Mr. President, this morning I got up and I went to get

on an airplane and the plane was delayed because of mechanical issues.

Then I got the word that the leader said we should come vote on

questions being discussed, just as I heard now.

I am here to participate in a charade. This is nothing but a charade.

It is a nonbinding resolution. We are coming back to vote on Saturday

on a nonbinding resolution that the American public doesn't support. As

a matter of fact, as I read in The Hill newspaper and as I see on the

front page, there is the majority leader's photograph and a story about

how the majority is trying to embarrass the 21 of us who are up for

election in 2008. I think the majority--current majority, former

minority--ought to look at that paper. Inside it, after giving the

majority leader credit for this charade, is a poll. It is an online

poll, and this was a question: Does debate on a nonbinding Iraq

resolution help or harm Americans? Harm: 57 percent; help, 43 percent.

Nothing at all will be accomplished tomorrow, even if we got cloture.

We would vote on a nonbinding resolution that is an embarrassment to

the troops that are wearing our uniforms in Iraq. What we should be

doing is voting on cloture on a series of votes which would include

Senator Gregg's resolution or amendment that declares our support for

our troops.

The reason we face this situation today is the new majority, with one

vote--a majority of one vote--went over to the House and negotiated a

resolution--a nonbinding, nothing resolution--and brought it over here

and said: You are going to vote on this resolution and nothing else. If

we do this, we become a lower body of the House. The House, in

responding to the Rules Committee, had no chance to offer any

amendments to that bill. Over here, the majority leader says: You

cannot offer any amendments to this because I am the leader.

Well, it is time we showed this leader the processes of the Senate

are here for the purpose of allowing debate. The House represents the

population of a whole series of congressional districts. We represent

our States. The national viewpoint is settled in the Senate. This is

the place where debate is supposed to take place and it should not be

limited.

If we voted for cloture on this resolution tomorrow, we would not be

allowed to vote on the Gregg amendment. The Gregg amendment:

What is wrong with that? Why won't the leader let us vote on that?

You

know why? Because it would carry. It would carry. Because Senators on

that other side of the aisle know they must support the forces in the

field.

Senator Gregg's amendment goes on to say:

Senator Gregg goes on to say this:

And they have to concur if we send it back to them--

It is nothing but a charade to say an amendment that does nothing

should not have a resolution such as this attached to it. That is our

purpose. That is our job. It is our constitutional responsibility to

support the forces in the field.

I am ashamed the Senate is taking action to prevent the voting on a

resolution, once again, establishing the principle. Our duty is to

support our forces in the field.

I have a chart to show, but it is difficult for many to understand

why we need surge forces. This whole concept we are talking about is

safety. Senator Gregg's resolution deals with safety of our forces.

This is a chart that shows the Iraqi Army and national police with lead

responsibility for counterinsurgency operations in their areas.

In May of 2006 this was their deployment, fairly small. By February

of 2007, this is their deployment. We are now in the process of going

forward on the new plan to deal with the fact that we have trained a

great many of these forces now, but they have not been moved into the

areas of real combat, and those are the white spaces on this chart. The

whole idea now is to start moving these forces into those areas.

By the way, the hot spots are also on arterial highways in Iraq. This

demonstrates where it is. The white areas are occupied by American

forces and coalition forces. We want to give them a chance now to move

them into those areas. As such, forces will be moving all over this

country. In that period of time, these additional surge forces are

necessary in order to provide the safety for the people whom they are

going to be moving. They are our forces, they are their forces.

Secretary Gates has said he does not think they will be there too long.

He made a point to make that statement. They will come out as soon as

they are no longer needed. Safety is a problem.

To those people who say: Let's get ready to withdraw, if we try to

withdraw right now, there would be mass murder in this country. Think

of what happened to the Russians and the Soviets when they tried to get

out of Afghanistan--and multiply it by factors of 10 to 20. We are

spread out all over this place and so are the Iraqis because that was

the problem, we were providing for the defense until they were ready to

move in and take care of their defense.

This is a chart that shows the current position of forces in Iraqi

Freedom. We can see various operations, Japanese and coalition forces,

including the British, around the periphery. We are there, in Baghdad,

on the major highways. We are in the white spaces on the chart. To get

the Iraqi forces in there, we have a new scheme where we will have

Iraqi brigades--not divisions but brigades--with an embedded battalion

in each brigade move in. Our people will be along with them to make

sure their training is carried out and they do the job of defending

themselves.

As a practical matter, in order to do that, we need the increased

safety of movement in this country. I fully support the plan. It was an

Iraqi plan improved on by Secretary Gates, the President, and his

staff. Very clearly, the whole program is so they can provide the basic

defense for themselves in areas where there is key opposition.

Assume the other side, the side who wants to withdraw, would get

approval of the Congress and had some way to mandate the President to

withdraw forces. The first thing that would have to be done would be to

move the Iraqi forces in there where they can defend themselves and

hold back the insurgents currently combatting our forces.

I am not a general, I am not even an armchair general, but I have

been around wars for almost all my life now starting out when I was 19.

