Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the amendment to be

voted on today which will provide supplemental funds for the war in

Iraq.

As I have said before on the floor of the House, it is time we ended

our military involvement in Iraq. We are not making progress, despite

losing thousands of lives, expending years of effort, and spending

hundreds of billions of dollars. This is a viewpoint shared by the vast

majority of the American people.

I strongly support our troops and understand we must provide

resources for them in the field. However, today's amendment continues

the President's failed policy in Iraq by not holding him accountable to

his own benchmarks for success and failing to set a timetable for the

redeployment of our troops. Although the amendment ties non-military

aid to the Iraqi Government's progress in meeting certain benchmarks,

the President can waive the requirement.

Spending billions on the war in Iraq without providing a prescription

for withdrawal or benchmarks with meaningful consequences for the Iraqi

Government, as the amendment before us would do, does our troops and

our entire Nation a disservice. It suggests that we will continue this

war without end or without putting meaningful pressure on the Iraqi

Government to do its fair share.

Unfortunately, President Bush and most Republicans in Congress

believe that this is exactly what we should do. President Bush vetoed

H.R. 1591, which imposed benchmarks with real consequences on the Iraqi

Government and mandated that our military forces would have left Iraq

by August 2008. So far he has refused to accept any major changes in

his Iraq policy,

If President Bush continues to be intransigent, Congress has the

responsibility to use its spending power to truly make a meaningful

change in the direction of the war in Iraq. The amendment under

consideration does not do that and I ask my colleagues to vote against

it.