Mr. Speaker, today President Bush requested an additional

$46 billion war request. This request is on top of an existing $142

billion request pending from earlier this year.

The President told reporters that the funding was simply for day-to-

day military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. He said that the bill

provides for basic needs like bullets and body armor, protection

against IEDs, and mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicles.

The President would lead us to believe that there are only two

options in Iraq; Congress must either continue to fund the war

indefinitely, or we must choose to pull the rug out from under the

troops and strand them in the field without body armor and bullets.

This, of course, is a ridiculous characterization of our position. We

feel that continuing to referee a civil war in Iraq runs counter to our

national security interests.

There is no military solution to the war in Iraq no matter how many

soldiers, weapons and dollars you dump into the country. Bombs and

bullets have not and will not bring us peace in Iraq. I believe there

is only one answer to the war in Iraq: a fully funded redeployment of

our troops and military contractors.

I think a reasonable Member of Congress would welcome a plan from the

President on how we're going to safely leave Iraq, and we would be

happy to fund it. But asking us to continue funding, providing funds

for the occupation of Iraq until President Bush decides to change

course is tantamount to asking us to just continue to support the war.

The choice is clear; it is time to face the facts: We either provide

funds to continue the war or we provide funds to end the war.

Mr. Speaker and Members, I'm bothered by this request. I'm bothered

by it because the President is playing politics with the issue. The

President of the United States is saying,

because he knows that the Members of Congress do not like

to be seen in a bad light, having folks believe that somehow they're

not providing support for the soldiers. And he keeps testing the will

of this Congress with these kinds of antics.

We know that the American public wants us out of Iraq. We also know

the American public wants to indicate its support for the soldiers who

are not there because they've decided that we would go to war, but

rather, they answered the President's call because they are patriotic,

many of them needed jobs, they needed resources, they needed money, so

they're there.

Everybody supports the soldiers, but the President is trying to set

us up. He is trying to set us up so that if we don't immediately vote

on this $46 billion it will look as if we are not giving the soldiers

the necessary equipment in order to wage the war. This is absolutely

ridiculous.

And I don't know how long this President thinks he can get along with

mismanaging this war in the way that he's doing. We have 101 questions

we ought to be forcing on him. First of all, where are the 190,000

weapons that have been lost? Where is the money we were supposed to

have been getting from the oil wells in Iraq? Where are the billions of

dollars that they sent over in cash in the beginning of this war? What

happened to all of that money?

We can go on and on and on with questions about Blackwater and the

contractors and the mercenaries. We can go on and on about this

government that they put together that does not function and will not

function. We can ask them, whose side are you on, the Sunnis, the

Shias? And now you're trying to manage what Turkey does with the Kurds.

The Kurds killed Turkish soldiers. The Turks threatened to go over and

invade the Kurdish territory, and now we're over there trying to manage

that. It is complicated. We have no business there.

This occupation is draining us, not only the lives of young men and

women who are there trying to answer the President's call, but the

dollars that should be going into comprehensive universal health care,

truly supporting Leave No Child Behind, truly supporting moderate and

low-income housing, truly being used to rebuild the infrastructure

that's falling apart all over America.

Come on, Mr. President, don't challenge us this way. There are some

of us who know what we're going to do, and others are going to get wise

very soon.