Mr. Speaker, Will Rogers once said, ``If you

find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is to stop digging.''

My colleagues, the majority now finds itself in a hole, and contrary

to Will Rogers' advice, it continues to dig. Indeed, this ill conceived

emergency supplemental is evidence of a majority party in complete

disarray, unable to develop consensus on supporting American troops,

and unwilling to work in a bipartisan manner with the minority and the

President to develop a way forward.

This legislation rations funding to our troops over a 60-day period

and dishonors the long-term sacrifice and service of our men and women

in uniform. It is legislation that says to the troops, we support you

conditionally today, but don't expect Congress to support you 2 months

from now.

I ask my colleagues, is this the message Congress wants to send to

our troops?

Is this the message we want to send to al Qaeda?

Is this the best a divided majority can do?

This legislation has caused me and others to question the majority's

commitment to our troops. No political party has a corner on virtue,

but the majority's reluctance to fully fund our troops clearly calls

into question its commitment to our men and women in uniform.

It is no secret that Chairman Obey is a strong supporter of the

Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a program that receives broad

bipartisan support. In recent years, Mr. Obey has supported advanced

appropriations for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Is it an accident that Chairman Obey, who advocates funding Kermit

the Frog and Clifford the Big Red Dog 2 years at a time, now wants to

fund our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan 2 months at a time?

What does that say about the majority's commitment to our troops

during a time of war?

Why is the majority setting our troops up for failure?

Mr. Speaker, it is time that we take funding our troops seriously and

move beyond the gamesmanship and the partisanship on display today.

Supporting our men and women in uniform is not a joke or a game. It is

among the most important responsibilities each of us has as elected

officials.

I was hopeful when the Speaker emerged from the White House last week

signaling her willingness to work with Republicans and the President to

craft a troop funding bill worthy of bipartisan support. Instead,

Speaker Pelosi has chosen confrontation over cooperation and has

demonstrated unwillingness to compromise.

Chairman Obey and his leadership have dramatically rewritten the

Iraqi supplemental bill without any input from the minority, and

unfortunately, the result will be the same as the last supplemental.

One more time it appears that the majority is more interested in

appeasing the left than supporting our troops. One more time the House

is being asked to consider a bill that is going nowhere fast. Even the

Senate is opposed to this piecemeal approach to funding our troops. One

more time, the House is preparing to approve a supplemental that the

President will veto.

Today I am left scratching my head trying to determine which bill is

worse, the one before us now or the one vetoed by the President last

week.

Frankly, I believe the bill before us today is considerably worse

than the measure vetoed last week. I will take a moment or two to

explain why I think that. Under this proposal, the President is

required to report by July 13 on the specific progress the Iraqi

government has made in meeting 16 specific goals.

Once this report is received, only the chairman, only the chairman of

the Appropriations Committee can introduce a joint resolution to

release the funds. He is not required to introduce the joint

resolution, and no other Member can do it.

Secondly, in an almost unprecedented move, this supplemental includes

the rule under which the joint resolution will be brought to the floor.

And under this rule, the only amendment made in order is the one that

mandates the withdrawal of troops from Iraq within 6 months.

Further, this legislation includes a new reporting requirement that

the President provide a detailed monthly accounting of the combat

readiness status of Iraqi forces. The supplemental dictates that this

report be made publicly available at the Department of Defense's Web

site with a link to the detailed data. As a result, we will provide,

not only to the public but also our enemies, the detailed readiness

report and potential vulnerability of Iraqi security forces. We do not

release this kind of information to our own troops. In fact, we keep it

classified. Why would we ever mandate that the United States provide al

Qaeda a blueprint for targeting Iraqi vulnerabilities?

Lastly, this supplemental includes a number of questionable

legislative provisions otherwise known as earmarks, including a land

transfer in Pennsylvania and a flood control earmark in New York.

Before closing, I want to express my profound disappointment over

these emergency supplemental appropriations bills coming to the floor

again under a closed rule. This is yet another violation of the

longstanding tradition of the committee and the House.

Mr. Obey's first two bills as chairman, the fiscal year 2007

continuing resolution and the first Iraqi supplemental, were both

considered under a closed rule. These will be the third and fourth

appropriations bills under Mr. Obey's chairmanship brought to the floor

with a closed rule. It is pretty obvious we do not have very much input

from the general membership regarding these bills when they are on the

floor.

I have spoken with Chairman Obey about this concern, and expressed my

belief that these bills, and all other committee bills, should be

considered in regular order under an open rule. I say these

supplemental bills, because my friend, Chairman Obey, and his

leadership have decided to split the ag, disaster, wild fire, rural

schools and salmon relief funding into another bill that will be

considered either later this evening or maybe even tomorrow.

Following consideration of both bills, the majority is apparently

planning to wave a magic wand in a feat that would make even Houdini

proud to merge them into one single package as it heads over to the

other body.

Albert Einstein was correct when he said, and I quote, ``You cannot

simultaneously prevent and prepare for war.''

The bottom line is this, the majority cannot have it both ways. The

majority cannot say it supports the troops as it pulls the plug on

funding. You either support the troops or you do not.

My colleagues, let us not signal that America is preparing to walk

away. Let us not send the wrong message to America, to our troops, let

alone to al Qaeda.

We must provide our full and unconditional support to our troops

during this time of war. We must support our commanders in the field.

We must support the President, our commander in chief.

I strongly urge my colleagues to vote ``no'' on this piecemeal, ill-

conceived approach to funding our troops.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, let me repeat that

one more time it appears that the majority is more interested in

appeasing their left, that is the left in their caucus, than in

supporting the troops.

One more time, the House is preparing to approve a supplemental that

the President will veto in no small part because it tells our enemy we

are ready to wave the white flag.

I strongly urge my colleagues to vote ``no'' on this piecemeal, ill-

conceived approach to funding our troops.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer this very

simple and straightforward motion to recommit.

Included within Mr. Obey's emergency supplemental proposal is

legislative language that requires the President to report by July 13

on the specific progress the Iraqi Government has made in meeting 16

specific goals. Once this report is received, only the chairman of the

Appropriations Committee can introduce a joint resolution of approval

to release any additional funds to our troops in Iraq.

The chairman of the House Appropriations Committee is not required to

introduce the joint resolution of approval, and no other Member can do

it. The authority that this gives the chairman of the committee to

introduce or not introduce legislation is unprecedented.

Further, in an almost unprecedented move, this supplemental includes

the rule under which the joint resolution will be brought to the floor.

And under this rule, the only amendment made in order is one that

mandates the withdrawal of troops from Iraq within 6 months.

Mr. Speaker, this legislative language sets dangerous precedents that

should be of great concern to Members on both sides of the aisle.

My motion to recommit strikes this legislative language in section

1331, the so-called fence language, limiting the availability of funds

for our troops. This ill-conceived language not only grants the

chairman of the House Appropriations Committee extraordinary authority,

but also preordains the rule by which the joint resolution will be

brought to the floor.

I strongly urge a ``yes'' vote on this motion to recommit.