Mr. Chairman, I would like to express my strong objection

to the House Republican Leadership combining two separate emergency

supplementals into a single bill. The response to Hurricane Katrina and

the Iraqi war deserve separate debates and significant oversight and

deliberation.

The human suffering that our neighbors along the Gulf Coast

experienced and continue to experience seven months later cannot be

underestimated. It will take a sustained federal and state, public and

private commitment to help those affected get back on their feet. While

I support a long-term reconstruction of the Gulf region, I cannot in

good conscience vote for this bill.

I strongly believe we need better oversight of supplemental funding

bills, particularly those that fund ``the long war.'' There were

excellent amendments offered on the floor today that I supported that

should have passed if Congress had been exercising its Constitutional

oversight role. For instance, I supported an Iraqi contracting

amendment and one to prevent permanent bases in Iraq. We cannot become

occupiers.

On this third anniversary of the war, our soldiers, our national

guard, their families and all Americans deserve better than platitudes

from

the Administration. I have repeatedly called for greater Congressional

oversight and an exit strategy, while recognizing that our troops have

done an excellent job, despite often lacking sufficient body armor or

equipment. I welcome the President's statements that troops will be

drawn down by the end of the year, but I believe that our soldiers are

being placed in an untenable situation, and need to be brought home as

soon as possible.