Amendment No. 648 removes $100 million. This is not about

being against security for people who are going to attend the

conventions. It is ironic that the decisions which are made at the

conventions will have already been made probably in February or March.

But we are going to charge the American taxpayers $100 million for

security outside of the budget. Who are we really charging? We are

charging our grandkids. This has never before happened. Always before,

if we funded money for convention sites, we have done it within the

budget. So it isn't an emergency, and it is markedly unethical to take

money that should be inside our budget and place it outside and ask our

grandchildren to pay for us to all have a party in August and

September.

H.R. 4613, the fiscal year Department of Defense appropriations bill,

provided $50 million for discretionary grants for this same purpose

associated with the 2004 nominating conventions. We did that in the

2005 bill. We did it within the budget. We have done it before.

Let's talk about the criteria of what is an emergency: necessary,

essential, and vital, plus sudden, quickly coming into being, not

building up over time, an urgent, pressing, compelling need requiring

immediate action, subject to unforeseen, totally unpredictable and

unanticipated, not permanent and temporary nature. There is no question

the funding for the conventions for the Democratic and Republican

parties does not meet any of those criteria. Yet here it is in the

bill. Why do we find it in this bill? So we don't have to spend the

money inside the budget limitations that are placed on Congress. Here

is $100 million outside of that budget limitation that we are then

going to spend, another $100 million, because we have not paid for this

one, and we should have paid for it within the budget.

This isn't sudden. It is not urgent. It is not pressing. It does not

require immediate action, is not unforeseen, not unpredictable, and it

was not unanticipated. There have been nominating conventions since

1832. The year 2008 will be the second Presidential election since the

9/11 terrorist attack. There is no question that increased security is

required. But this is the first time we have said it is an emergency.

It is like saying we don't know the census is coming in 2010. We will

have an emergency supplemental for the census. As a matter of fact, we

have done that before. The war on terror is an emergency. Having a

party for politicians and their political parties doesn't qualify.

We are going to have a vote on this amendment. I expect to lose the

vote. But I also expect the American people will ask: Why in the world

would we be doing this? Why would we violate their good will by playing

games for the political parties? Why would we do that? It comes back to

the point of where we are in the Senate, why are we addressing this

legislation? Why is there $18.7 billion worth of additional items added

to this bill other than to fund the Defense Department?

We will hear all sorts of answers: We need it. We didn't do it. We

have emergency agricultural appropriations in this bill.

Actually, I believe there is an emergency in farm country, and we

ought to be doing something about it. But we ought to be paying for it.

I haven't yet talked to a farmer from Oklahoma who thinks his

grandchildren ought to be paying for us to do an emergency supplemental

in terms of agriculture. They believe we ought to find it within.

The fact is, Senator Carper and I held 49 hearings in the last

Congress and discovered over $200 billion of waste, fraud, abuse, or

duplication within the discretionary budget. That is within $1

trillion, 20 percent. Most Americans probably believe that. The problem

is, most politicians don't have the nerve to challenge where that

spending is because there is an interest group that wants it spent.

There is an interest group, and it is us. It is self-serving that we

are going to spend $100 million on increased security for the

conventions and not pay for it and spend that money inside the budget

on something else. Probably the greatest moral question is, Are we

going to have a party on our unborn next generation?

They are going to be the ones who pay back this $100 million. It is

not going to be $100 million when they pay it back; it will probably be

$500 million or $600 million by the time we get to paying it back with

the compound interest.

What would this $100 million do if we were not spending it on

security at party conventions? It would buy 31,797 sets of body armor.

It would uparmor 658 humvees. It would uparmor 529 ambulances, medic

carriers for the guys who are helping our guys in the field.

Instead, we are going to use a bill, intended to cover the cost of

winning the war, to protect our national security, fight the war on

terrorism, to add $100 million to our national debt that already

exceeds $8.7 trillion. We added $1,000 to that debt last year for every

man, woman, and child. We added $1,000. If you pass this bill--

``emergency''--what we are going to do is add another $400 for every

man, woman, and child in this country--the debt just for this bill. So

it ought to be about real emergencies.

Federal funding also is already planned for the conventions. The

Department of Justice did not request this $100 million. The

administration budgeted $15 million for the Secret Service to provide

the security at these conventions. Each convention has been designated

as a national security, special security event, making security

personnel eligible for other Federal tax dollars through grants to

cover the expenses. Why are we doing it? There has not even been a

security plan for which we are throwing $100 million at formalized for

the conventions.

I believe if you are a young person in this country today, what we

are doing on this bill, especially with this item, has to be

heartbreaking. April 15 is coming up pretty soon. We all look at our

pay stubs and see what we are paying in Federal taxes. What you do not

see when you get that pay stub is how much additional you are going to

owe at the end of the year because we were not responsible. We were not

responsible with the taxpayers' money. Yet we play all these shell

games of hiding money, underfunding defense so we can bring it back in

a supplemental, so we can spend money elsewhere rather than making the

tough choices.

Let's read about what was in the news after the last conventions. It

is pretty interesting to know. One hundred million dollars of your

money for the following: USA Today reported the convention featured

more than 200 parties by corporations, lobbyists, trade groups, and

other organizations. These were in addition to the high-dollar donor

meals, golf tournaments, sporting events held during the convention

week. Top sponsorship at these events can cost up to $250,000--golf

tournaments, breakfast at Tiffany's, Yankee Stadium fundraisers,

champagne and cigar celebration, baseball games.

We are going to spend $100 million of our grandkids' money to protect

politicians while they have a party. To me, it is unconscionable. It is

even more unconscionable to do it in this bill. There is nothing about

this that is an emergency. There is nothing about this that was not

foreseen. There is nothing about this that was not anticipated. This is

a game.

The last election reminded us--my party--you cannot say one thing and

do another, except that is what we are seeing with this bill.