Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin with

a quote from Coretta Scott King:

I rise today to talk about one of America's priorities in the

emergency supplemental appropriation bill, and that is to fulfill the

promise to help rebuild Louisiana and Mississippi from Hurricane

Katrina and Hurricane Rita.

In August of 2005, the American people saw something that was hard to

believe. They saw a U.S. government that was incompetent, a government

that was inept, and a government that did not care about its open

people.

Unfortunately, 2 days ago, President Bush vetoed the emergency

supplemental bill and showed the American people that things haven't

changed. After the President vetoed the bill, he had the audacity to

make the following statement:

Only two other people in the country believe that we are winning the

war in Iraq, by the way. That's President Bush and Vice President

Cheney. The cheese stands alone. The $1.3 billion for east and west

bank levee protection and coastal protection isn't pork. The $30

million for K-12 education assistance has been debated and has been

deemed essential.

The $25 billion for small business disaster loans will help rebuild;

the $80 million for HUD rental assistance will bring people back home;

the $4.3 billion for FEMA disaster recovery grants is an emergency for

our fellow Americans in Louisiana and Mississippi who have been waiting

18 months for you to keep your promise to rebuild Louisiana and

Mississippi.

Mr. President, you were wrong to veto this bill. I have been to New

Orleans seven times and going back in June. Sadly, every time I look

there, it look looks like a war zone. It is unbelievable that 18 months

have passed and the most basic human needs have not yet been met; 18

months later, and residents are not able to move back. There is still

debris everywhere, and people are without electricity 18 months later.

The roads are not passable, no clean running water, not enough schools

and teachers; 18 months later and no street signs, toxic fumes in the

air and not enough police; 18 months later, this is unacceptable.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle made the statement over

and over again about how we should pass a clean bill. Well, I have been

elected 25 years, and I have never seen a clean bill yet. If the

President or my Republican colleagues would have done their job 18

months ago, we wouldn't need to have these extra funds in the

supplemental bill. It is shameful that the very people who write the

checks and pay the taxes in our cities are not given the money they

deserve.

I remember the President's press conference in Jefferson Square in

New Orleans and his promise to rebuild. His veto showed the American

people once again that he has no intention of living up to his promise.

The Democratic majority has done their job. They passed this bill.

Sadly, the residents of Louisiana and Mississippi will have to keep

waiting on you to remember your promise. The good citizens of Louisiana

and Mississippi demand good government. This is responding to the

caring, and it is also an example of not just talking the talk, but

walking the walk.

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