I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge the defeat of this supplemental

appropriation. It is wrong in so many ways. And I say that as someone

who strongly believes that the war in Iraq is the central front in the

war against terrorism. I say that, and I see my colleague here, Mr.

Fossella, someone who lost hundreds of friends and neighbors and

constituents on September 11. And I also say that as someone who says

this supplemental is sending all the wrong possible signals. It is

sending the wrong signal to General Petraeus. It is sending the wrong

signal to our troops. And probably most importantly of all, it is

sending the wrong signal to the enemy. It is telling them that we in

the Congress think there should be 535 commanders in chief, 535

commanders in the field; telling the enemy that they have 60 days to

create whatever chaos and carnage and confusion they can to influence

the media, to influence those here in the House who are looking for an

excuse to cut off funding for the troops.

If we have a Commander in Chief, a commander in the field, they

should be given the ultimate power and authority to prosecute the war.

If the Democrats want to make this their war, that is one thing, but

this should be above politics. It is not a political issue. It is not

something that should be gauged on public opinion polls. It should be

based on what is right for America. And whether it is a Democrat

President or a Republican President, the President is the Commander in

Chief.

The United States Senate approved General Petraeus by a unanimous

vote. To send him over there and then to undercut him, to cut off his

legs when he is trying to carry out a policy which is showing signs of

work. I am not a general. I am not the commander, but if you look at

what is happening in Anbar province, what is happening in Ramadi, what

is happening in parts of Baghdad, give General Petraeus the

opportunity. Give our troops the opportunity. Don't be grandstanding.

Don't be playing to the crowd. Don't be caving into your left wing base

which is right now driving you. You have gotten yourselves into a hole,

and you cannot get out of it. Our troops should be above that.

Have concerns for our troops, but most importantly, respect the

Constitution. Allow the President and his commanders to prosecute the

war. He was elected; General Petraeus was confirmed by the Senate.

Everyone knew that he had to plan for a surge. To undercut him now is

wrong. It is morally wrong. It is politically wrong, and it is going to

bring shame on the House of Representatives.