Mr. Speaker, I want to rise to commend my colleagues, Mr.

Obey and Mr. Murtha, for the excellent work on the supplemental

appropriations bill that they have brought to the House floor. The

House leadership has worked hard to put together the votes to pass this

legislation.

This bill funds the troops. We have given them extra funds to deal

with the critical issues of traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic

stress disorder. We need to clean up the mess at Walter Reed and the

other hospitals around the country, including the VA hospitals. There

is money in this bill to provide extra staff, nurses and to clean up

these facilities.

It is critical that we put pressure on the Iraqi Government to end

the civil war. The Maliki government must get the message that the

American people do not have unlimited patience. General Petraeus has

said that we cannot end this war with only a military solution. We need

the Iraqis to resolve the conflict amongst themselves. We need them to

fix their Constitution, pass necessary oil legislation, and end the

sectarian violence. The benchmarks in this bill will help them to

accomplish these objectives.

I hope that General Petraeus is successful in reducing the violence

in Baghdad and the surrounding area. I hope that U.S. forces embedded

with Iraqi forces can stop the sectarian killing. Without political

reconciliation, we cannot stop the sectarian violence and the al Qaeda-

led terrorist attacks. We also need an economic recovery program across

Iraq to create badly needed jobs.

This bill sets a timetable. It puts pressure on the Maliki

government, and I think it is the right bill at the right time to

change our Iraq policy and to bring the troops home in a reasonable

period of time.

I hope we can stabilize Iraq, but we can only do it with the effort

of the Iraqi Government and their people.