Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, we can do both: fund the troops and change our mission

in Iraq. That is what this supplemental does, and we urge you, Mr.

President, to look into your heart, reconsider, and sign it.

The American people, bipartisan majorities in both Houses of

Congress, military experts, and the Iraq Study Group all agree the only

way to succeed is to change our mission. Only President Bush and his

small band of advisers think we should stay the course.

What is more, the President wrongly thinks the only way to support

our troops is for everyone to rubberstamp his policies. That is not

what the American people want. The American people want a change in

mission. They want a new direction, not more of the same failed

policies.

I have talked to generals and to NCOs. They do not want us to

rubberstamp the President's policies. They want a debate because

everyone knows the present direction is failing. Everyone knows we need

a change of mission--except the President and his small group of

advisers who are clustered down there at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue and

refuse to listen--stubbornly refuse to listen--to the experts, to the

American people, and to so many others.

First, let me tell you what this supplemental does. The first thing

it does is fund our troops. It fully supports our troops. It allocates

more dollars for them than the President has asked for.

Second, it provides reasonable and meaningful guidelines to protect

our troops by ensuring that all units that are sent overseas to fight

are ready, trained, and equipped to fight. It will require the

Department of Defense to adhere to its own guidelines to ensure that

every unit that is deployed is ``fully mission capable.''

Why would President Bush want to send our troops to Afghanistan and

Iraq, into fierce battles, without the training and equipment needed to

get the job done and come home safely? But when he says he will veto

this bill, he will veto that provision.

Third, this legislation shows both the United States and Iraq how to

change the failing strategy.

What has happened is simple. Our mission in Iraq has devolved so that

most of what we do is patrol, police, and stand in the middle of a

civil war. The Sunnis and the Shiites have hated each other for

centuries. Their enmity goes way back. They will continue to not like

each other, not work with each other, fight with each other long after

we are gone--whether it is 3 months or 3 years. Yet most of the time

our troops--our brave men and women--are simply caught in the middle of

a civil war. We have not chosen a side; we are just in the middle.

The original purpose in Iraq was to fight terrorism. Our supplemental

says, let's go back to that original purpose: counterterrorism, as well

as force protection, and training the Iraqis. But to continue to spend

most of our time, effort, and lives--lives--patrolling a civil war

makes no sense.

Mr. President, in conclusion, again, there is a simple

answer to our problems in Iraq, which is mission change. We can both

support the troops and change the mission. That is what the American

people want. That is what the experts tell us. I believe that is what

most of our soldiers want. I urge support of this supplemental and

again urge the President to reconsider and sign it.

I yield the floor.