Madam President, America's troops deserve our Nation's

full support every step of the way--from when they enlist, to when they

train, to when they deploy, to when they return home.

Tragically, this administration has failed our troops every step of

the way. Today, Democrats are saying enough is enough. We are going to

give our troops everything they need, and we are not going to be a

rubberstamp for the President's war without end.

I am very proud today to offer the Murray resolution in support of

our troops, and I am pleased our majority leader, Senator Reid,

strongly supports this resolution.

We have been fighting to finally have a debate in the Senate for

months. Now we are having that debate, and today we have to do three

things: We need to adopt the Murray resolution that says we support our

troops every step of the way. We need to reject the Gregg resolution

that blindly follows the President. And I hope we pass the Reid

resolution that sets a new direction in Iraq.

The Murray resolution I have offered affirms we will provide our

troops with everything they need to be safe and to complete their

missions. We will provide everything they need in terms of training,

equipment, logistics, and funding, and we will provide everything they

need when they return home.

Now, some here have a different idea. The Gregg resolution will tie

the hands of Congress and would, importantly, leave all decisions to

President Bush.

Well, we know how that has turned out. If Congress--we who are

elected by our constituents at home--surrenders its voice, we could see

our troops being stuck with more of the same--more Americans being

stuck in the middle of a civil war and more veterans coming home

without the care they need.

We do not need more of the same, in my opinion. We need a new

direction. The Murray resolution shows we can have a new direction in

Iraq, and we can give our troops all the support they need.

So shortly we will all have a choice: Either you can blindly follow

the President or you can say: We--here--are going to stand up to our

own responsibility to support our troops, and we can also push for a

new direction in Iraq.

Now, the Gregg resolution says we have to support the President. The

resolution I have offered says: We--here--have to support our troops.

The Gregg resolution would simply make Congress a rubberstamp for a

failed policy. The resolution I have offered says that Congress--us,

those of us elected here in the Senate--have a voice, and we have to

use that voice to help our troops.

I suggest to my colleagues if you are happy with the war in Iraq, go

ahead and vote for the Gregg resolution. It will keep us locked on the

same path.

If you are OK with returning troops waiting months in a crumbling

military hold unit--or waiting years for their benefits--then vote for

the Gregg resolution and keep us locked on the same path. But if you

think our troops do deserve our support and do deserve better, vote for

the Murray resolution. If you agree our troops deserve equipment to

keep them safe, vote for the Murray resolution. If you agree our troops

deserve the training that will help them succeed in their missions,

vote for the Murray resolution. If you believe our troops deserve

better when they come home, importantly, vote for the Murray

resolution. If you believe Congress needs to use its voice and its

power to give our country a direction in Iraq, vote for the Murray

resolution.

Our troops deserve better than what they have been provided so far.

This President sent our troops into battle without the lifesaving armor

and equipment they need. This President left our troops on the

battlefield without a plan, without a clear mission, and without being

honest about the costs--all costs--of the war. This President

shortchanged health care and benefits for our returning service members,

leaving brave Americans, as we now know, to languish in squalor at

Walter Reed and facilities across our country.

Haven't we had enough of that? Didn't Americans send us a clear

message last fall that enough is enough? It is time, I believe, for a

new direction.

The resolution I have offered recognizes that Congress has a role to

play in supporting our troops. We have a voice also to push for a new

direction, and we are going to use our power we were elected to use to

help the brave men and women who proudly wear the uniform of the U.S.

military.

I would say to all of my colleagues today, if you vote against the

Murray resolution, you don't really support our troops. Don't vote

against our military and don't vote to tie our own hands. Use this

opportunity today to tell our troops: We are all here for them and

their families; from the time they head off to battle through the rest

of their lives, we are there for them. Most of all, I hope the Senate

votes to support the Reid resolution so we can change the direction in

Iraq.

I yield the floor.

Madam President, the Senate is about to vote on the

Murray resolution. There should be no question that the Members of the

Senate support our troops. We all do. In this resolution, we want to

make sure we go on record saying we support our troops from the time

they go to battle and are sent on their missions to the time they come

home.

We make very clear in the Murray resolution that this Senate will go

on record saying the support of our troops extends far beyond their

mission in the field. It means when they come home and are sent to

Walter Reed or one of our other medical facilities, we will support

them with what they need. It says we will support their families

throughout their lifetime, if that is what it takes, for their service

to this country.

I hope this is passed on a strong, loud, bipartisan vote.

I yield the floor.