Madam President, whatever time I have left I will add to

that leader time.

Madam President, on the eve of the fifth anniversary of this

protracted war in Iraq, the Senate finally considers important

legislation to direct President Bush to change the course of this civil

war. S.J. Res. 9, which is a joint resolution to revise U.S. policy in

Iraq, is one I offered. The second vote will be on the Murray

resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that no action be taken

to undermine the safety of the Armed Forces. Finally, S. Con. Res. 20

is the Gregg resolution on funding for American troops in the field. I

will discuss at some length at a later time this afternoon the

difference between Murray and Gregg. Suffice it to say the Murray

resolution takes care of the troops after battle in addition to while

they are in Iraq. It takes care of the situation so we don't have

another Walter Reed situation. The Gregg resolution does not cover the

troops after battle.

As it relates to S.J. Res. 9, Members will have to consider a choice:

Will we continue to support President Bush's failed policy that has our

troops bogged down in the middle of a civil war while the enemy who

attacked us on September 11 grows stronger or will we stand with the

American people in demanding a new direction for this war? This new

direction maximizes our chances for success in Iraq and in that part of

the world, a new direction that recognizes the current policy has

pushed our troops and their families to the breaking point, a new

direction which sends a signal to the President that this Congress will

hold him accountable and no longer will we rubberstamp his failed

policies; a new direction that restores U.S. standing in the world and

refocuses our resources on our most imminent threats. My hope is we

will stand with the American people, because they are standing with

this resolution, S.J. Res. 9. We must have a new direction in Iraq.

Monday will be the beginning of the fifth year of this war, the fifth

year of

this war our troops are now mired in, a war in this faraway country.

Five years of war, of the President's approach to Iraq, and it is clear

it is not working. The country is in a state of chaos. Iraq is in a

state of chaos. There literally is no stability. U.S. troops are

policing a civil war, a protracted civil war, not hunting and killing

the terrorists who attacked us on 9/11. Five years. Five years of war.

The mission has changed. Saddam is gone. There are no weapons of mass

destruction. The original mission no longer exists. Five years of war

with 3,200 dead Americans, 25,000 wounded Americans, hundreds of

billions of dollars spent, $4 billion a week, a couple of hundred

million dollars a day and still no end in sight, according to this

President. The American military, the finest in the world, cannot and

should not police an Iraqi civil war. General Petraeus's name has been

thrown around here as if it is his war. It is not his war. It is

President Bush's war. General Petraeus, the commander in Iraq today,

recently observed there is no military solution in Iraq. The war must

be ultimately won through diplomacy, politically, by forcing Iraq's

political factions to resolve their differences.

The key to success in Iraq is not to escalate the conflict by adding

tens of thousands of additional troops to march down the same road.

Some of these troops have been down the same road as many as four and

five times. It is time to find a new way forward and a new way home

that gives our troops a strategy to complete the mission and, I repeat,

come home.

The Reid resolution will give our troops the best chance to succeed

in Iraq and to succeed in the larger war on terror. It will direct the

President to change course in Iraq by changing the mission in Iraq.

This resolution immediately transitions the mission to training, force

protection, targeting counterterrorist operations, and beginning the

redeployment of our troops in the next 120 days.

Similar to the bipartisan Iraq Study Group, the goal in my resolution

is to remove all combat forces not associated with these missions by

the spring of 2008. My resolution also recognizes a comprehensive

strategy in Iraq. Phased redeployment shall be implemented as part of a

comprehensive diplomatic, political, and economic strategy that

includes Iraq's neighbors and the international community.

S. Res. 107, the Murray alternative to the Gregg resolution, strongly

supports our troops but also properly interprets the Constitution by

stating that the President and the Congress have shared

responsibilities for decisions involving our Armed Forces.

Quoting from the resolution:

In addition, the Murray resolution makes it clear that the

Constitution gives Congress the responsibility, in addition to the

President, to take actions to help our troops and veterans. The Murray

resolution says that our responsibility to our troops doesn't begin and

end when they are deployed. Supporting the troops means giving them the

proper training before they are deployed and ensuring they receive the

proper medical and other support when they return home.

Madam President, I suggest that voting no on the Murray resolution is

voting to condone what has taken place at Walter Reed. The Murray

resolution recognizes that the troops must be taken care of not only

when they are in battle but when they get out of battle. If there were

ever a picture of what is wrong, look at what happened at Walter Reed.

The Murray amendment underscores that.

The people voting against the Murray amendment will be voting against

changing what took place at Walter Reed.

The Department of Defense said yesterday in a report they issued--the

Pentagon issued--that there is a civil war going on in Iraq now, as we

speak. The Pentagon, in their report yesterday, said violence is up,

not down. Three soldiers a day are being killed. February was the month

of more attacks than at any time during this 5-year war.

Al Maliki, when he met with the President face to face, said get the

American troops out of Baghdad. He is the leader of Iraq. General

Casey, who was a commander at the time the President suggested the

surge, said the surge won't work. This is not General Petraeus's war,

it is President Bush's war, and we must change course.

In our resolution, there is a 120-day redeployment, and there will be

work on counterterrorism, force protection, and training. Yes, they

will also do political and economic strategy, and certainly diplomacy.

Our goal is the spring of 2008.

It is easy to talk about sending the troops into battle and

supporting the troops. I support the troops. I support the troops, but

I don't think that we should spill another drop of American blood in

Iraq--not another drop of blood.

I spoke to the mother of LCpl Raul Bravo a week ago today. She is the

mother of that 21-year-old boy who was killed in Iraq. It was his

second tour of duty. She said that ``he is the only man in our

family''--her and his three sisters. She said that he was an angel. Her

son did his best to learn to speak the language of the Iraqis. She said

he said prayers with the Iraqis. His blood should not have been left in

that faraway place.

The war has gone on too long. We must change direction in Iraq. We

have given the President chance after chance. We hear that things are

getting better. His own Pentagon says it is a civil war. His own

Pentagon says it is getting worse. That is what these resolutions are

about today.

The Reid resolution says let's change direction in Iraq. The Murray

resolution says support the troops at all times. The Gregg resolution

takes Congress out of the equation and doesn't do a thing for the

troops when they come home.

Madam President, the Gregg amendment has been changed since

it was originally filed. It is still imperfect. I still think, at least

from my observation, it is not good, especially in light of the fact

that the Murray amendment so clearly defines the necessity of taking

care of the troops when they come home. But there is no caucus position

on this issue. Senators on this side of the aisle should vote however

they feel comfortable. I personally am not going to vote for it because

I don't feel comfortable. I believe the resolution leaves a lot to be

desired. It can be construed many different ways. It is wrong that we

do not take into consideration the injured troops when they come home.

My caucus can vote any way they feel appropriate.