I have seen a great many wars, and I have seen a great many problems

with war. Coming back from overseas, I talked to some of my friends and

I decided I was going to become an aeronautical engineer to try to find

out what caused wars. I hate wars. But I know my duty is to support the

military and to support those people carrying out our constitutional

mandate to provide for the common defense of this country.

In my opinion, this is the common defense of our country. We have

taken on the task of trying to stop a movement that could very well

destroy the world. I do believe we should stop these incessant debates

on resolutions that mean nothing. Why would we spend all this time and

come back on Saturday in order to vote on a nonbinding resolution that

would not do a thing? It would not do a thing at all for anyone in that

conflict, not one thing. It is nothing but a charade, a charade. It

embarrasses me to have to say that. The whole reason for it, pick up

The Hill newspaper, back to where I started, to provide a challenge to

the 21 Members, Republicans, up for election in 2008, 3 on that side of

the aisle. The whole idea is to try to see if we cannot force them to

come back on Saturday in order to say to our State constituents: They

were not here to vote. I am here to vote. I happened to get off the

airplane because I was pretty irritated when I read that story. I am

still irritated.

I remember Steve Syms in 1986, when everyone was trying to embarrass

people up for election, he said: I am going home and I am going to talk

to my constituents, and he did not get sucked back into the debates

such as this. He was reelected.

What these people do not know is, we are going to stand up and speak

up. We are going to call a spade a spade. This is a charade. I have not

been home since January. And I got off that plane to come back and

complain about this. I have a right to go home once in a while. I live

4,500 miles from here. As a matter of fact, I am stopping off on my way

home to see a very sick relative before I get to Alaska on Monday.

Leadership is leadership, and I have been in leadership in this Senate.

I was not elected leader, but that is another story. As a practical

matter, I have seen leaders come and I have seen leaders go. My friend

from Nevada has been my friend for a long time. I am saying I am not

going to be embarrassed to come out and say this is nothing but a

charade. We should not come back tomorrow to vote on a nonbinding

resolution to see if we would vote on a resolution that doesn't tell

the story that America wants us to tell, and that story is we support

our forces in the field, we support what they are doing. We want them

to do what we said we would do, move the forces in that are now trained

in Iraq. Let them show how they can defend themselves and we then pull

out our embedded battalions and we will be in a position to figure out

what is the long-term plan now for this new democracy we have helped

establish.

What does this nonbinding resolution do to people in the field? What

does it do to the Iraqis? What is it selling them? People are telling

me now we should find some way to take the money the President has

asked for, the supplemental, and to use it for something else--not to

use it to support the people in the field.

There is what is called the Food and Forage Act of the United States.

I hope the Senate understands that act. I have been involved in defense

appropriations now for over 25 years. The President of the United

States has the authority to take money from wherever it is to support

forces in the field. We will never abandon our people in the field. We

will support them in every way possible. That is why the current

majority does not want to vote on the resolution of Senator Gregg. They

do not want to be put in a position of saying no to Senator Gregg

because if they vote, if they support that resolution, they are

continuing the concepts that have been embodied in my life and in the

Senate's life as long as I have known it. That is, we support our

forces in the field. We are not going to divert money they need for

their support, and we are not going to waste our time on nonbinding

resolutions that do not do anything to help anybody.

We have a lot of things we could be working on, immigration, energy,

global climate change. What are we doing? We are spending our time

coming back on Saturday to debate whether we should vote on a bill that

was started in the House of Representatives, with not one amendment,

and brought over here, not one amendment, and expresses a point of view

that the American public does not approve of.

I hope we can get to a debate one of these days, and people will stay

around after they make comments such as I heard before I came in. I

guarantee, in my heart and in my mind, I know what it means to be in

uniform, what it means to be in a position to feel it is necessary to

have support at home.

I spent some time last night talking to Colin Powell, one of the

famous generals of this country, and reminded him once when we were

talking years ago, he told me about the time when he was sent into Laos

as a young captain with about 12 days' rations and how when you get up

on the morning of the 12th day and realize a drop mission is coming to

give you your rations for the next 12 days, how you realize what it

means to rely on people, to understand that people in the United States

are behind their military, to know you can eat those rations because

the supplies are going to come in when they are supposed to come in.

That is support to people in the field.

Another concept I speak of is our people have a doctrine that hardly

any armies or military in the world has had--we never abandon our

forces in the field. What these people are doing now if you listen to

them on this other resolution, they are saying, we are going to take

and divert this money and put it somewhere else. Not this Senator. If

they need that money over there to carry out the commands of the

Commander in Chief, I am going to support it. The Senate should support

it. We should stop this business of trying to embarrass people who are

up for election and demanding they come back and vote on Saturday.

This recess was announced a month ago. Those who live a long distance

from here rely on that. The Senate has to start keeping its commitments

to our Members whether they are up for election or not.

This is political posturing at its worse. I will be here to vote

tomorrow to represent some of those people who could not get back. I

stayed to vote so I could come and say this: Political posturing has no

place in the Senate of the United States.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.