Mr. President, I yield myself 2 1/2 minutes.

We need to change course in Iraq. That is why I support the

supplemental bill now before the Senate and oppose the Cochran

amendment that is pending. This underlying bill finally sets a new

direction for our mission in Iraq. It begins to redeploy our troops,

and it helps us refocus our efforts on fighting and winning the war on

terror.

Mr. President, our troops have done everything we have asked them to

do. Now it is time to start bringing them

home. It is time for the Iraqi people and for the Iraqi Government to

take responsibility for their own country. We should not be sending

more and more Americans into the middle of a civil war. The conflict in

Iraq is not going to be solved by military force alone. It is going to

require a political solution among Iraqis. So this underlying bill sets

benchmarks for the Iraqi Government on the types of progress that we

all agree they ought to be making. They should not be stricken from

this by the Cochran amendment.

The President wants to commit more American service members to an

open-ended conflict. This bill recognizes that we need a new strategy.

We need to do what the Iraqi Study Group and what many generals and

what the American people have called for. We need to redeploy our

troops. The bill says a redeployment should begin within 120 days, and

it sets the goal of having most U.S. forces out of Iraq by next March.

Importantly, this bill helps us take care of those who are injured

fighting for our country. It is time we focused our attention on those

men and women who have sacrificed so much, who have come home and have

endured the hardship we have seen at Walter Reed and other facilities

across this country. We need to make sure they get the resources they

need, and this bill does that.

I am pleased to support the underlying bill. I oppose the Cochran

amendment, and I support this bill because it sets a new direction for

our policy in Iraq and it provides important new support for our

service members and veterans who are here at home.

I retain the remainder of our time.