Mr. President. I rise in strong support of the

legislation we are seeking an agreement to consider that would honor

the service of our men and women in uniform who are defending our

freedom honorably in Iraq and Afghanistan. This legislation would award

separate campaign medals to members of the Armed Forces who participate

in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi

Freedom.

The bill passed the House of Representatives unanimously in March and

was reported by the Senate Armed Services Committee earlier this week.

I am proud to have worked with my colleague, Senator Jeff Bingaman, and

others on a companion bill in the Senate.

I know after talking with service men and women from Arkansas that

this is an important effort which will allow us to properly honor and

recognize the individual sacrifice of those who put their lives on the

line so far away from home to defend the freedom we cherish as

Americans.

In an effort to demonstrate support for our men and women in the

military, I am circulating a Soldiers Bill of Rights petition in

Arkansas to demonstrate to my colleagues in Washington how important it

is to honor the sacrifice of our veterans and their families. This

legislation is one of ten priorities I have included in my Soldiers

Bill of Rights and I hope we can pass this bill in the immediate

future.

I close my remarks by commending my colleague, Congressman Vic

Snyder, who led this effort in the House. Vic is a good friend and a

Vietnam Veteran, and I am very proud of his leadership on this issue on

behalf of the constituents we represent in Arkansas.