Mr. Speaker, when General Petraeus testified before

Congress last month, there was a lot of happy talk from the

administration about how much improved things had gotten in Iraq. From

the way they talked, you would have thought that Iraq had become a sort

of paradise, a middle eastern Shangri-La.

But now it's back to harsh reality, and yesterday the administration

handed us yet another bill for their senseless occupation of Iraq. This

time, the tab is $46 billion in supplemental funding. And this is for

Iraq as well as Afghanistan. That's on top of the nearly half trillion

dollars we have already spent in Iraq. And make no mistake, this isn't

the last bill for Iraq that we will be getting. The administration has

no exit strategy. Instead, it has a strategy to keep the occupation

going for decades. So the bill will keep piling up until our credit

cards are absolutely maxed out. To make matters worse, the

administration had the gall to hand us this enormous bill just a few

weeks after vetoing the SCHIP bill, which they said was too expensive.

Let's examine the White House's logic. Our policy in Iraq is a

failure while the SCHIP program is a big success. So you would think

the administration would want to cut our losses in Iraq and increase

our investment in SCHIP. But, no, it's the other way around. The White

House has turned into Superman's bizarro world, where everything is the

opposite of what it should be.

Yesterday, when the administration announced its funding request, the

President said, and I quote

Well, a few weeks ago, the administration had a chance to show that

it supported the troops, and it blew it. The SCHIP bill that was vetoed

included the bill that I sponsored, H.R. 3481, the Support for Injured

Servicemembers Act. This bill amends the Family Medical Leave Act to

allow family members of a soldier wounded in Iraq or Afghanistan or any

other conflict to take up to 6 months leave from work to care for that

soldier.

This change in the Family Medical Leave Act is desperately needed by

the families of our brave troops. The Dole-Shalala Commission reported

that 21 percent of active duty soldiers, 15 percent of reservists and

24 percent of retired or separated soldiers have had family members or

friends give up their jobs to care for them while they recovered from

their wounds. And 33 percent of active duty soldiers, 22 percent of

reservists and 37 percent of retired or separated soldiers have had a

family member or close friend relocate, relocate for extended periods

of time to care for them while they were in the hospital. So extending

the Family Medical Leave Act benefits would help many military families

when they actually need the help the most. That's why my bill has been

endorsed by the Military Officers Association of America, the Enlisted

Association of the National Guard of the United States, the National

Military Family Association, and the National Partnership for Women and

Families.

The administration's veto of SCHIP was a slap in the face, not only

to the children that will not be covered, but to all of these fine

organizations.

Let's support our wounded troops and their families and let's support

our courageous troops in the field in Iraq by rejecting this

administration's request for supplemental funding, but, instead, fully

funding the safe, orderly and timely redeployment of all of our troops

and of all of our military contractors. That way we will be supporting

the troops in Iraq.

This is what Congress must do. This is what the American people want.

And if we fail to do it, we will have failed the American people and

our troops.