons of mass

destruction. And I think the jury is still out. We are finding

documents that apparently refer to things that were taken to Syria.

There may be things that turn up that we haven't yet found.

But let's say, for argument purposes, that there are no weapons of

mass destruction. You know, being a Christian

is part of who I am. We have been taught to forgive. I think it is high

time, if the President lied to us about weapons of mass destruction,

then let's forgive President Clinton for all those lies. Let's forgive

his administration, people like Madeleine Albright that lied, and let's

move on. Let's put that behind us and just get on down the road.

And I would like to say, I do appreciate the visitation that

Congressman Murtha makes to those who have been injured and harmed and

to the grieving families. He is very devoted in his visitation. And it

obviously, as I have talked to him, it obviously affects him, as it

would any of us that see people suffer.

There in East Texas, in my district, we had a Private First Class

Steven Wright who is 19 years old. Was killed, he was from Kilgore,

Texas. And, you know, some us, this was before I got elected to

Congress. But having spent 4 years in the Army, I have been to funerals

enough, back in the days when people didn't come to service members'

funerals. And they present the flag to the deceased family and say, on

behalf of a grateful Nation and they would look around, go where is the

grateful Nation. There is nobody here. Just a few friends. Where is the

grateful Nation?

And so out of concern that there might not be many show up to that

young man's funeral, this hero, Steven Wright from Kilgore, many of us

showed up from around east Texas that have been in the service before.

And I am telling you, that little rural church was a few miles from the

cemetery there on Highway 31. And I ended up at the back, and I checked

the mileage. There were cars creeping along three solid miles to have

their opportunity at the cemetery to pay tribute to that young man and

his family. And I saw them again Memorial Day, his family. They know

what the price is. They are not ready for us to cut and run. They know

that to do that would diminish the value of what Private Wyatt fought

and died for.

We had a Marine that I visited 2 or 3 weeks ago from Marshall, Tony

Flynn. He took a mortar round in the chest. And I think through the

prayers and the grace of God, he is doing well. And his mom was there

with him. He is doing well. I tell you, there have been so many

sacrifices. How tragic if we were to cut and run and leave all that has

been done. So close. I mean, democracy is right there within their

grasp. And when I was with Congressman Shays and Congressman Marshall

over there, we had a meeting, the leader of the Kurdish party, Shiia

party, Sunni party, and in talking with them, one of the things I

mentioned to them was that it is within their grasp. Just get the Prime

Minister appointed. Get the cabinet appointed; that they can let this

opportunity pass them by and they will be forgotten, or they can grasp

it and they would be the George Washingtons and the John Adams and the

Patrick Henrys of this next, well, of the next generations to come, as

well as in the Middle East itself.

I couldn't help but note, my good friend Mr. Scott said there is no

good result that can occur from what we are doing there. Well, I have

got good news. There have already been good results. You took a country

that had never experienced democracy, never knew democracy, and yet in

2005, that first election, there were fliers all over the country,

little fliers, had two sentences in their language that simply said,

you vote, you die. Despite those all over the countryside, people

turned out in millions to vote. They did it again for a constitution,

and they came out in even greater numbers, and the Sunnis participated

in the election in December. I am so proud of the courage of those

people.

And I would like, at this time, to yield to my friend from

Connecticut (Mr. Shays). As far I know, I don't believe there is any

other Member of Congress that has been more times to Iraq to ensure

that we are doing the right thing, that our money is being spent

appropriately, that we are giving our troops the things they deserve

because of his heartfelt desire, and he is a big hearted man. But his

heartfelt desire to make sure that our people are protected, our guys

in harm's way are getting what they need and we are doing the right

thing.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would be interested in hearing from my good

friend, Mr. Shays from Connecticut, on this subject at this time. I

yield to Mr. Shays.

Mr. SHAYS. I thank the gentleman for yielding. And just to say that I

appreciate the opportunity to appear with him and to have some

dialogue.

Being to Iraq 12 times has been very interesting for me because what

I have been able to do, I go every 3 or 4 months and I am able to kind

of graph out how well we are doing or how well we are not doing and to

have a sense of where we are headed.

If you were to just take April 2003 when I was there, and now, in

June of 2006, you would say, well, we are not, things aren't as good as

they were way back in April when everyone was euphoric. And if you are

tempted to draw those two points you see a downward slope. But if you

were an economist or anyone else looking at a graph you would say,

well, what happened in between? Is the trend line up or is it down?

