I am here to speak about Iraq. Americans are tired of

this war, but at the same time they want to secure the best of the

situation for the perception of security not just in that region but

globally.

I watch the Republicans and our concern as Democrats is that they

believe that our military might provide a solution in Iraq. I look at

my party and my concern is that we need to stop the impure opposition

and to begin to help craft, to help author an implementable,

comprehensive Middle East/Persian Gulf security plan. But to do that,

we obviously need a union with our Republican brethren.

I honestly believe that when people talk about taking care of our

troops, the belief is not that we use them in war when necessary but

where and how we use them. There are the elements right now to begin to

come together in a union to craft a comprehensive end to this tragic

misadventure that can meet the goals of both sides.

First, we have an army that is strained and by next April we will be

at the point of almost irreparable harm for some years to come. Second,

we know that in order to redeploy that army out of Iraq, it will take

time. When the Soviet Union left Afghanistan with 120,000 troops, it

took them 9 months and because of the ill preparation, 500 died on the

way. We have 160,000 troops, 100,000 contractors. We must work well to

get them to redeploy safely. They can only take in Kuwait two to two

and a half brigades at a time. Forty combat equivalent brigades are in

Iraq. The math comes out to a minimum of 18 to 24 months.

Third, because of that time line we can use the last arrow in our

arsenal we have not used, diplomacy. The road out of Iraq is through

Tehran, Iran. If we have the ability as we slowly redeploy to bring

together Iran to work for stability, we can have a comprehensive

solution to this conflict.