Madam President, I rise

today to join my three colleagues, Senator

WARNER, the distinguished ranking

member and former chairman of

the Armed Services Committee, Senator

BAYH, and Senator LIEBERMAN. I

am always honored to have my name

associated with these three outstanding

public servants.

This resolution, we should make very

clear, is the text of the resolution

agreed to this morning by the President

of the United States and congressional

leaders. This is the exact text of

a resolution that was agreed to in

hopes the debate will take place on two

exact resolutions in both Houses of the

Congress. I believe with open, spirited

debate and discussion, we will come to

a consensus which is broad based, and

following a debate which I think will

be illuminating and educational to the

American people, as well as our colleagues.

America is at war with terrorists who

murdered our people one year ago. We

now contemplate carrying the battle to

a new front—Iraq—where a tyrant who

has the capabilities and the intentions

to do us harm is plotting, biding his

time until his capabilities give him the

means to carry out his ambitions, perhaps

through cooperation with terrorists—

when confronting him will be

much harder and impose a terrible

cost.

Saddam Hussein is in patent violation

of the terms of the Gulf war

ceasefire and 16 United Nations Security

Council resolutions. He possesses

weaponized chemical and biological

weapons and is aggressively developing

nuclear weapons. He holds the perverse

distinction of having used weapons of

mass destruction against both his own

people and his enemies—the only dictator

on Earth who has done so. As our

President has said, Saddam Hussein’s

Iraq is a grave and gathering danger, a

clear threat to American security and

the security of our friends in the region.

As I just mentioned, Congress must

debate the question of war with Iraq. It

is appropriate and right for the people

of the United States to have their

voices heard in this debate through

their representatives in Congress. But

as the President has said, the nation

must speak with one voice once we determine

to take a course that will most

likely send our nation’s young men and

women to war.

The President has patiently worked

with Congressional leaders to craft a

resolution authorizing him to take necessary

action in Iraq to defend American

national security and enforce all

relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions.

The resolution is a product of

compromise that protects both congressional

prerogatives and the authority

of the Commander in Chief to use

whatever means he determines necessary

to protect American security.

The President’s authority is not absolute

on these matters. But he is the

Commander in Chief, and he has made

clear that congressional action to tie

his hands, to limit the way he can respond

to threats to the security of the

American people, will damage our

country’s ability to respond to the

clear and present danger posed by Saddam

Hussein’s Iraq.

There is a reason why the Constitution

vests shared power in the President

and the Congress on matters of

war. But there is also a reason why the

Constitution recognizes the President

of the United States as Commander in

Chief. Limiting the President’s ability

to defend the United States, when Congress

and the President agree on the

nature of the threat posed to the

United States by Iraq, is unwise.

No resolution tying the President’s

hands or limiting the President’s ability

to respond to a clearly defined

threat can anticipate the decisions the

President will have to make in coming

weeks and months, with American

forces deployed overseas on his orders,

to defend American security. We cannot

foresee the course or end of this

conflict, even though to most of us the

threat is abundantly clear, and the

course of action we must pursue is apparent.

That’s why there is one Commander

in Chief, not 535 of them. Restricting

the President’s flexibility to

conduct military action against a

threat that has been defined and identified

makes the United States less capable

of responding to that threat.

Supporting the President in his role

as Commander in Chief does not necessarily

mean supporting the President’s

policy on matters of national security.

In 1995, President Clinton determined

to deploy American forces to

Bosnia to uphold a fragile peace in a

land where many said peace was not

possible. Until that time, I had serious

concerns about the administration’s

policy in the Balkans. But once the

President made his decision, I worked

with Senator Bob Dole, Senator WARNER

and many of my colleagues to

make sure the President—a President

from the other party whom we had

criticized harshly for his conduct of national

security policy—had the support

he needed to enforce the peace in Bosnia.

I think my friend Senator Dole

would agree with me that it was one of

the high points of our service in the

Senate.

Thanks to the President’s leadership

over the past few months, the Congress

has been moving steadily to support

the President’s determination to hold

Saddam Hussein accountable to the

world. I urge all my colleagues to

renew their efforts to come together on

one resolution—to show the world we

are united with the President to enforce

the terms of the gulf war

ceasefire and prevent Saddam Hussein

from threatening our and the world’s

security ever again.

Again, I want to thank Senator

LIEBERMAN, Senator BAYH, and Senator

WARNER, and I especially would like to

mention Senator LIEBERMAN and Senator

BAYH have shown some courage on

the floor of the Senate, as Senator

WARNER and I have had to do in the

past, when perhaps the majority of our

party may not have been in complete

agreement.

I yield the floor.