

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution.

I wish our action today were unnecessary. As I noted earlier this year when the President initiated military action in Libya, he would have been better served by putting this matter before this body in advance of taking action, not afterwards. And as I predicted then, the President has been subjected to almost daily second guessing, criticism, and frequently partisan attacks over this operation. All of this was avoidable.

None of us wish to abandon freedom-seeking Libyans or our NATO allies, and a vote for this resolution does not mean we are doing either. Our logistical and intelligence support to NATO will continue uninterrupted. Our capacity to conduct cover action to assist the Libyan rebels will remain unimpeded. And the ability of the international community to continue to provide humanitarian aid to the people of Libya will be unaffected.

I am voting for the Rooney bill for what it says, not for what some in the majority say it says. This should not be used as a club to attack President Obama. I will support this measure because it is absolutely imperative for the Congress, as an institution, to remind the President that the power to authorize military actions and war resides in this body. We strengthen our democracy by passing this resolution, we strengthen this institution by passing this resolution, and we honor our NATO obligations, and we stand by Libyans seeking self-determination, and that is why I urge my colleagues to join me in passing this resolution.