Madam President,

along with my dear friends and colleagues,

Senators WARNER, BAYH, and

MCCAIN, I am proud to introduce this

bipartisan resolution which would authorize

the President of the United

States to use the Armed Forces of the

United States as he determines to be

necessary and appropriate in order to

defend the national security of the

United States against the continuing

threat posed by Iraq, and to enforce all

relevant United Nations Security

Council resolutions regarding Iraq.

There is no more fateful or difficult

decision that we as Senators are ever

called upon to make than a decision as

to whether and when and how to authorize

the President as Commander in

Chief to put the men and women of the

U.S. military into battle.

Each Member of the Senate must

make this decision at this hour according

to their personal conscience and

their sense of what is best for the security

of the people of the United States

of America.

For my part, and that of my colleagues,

I have made that decision. For

more than a decade now, Saddam Hussein

has threatened the peace and security

of his region and the wider world.

We went to war in 1991 to roll back his

aggression—an invasion of Kuwait—because

we determined across party lines

that Saddam Hussein had ambitions

that were hostile to America’s security

and the peace of the world to become

the dominant power in the Arab world

which, if ever realized, would be bad for

the Arab world, bad for the peace and

security of the broader region, and

very bad for the people of the United

States. We won that war in Kuwait—

Operation Desert Storm—but Saddam

Hussein has continued for the decade

since then, notwithstanding documents

that Iraq signed to conclude the gulf

war, to thwart the rule of law internationally,

to deceive and deny all that

he had promised to do at the end of the

gulf war, and all that the United Nations

called on him to do in the years

since then. He has continued, without

question, to develop weapons of mass

destruction and the means to deliver

them on distant targets. He has continued

to earn a dubious place on that

small list of countries that the State

Department considers state sponsors of

terrorism.

Even today, Iraq has provided shelter

for significant figures within al-Qaida

who struck us on September 11, as they

have fled from American military

forces in Afghanistan.

President Bush has said that the

hour of truth has arrived. We can no

longer tolerate the intransigence and

danger posed by Saddam Hussein. He

has gone to the U.N. and sought support

from the international community.

This resolution is our attempt to express

our support of the President as

Commander in Chief in seeking international

backing for action against

Saddam Hussein. It is also a way to

strengthen the President’s hand as

Commander in Chief. If Saddam Hussein

does not comply, or if the United

Nations is not willing to take action to

enforce its orders, in my opinion, this

is the last chance for Saddam Hussein

but also the best chance for the international

community to come together

to prove that resolutions of the United

Nations mean more and have more

weight than the paper on which they

are written.

It is also the hour for Members of

Congress to draw together across party

lines to support the national security

of the United States. A debate will follow

in the days ahead. It is an important

debate that should not be rushed.

It should be reflective. Ultimately, I

am confident the resolution that Senators

WARNER, BAYH, MCCAIN, and I are

introducing will enjoy the broad, bipartisan

support that our national security

demands at this time.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.