Mr. President, I thank Senator Bond for his remarks. As the

senior Republican on the Intelligence Committee, I know he has

knowledge and information and passion maybe some of the rest of us

don't have the benefit of.

Mr. President, I rise today to oppose final passage of the emergency

supplemental funding bill.

It troubles me to oppose this bill because our troops need this money

right now to continue operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and around the

globe.

But there are so many things I find objectionable in this final bill

that I cannot support it.

The bill still includes over $21 billion in unrequested items--$425

million for rural schools, $3.5 billion for agricultural assistance,

and even an additional $910 million more than the President requested

in FEMA disaster relief for communities impacted by Hurricanes Katrina

and Rita.

It is not that these programs are bad or wrong, because many of them

aren't--in fact, most of this assistance is very valid. We desperately

need that FEMA money on the gulf coast to repair our communities as

many communities are still struggling to get back on their feet.

But this is an emergency supplemental that is supposed to focus on

the urgent needs of our military in fighting the war on terror. We

should not be including money for a multitude of requirements that may

be important, but are not urgent.

I'm also very troubled that this bill micromanages the President's

ability and constitutional mandate to serve as Commander in Chief of

the Armed Forces.

Through this bill, the Congress says to General Petraeus: ``Thank you

very much, General. We unanimously think that you're the right man for

the job--we just don't believe you when you tell us what you need to do

that job, or when you tell us how things are actually going on the

ground.''

It tells our enemies: Just wait a few months, and the place is yours.

It tells our friends: When the going gets tough, don't count on

America to stick around.

And it tells President Malaki: Good luck with that democracy and

freedom thing you are working on. Let us know how it turns out.

This is exactly the wrong message at the wrong time to send--not only

to the terrorists in Iraq, but to terrorists and rogue states around

the globe.

The stakes only get higher from here. I'm convinced that surrender in

Iraq will embolden these terrorists and ultimately threaten the

security of our shores.

Don't get me wrong--I, too, want our servicemen and women to come

home as soon as possible. I pray that not 1 more American has to pay

the ultimate price in this struggle.

I agree that the Iraqi Government must step up to the plate as soon

as possible, and take responsibility for the security of their county.

I have always supported the establishment of benchmarks to ensure

that expectations are clear, and progress against those expectations

can be measured.

What I don't agree with is telling the President and the Generals on

the ground how to do their job.

But this bill is even worse then that--this bill is like a bait and

switch: we'll give the money today for operations in Iraq, but you need

to come home tomorrow because we don't support operations in Iraq.

Which one is it? Do we support our troops and their mission, or not?

If my colleagues on the other side of the aisle want our troops to

come home tomorrow, they can make that happen. It is easy. The

Constitution of the United States gives the legislative branch the

power of the purse.

You can cut off money today--you can vote against this bill today.

When you start marking up the fiscal year 2008 Defense appropriation,

you can cut off Iraq funding there as well.

But what we have here is political theatre. This is a ``do nothing''

Congress at its worst.

The President has been very clear many times--he is going to veto

this bill because of the withdrawal timeline and all the excess

projects. And in the Congress, there will not be enough votes to

overturn that veto. Then what?

I guess we'll get to talk about this matter again next week or the

week after. But at some point, very soon, our inaction is going to

cause some real harm--and I hope that the real harm doesn't include the

loss of more American lives around the world.

If we can't get moving and fund our troops with no strings attached,

we are eventually going to impact the safety and capability of our

military, not just in Iraq, but around the globe.

This should not be about the President. It should not be about the

Congress. This is about funds for our troops--the men and women in

uniform--who are in Afghanistan and Iraq right now, doing the job they

were directed to do. They need this money. They need the equipment the

money would provide to do the job, and that should be our focus.

This funding was requested by the President on February 6, almost 3

months ago, and through this political theater we are fixed to embark

upon a vote we know will not become law, one that will surely be vetoed

by the President. This legislation is dead before arrival. Why don't we

acknowledge that and find a way to get the job done without delaying

even more, forcing our military to move funds around, to borrow from

Peter to pay for Paul. It will have a negative effect on our men and

women in the Navy and the Air Force and the rest of the military.

We could have turned this over to our senior members of the

Appropriations Committee, my colleague from Mississippi and the other

appropriators, including the Senator from Washington State, and said:

Look, work through this. Let's get something we can support in good

conscience.

There are more problems with this than just artificial deadlines. The

$21 billion in domestic spending was added beyond--I believe that is

approximately right--what the President asked for. Some of it is needed

and justified. I know my colleague from Mississippi and the

Appropriations Committees on both sides of the aisle and on both sides

of the Capitol could have worked through that and come up with a bill

to get the job done. It is not that some of these adds are not good and

justified. The President asked for funds for Katrina recovery, and I

think maybe some funds have been added to that beyond what he asked

for. This is important to me and my State, but I refuse to be trying to

get funds that may be immediately needed for a disaster on the back of

our troops and to delay it even more. Surely there is a way we can come

to an agreement on how to achieve this result.

This is an emergency supplemental. Some of the things that have been

added--not just money but language--don't relate to an emergency

domestically or in terms of what our troops need. That language should

be stricken. We make grand speeches here on the floor about how we

should not legislate on appropriations, yet things have been added in a

number of categories, not just the minimum wage and small business tax

cuts that don't get the job done.

This is a classic case of micromanagement where the Congress is

trying to set dates. We have an alternative. If we want to use the

power of the purse to stop the war on terror and our efforts in Iraq

and Afghanistan, vote no. Vote no. Vote against this. Don't provide the

troops the funds they need or any of this other money. If you want to

do that, go right ahead. There is a procedure. But here we are trying

to set ourselves up as the final judges.

General Petraeus was here yesterday telling us what is going on. He

was honest. He didn't say it is perfect. There was a change in

strategy. It is being implemented and carried forward. We voted 100

percent for General Petraeus, and now we are saying: Oh, well, sorry

about that, General. We are going to try to tell you when to do what,

not wait until we get more reports from you. Wait months, our enemies

are told, and the place is yours. When the going gets tough, can you

count on the Americans to see it through in a responsible way? This is

the wrong message at the wrong time.

Mr. President, I am an incurable optimist. Let's get it done. Let's

let it go on through. The President will veto it. But next week, can we

get together and do the right thing for our country and for our troops?

I beg my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. We have made our

political points, our political statements. Then let's get our job

done. Let's do the right thing for America, not the right thing for

Republicans or Democrats but the right thing for our troops.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.