Mr. Speaker, regrettably, I rise in opposition to the

Fiscal Year 2007 Emergency Supplemental Spending bill.

Earlier this year, our military submitted a request to Congress for

emergency funding to protect our brave soldiers, and it is our duty to

respond to this important request in a timely fashion. Unfortunately,

the legislation before us today includes billions of dollars in non-

emergency spending and numerous provisions relating to troop withdrawal

not requested by the Administration, which have the potential to delay

passage of this vital emergency funding.

Much of the extra spending included in this bill will go to wasteful

pork barrel projects and non-emergency subsidy programs, including

millions of dollars for spinach farmers in California and peanut

storage in Georgia. While I have strongly supported some of the policy

provisions added to this bill, such as the minimum wage increase and

expanded funding for homeland security, I am concerned that the

Democratic leadership is attempting to hold critical resources for our

soldiers in limbo in order to force political votes.

Our military leaders on the ground in Iraq have warned that

disruptive changes in day-to-day operations will occur without

immediate supplemental funding. In fact, the acting Secretary of the

Army recently stated that if it does not receive additional funding by

the end of April, the military will be forced to start making difficult

decisions, such as postponing repairs on equipment. Sadly, rather than

providing our military with the tools it has requested, the Democratic

leadership is forcing a political agenda, which is certain to lead to

an impasse with the Administration and further delay this important

funding.

I have disagreed with many aspects of our strategy in Iraq, and I

have worked hard to convince our government to change its course in the

region and begin pursuing robust diplomacy to end the conflict. Indeed,

I am hopeful that my efforts, and those of my colleagues, have prompted

the Administration to begin engaging in an intense diplomatic

initiative to establish peace and stability, so that our troops may

return home to their families. However, when it comes to funding for

our soldiers who are serving in harm's way, it is not appropriate for

Congress to set arbitrary timelines for withdrawal or condition

military resources based on partisan objectives. It is important that

our strategy in Iraq include goals for bringing the troops home, but

excluding the judgment of U.S. commanders and mandating an exact

deadline for withdrawal--regardless of the situation on the ground--

would endanger our brave soldiers.

Mr. Speaker, the President has pledged to veto this legislation due

to the inclusion of non-emergency spending and policy provisions. We

cannot afford to waste precious time arguing over disingenuous

political proposals and extraneous pork barrel spending projects. I

intend to vote against this bill and I will adamantly oppose any

attempts to play politics with funding for our soldiers.