Mr. Speaker, today I voted against the 2007

Supplemental War Funding Bill. I opposed the bill not for what it

contained--but for what it lacked. The bill lacked strong

accountability measures for the Iraqi government and omitted readiness

standards to ensure that deployed troops are fully prepared and

equipped for duty. While this bill represents an important step forward

from where we were before the election, it does not go far enough. In

the last election, the American public made clear that they wanted a

change of direction in this war. This is not change enough.

On May 1, 2003, the day the President declared an end of hostilities

in Iraq and Afghanistan, there were 142,000 American soldiers in Iraq.

Today there are 155,000. On that day there had been 138 American

casualties and 542 wounded in Iraq. Today the number of casualties is

3,476 and the number of wounded is 25,225. The Iraqi people have also

suffered. The estimated number of Iraqi civilians killed by violence

since May 2003 is between 53,000 and 63,000. The bill voted on today

does little to reverse this course.

The Congress sent the President a bill that would have begun the

process of changing worsening conditions in this war by holding the

Iraqis accountable for taking the steps necessary to achieve political

reconciliation and greater stability. The bill also provided additional

funding to go after Osama bin Laden, the Taliban and al Qaeda. By

vetoing that bill, the President missed an opportunity to change

direction in Iraq and complete the job in Afghanistan.

By vetoing that bill, the President said ``no'' to ensuring that our

troops had the training and equipment they need. By vetoing that bill

he said ``no'' to ensuring that we hold the Iraqi Government

accountable to the benchmarks which the Bush administration and the

Iraqi Government have said are absolutely necessary to achieve

political stability in Iraq.

We voted to give our troops every penny the President asked for and

more. We also insisted on accountability to protect our troops. The

President wanted the money without adequate accountability. Our troops

deserve better and so do the American people.