Mr. Speaker, this legislation, the third

supplemental bill we have considered this year, has many merits.

However, I am extremely disappointed that it does not include a plan

for phased redeployment of our troops. It is past time that we chart a

new path in Iraq.

I have supported the previous versions of this legislation because

they required that the White House demonstrate milestones of success

and progress in Iraq with an explicit timeline for troop removal. But

to now give the President a blank check would be unacceptable. We have

spent hundreds of billions of dollars on this war and have yet to see

even the beginning of the dividends of democracy promised to us by the

President. Additional funding must include sufficient requirements for

evidence of success. We also need an understanding of how much longer

we will be in Iraq.

It is significant that the new Democratic leadership in Congress has

ensured that appropriations funding bills are now focused on the

soldiers and I am pleased to see that this bill includes funding for

the armor and equipment needed. Nevertheless, this bill, with its

absence of a plan for phased regional redeployment of American troops,

will only further ensure that we stay in Iraq with no end in sight. The

best way to support our troops is to give them the tools to do their

job, and to change our policy to bring them home as safely and quickly

as possible.

I believe this President must be held accountable for the

deteriorating situation in Iraq and for lacking a plan to succeed. I

believe it is the role--and the right--of Congress to be substantially

involved in the direction of our foreign policy. And I believe that our

men and women in uniform deserve better leadership. For these reasons,

I cannot, and will not, support continuing to fund this war without a

distinct time line for redeployment, and I will be voting ``no.''