Madam President, I have been on the Senate floor on a

number of occasions to discuss the amendment which I am introducing

today. I introduced it on March 5 as S. 759, which is a bill to

prohibit the use of funds for military operations in Iran without the

consent of the Congress. I am offering this legislation today as an

amendment to the fiscal 2007 emergency supplemental appropriations

bill, with the support of the chairman of the Appropriations Committee.

This bill has received a good bit of discussion and also a good bit

of correspondence from various citizens groups that have gone to

Members' offices. I will not take a great deal of time in terms of

going through a lot of the debate about it. I would like to say at the

outset that I have taken great care in the preparation of this

amendment to ensure that it will not in any way prevent our military

forces from carrying out their tactical responsibilities in places such

as Iraq and in other areas that are on the coastlines and border lines

of Iran. But I would like to emphasis that, in my view, this amendment

is essential to revitalizing the constitutional health of our

governmental process.

The purpose of this legislation is to restore a proper balance

between the executive and legislative branches when it comes to the

commencement of war. Any general attack on Iran would be, beyond cavil,

a commencement of a new war in a region that is already enduring two

costly and debilitating wars. If this action is to be taken, it should

be done only with the full and considered consent of the Congress.

At the same time, the legislation allows American forces to directly

respond to attacks or possible attacks which might be initiated from

Iran, as well as those which might be begun elsewhere and then carry

over into Iranian territory.

Specifically, the amendment requires that the President seek

congressional authorization prior to commencing any broad military

action in Iran, and it allows the following exceptions: first, military

operations or activities that would directly repel an attack launched

from within the territory of Iran; second, those activities that would

directly thwart an imminent attack that would be launched from Iran;

third, military operations or activities that would be in hot pursuit

of forces engaged outside the territory of Iran who thereafter would

enter Iran; and finally, those intelligence-collection activities that

have been properly noticed to the appropriate committees of Congress.

The major function of the amendment again is to restore the

constitutional balance. No administration should have the power to

commence unproved military activities against Iran or any other nation

without the approval of the Congress, but the issue of the day is Iran.

I am offering this amendment partly due to my concern over President

Bush's signing statement which accompanied the 2002 congressional

resolution authorizing the use of force in Iraq. That amendment, if you

read it carefully, indicates that this administration believes it

possesses the broadest imaginable authority to commence military action

without the consent of the Congress. It should not be left unanswered

by this body.

This amendment will not take any military operations off the table,

any options off the table. It will not tie the hands of this

administration if our military forces are actually attacked from

Iranian soil or territorial waters or by forces that retreat into

Iranian territory.

This is responsible legislation. I urge my colleagues to support it.

I yield the floor.