Well, it has clearly been up. And the reason it has been up is that we

saw a serious decline in what happened in Iraq shortly after we took

over. We, unfortunately, allowed for the looting. We, unfortunately,

didn't take charge of the munitions depots. So Iraqis got in there and

took out a lot of armaments. And then we, and I think this was the

biggest mistake. We allowed their army, their border patrol and their

police to be disbanded.

Now, what we basically said to 26 million Iraqis is, you have no

police, no border patrol and army. And then what we said to 150,000

troops, mostly Americans, is you have to be their army, their police

and their border patrol. Really, an impossible task. And I say that

with a lot of regret, but also with the recognition that explains why

things really started to decline. And what you then saw is the fact

that you saw the Iraqis have real concerns about the United States. We

had said, you lay down your arms, don't fight, and we will work with

you. And the Iraqis would say to me, why are you putting my brother and

my father and my uncle, my cousin, my son, particularly my husband out

of work? That was their argument. And they said, why can't they at

least guard a hospital?

Well, those were very poignant words for me because the first death

we had was Wilfredo Perez from Norwalk, a young man who was guarding a

hospital. We had another death Tyanna Avery Felder, this young woman

from Bridgeport. And then we lost another American, Jack Dempsey, a

very young man who graduated from high school and wanted to be in the

Marines, and he went in the Marines instead of going on to college.

These three fine Americans from my district lost their lives. I can

look their families in the eye and say, without any hesitation

whatsoever, that they did not die in vain. I can say that so long as we

don't abandon Iraq, leave prematurely.

When we dug this hole with no army, no police and border patrol, and

asked our military, we saw the problems that we have seen. But then

what did we do to turn this corner and head in the right direction? We

started to train their police, their border patrol and their army. That

is what we did. And we saw in 2005, extraordinary elections. I was

there for the first election. It was one of the most thrilling things

that I have ever seen in my entire life. We were in a Kurdish area, in

Irbil, and we saw Iraqi women bringing their husbands and family

members to vote. They were so excited that after they voted they

celebrated. And I was so excited watching these brave people as they

voted. And what I saw was something pretty extraordinary. What I saw

were Iraqis thrilled with the opportunity to vote. And I asked if I

could put my finger in that ink jar. And they looked at me and said,

with some astonishment, no. You are not an Iraqi. And I thought, she

could have said I wasn't a Kurd. But she said I wasn't an Iraqi. She

didn't think of Sunni, Shiia and Kurd. In fact, when I go to Iraq and I

will ask someone, are you a Kurd or a Shiia or a Sunni, they will say I

am a Shiia, but I am married to a Sunni, or I will ask someone the same

question. They will say, I am a Kurd. But sir, Kurds are Sunnis.

For me, it is an amazing thing to go to that country and to see the

absolute conviction that Iraqis have that they can have a better

future. And I think as I am seeing this, back here at home we are

saying we need to leave. Again,

when I ask the Iraqis what is their biggest fear, their biggest fear is

this, that you will leave us, that you will leave us before we can take

hold of democracy and own it.

And I know my colleague made reference to the concept of lying. There

is no question in my mind that anyone lied about weapons of mass

destruction, not a scintilla of doubt about that issue. And I could

confirm it in a whole host of ways. One is, we didn't let our troops go

into Iraq until every one of them had protective chemical gear.

If we didn't think they had chemicals, if we didn't think they would

use it, we sure as heck would not have spent our time doing that. What

we should have made sure of was that they had body armor. So they did

not have body armor. They had exactly what we thought they needed:

protective gear against chemicals.

When I went to the Brits, the French, the Turks, the Jordanians, and

the Iraqis, they all said this to me: He has weapons of mass

destruction. Only the French said he wouldn't use it.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to use the

remainder of the time being there is no one here.

Reclaiming my time, you brought up the point about an

arbitrary date earlier tonight and then again just now, and for

illustration purposes I can't help but think about World War II. And

here you had Hitler basically hunkered down trying to withstand the

onslaught as Patton and the 3rd Army and Montgomery moved forward. What

if Congress had demanded a date at that time or before then and said if

we do not win by, say, December 1 of 1945, it is hard to imagine but

you know good and well Hitler would never have killed himself. He would

have been in a bunker saying if we can just hold out, if I can stay on

the run and stay alive until December 1, I win and I will be alive and

can carry on some other day and continue with basically guerrilla

tactics.

