Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member, Mr.

Lewis, for his hard work in providing this response, this very, I

think, respectful response.

I would submit to you that any sacrifice any American has made in

Iraq is a worthy, worthy sacrifice.

Mr. Speaker, here we go again. Thus far in the 110th Congress, the

House has considered two pieces of appropriations legislation. Thus

far, we have twice done so under rules that stifle debate and

amendment.

First, we operated under a closed rule on the 2007 continuing

resolution, limited debate, no amendments, a bill that spend hundreds

of billions of dollars. Now we are doing the same thing with a war

supplemental. Let me be clear about what is happening here tonight.

The majority does not want a vote to remove the egregious and

unconstitutional provisions restricting the Commander in Chief's

authority over our Armed Forces. They do not want to allow us the

opportunity to strike the unprecedented deadline for withdrawing our

troops. Never before has a Congress in our history written into law a

date for the withdrawal of American troops in a war.

They won't allow us that opportunity because Republicans and

Democrats would vote bipartisanly to strike that deadline. They have

proposed a rule that will prohibit Members from offering amendments

that could modify the bill in such a way that the President could sign

it.

Let's be clear: by proposing a closed rule, the Democratic leadership

signals it wants this bill vetoed. In short, the majority would rather

play politics than find a solution to the problem. And who will lose

this game of political chicken? The troops who stand in harm's way as

we talk; the troops, who are relying on this Congress to provide the

necessary funds before the end of May so they can complete their

mission successfully and as safely as possible.

This bill should be rejected out of hand and the majority should

immediately bring back a clean supplemental so we can ensure that our

troops will have the resources they need. Let's stop the posturing and

pass a clean bill. That's the bottom line.