Madam Speaker, nine more soldiers are dead,

and our soldiers can claim victory in Iraq. Madam Speaker, even after

losing thousands of American lives and spending billions of taxpayer

dollars, the Bush administration continues to demand an open-ended

commitment of American troops in Iraq with no exit plan and no

strategy.

But this Democratic Congress, the leadership of Speaker Pelosi,

understands the responsibility of war. We understand the commitment to

the American people, and, yes, we understand the needs of national

security. Retired military officers support our plan and the new

direction for Iraq to begin to redeploy our troops to begin to bring

them home.

Secretary Gates has gone to Iraq trying to stop the bleeding, but he

believes that congressional debate is helpful, and he has said that the

clock is ticking. Can the Bush administration understand that? The

Pentagon has confirmed, through a Congressional Research Service

report, that the President's comments about us stopping funding, the

Congress stopping funding, is absolutely wrong.

We need to save lives. We need to restore the confidence and the

leadership in Iraq, but we need to claim victory for our soldiers. They

have done their job. It's time to bring them home now.