As the gentleman from Connecticut has said, no war has ever been won

by setting an arbitrary date beyond which we were not willing to fight.

Once the enemy knows that there is a date and that is all they have to

get by, then it is just a matter of their surviving until that date and

then they win.

Of course, being a history major at Texas A&M, I also am

a great fan of history and do believe the adage those who refuse to

learn from history are destined to repeat it. And then, of course, the

follow-up to that is those who do learn from history will find new ways

to mess up.

But going back to the Revolutionary War, the gentleman from

Connecticut gives a great example. As history indicates, and McCullough

did a great job of documenting this in his book 1776, before the

victory December 24, 1776, where Washington crossed the Delaware, there

was not much to really crow about. And as the gentleman well knows,

that retreat from over to Manhattan with the superior British forces

there could have been a disaster and would have been if the wind had

been blowing the other way. But I think it was providential that fog

came in and covered their retreat. But I believe it was on December 27,

not only did the Congress not set an arbitrary date by which he had to

win, they were so committed to victory, they passed a resolution that

basically gave Washington whatever power he needed, whatever authority

to spend money he needed to get the job done, to get the troops

reassigned so that they could fight until they won the war. That is how

committed they were. And in the cover letter, as I recall, and this is

a testimonial to Washington's being the man for the time, it went along

the lines of basically we submit a copy of the resolution and knowing

that neither man nor his liberty will be in jeopardy with your having

all this power, and then when it is no longer necessary, you will

return it back, as well he did. But what a contrast to the discussion

today to say, you know what, let us set an arbitrary date over here and

then just pull out after that. We would not have had a successful

conclusion to the American Revolution.

I would like to address something here. This is taken off-line from

USA Today. And it says ``Text of a Document Discovered in Zarqawi's

Safe House,'' and then it has updated June 15, 2006, 2:31 am, the

Associated Press. And it says ``Text of a document discovered in terror

leader Abu Musab al Zarqawi's hideout. The document was provided in

English by Iraqi National security adviser Mouwafak al Rubaie. And this

is supposedly from these guys, that it was discovered in a safe house.

And it documents exactly the things that so many on the other side and

a few on our side have been saying is not the case. Our own enemies

have documented what Mr. Scott will be glad to know are good results

that have been occurring.

And it goes on to say, and these are the terrorists writing this:

The terrorists call themselves resisters.

The resistance being the

terrorists, which is just what the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr.

Shays) was saying earlier. We have been there. They are training them.

Some opponents are saying we have not been able to train people, that

they cannot protect themselves. Well, the terrorists are saying in this

document that our forces have been able to form them and train them and

reinforce them and enable them to undertake military operations.

Reclaiming the time, it is such a great point. He was

killed.

I will tell you, I do not know if the gentleman has been hearing some

of the ridiculous reports. One thing we have seen from this

administration is they cannot keep secrets too well. The President went

to Iraq without but a handful of people knowing. But if they try to

keep a secret very long, somebody leaks from all over the place. And so

there were some reports, and I couldn't help but shake my head, that

said, We think they had Zarqawi on ice in a freezer somewhere and they

just brought him out. And some have said he was beaten to death, that a

bomb did not do that. Do you want to know how absurd that is? Can you

imagine this administration having Zarqawi in a freezer somewhere for

weeks and somebody not leaking that? I am sorry. That could not happen.

That would have been leaked by somebody that they have got Zarqawi on

ice.

Those are important words from our former President

Clinton, who had said himself numerous times that they did have weapons

of mass destruction in Iraq, that Saddam did, and I am glad to hear

that he is recognizing that an arbitrary withdrawal would be

devastating.

There are numerous other things here in this document. If I could

just touch on a couple very briefly as our time comes to a conclusion.

He goes through about how the picture is bleak, and he goes on to say:

And

he has a strategy. The strategy is to use the media for spreading an

effective and creative image of the resistance, or otherwise the

terrorists. Another point was to create division and strife between

America and other countries and among the elements disagreeing with it.

This would be al Qaeda that is saying this. They realize

that they are in a crisis, they are big trouble, and that we are

prevailing and that the situation looks bleak.

We believe the United States will prevail in the global war on terror

and the noble struggle to protect freedom from terrorist adversaries

will be all worthwhile.