Madam Speaker, today is an important day in that we

are going to hear the anticipated progress report, so-called, by

General Petraeus, who will be testifying in a short while before the

Armed Services and Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of

Representatives, and the case that is going to be made is that there

has been just enough progress to warrant staying the course in Iraq.

On August 6, I was in Iraq. What I learned from that visit that day

was that in fact that the President's surge has failed and that there

is no end in sight for the war in Iraq. I learned that first by talking

with the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq that day who said that the night

before that former Prime Minister Ayad Allawi had pulled his people out

of the Parliament, and the week before the Sunnis had left, and then

what was remaining of the Parliament was on vacation. And he said that

there wasn't going to be any political settlement by this September,

nor would there be by next September, and he didn't say which

September.

The point of that is the reason for the surge was promoted by the

President and by General Petraeus as creating the space for political

settlements in Iraq, which have not only not happened but we have even

seen steps backwards. But what is really important today is that people

examine the so-called evidence that progress has been made, and that is

why I brought a few charts here.

The first one says, is there really less violence in Iraq? Let's look

at what is counted, but, even more importantly, what isn't counted.

In the evidence that progress has been made, not counted includes

Shiite on Shiite violence which is happening in the south in the Basra

area, Sunni on Sunni violence. Car bombings aren't counted. And get

this one, this isn't a joke. People shot in the front of the head are

not counted; people shot in the back of the head are counted. I thought

at first that was just an exaggerated joke. It is true. And, finally,

the large-scale bombing like the one that killed 500 ethnic Yazidies in

August is not counted. So clearly these numbers are very clearly cherry

picked.

Then, if you look at a fact that is important to many Americans,

every month in 2007, including the months, of the surge has seen more

U.S. military casualties than the same month in 2006. In other words,

more and more of our young men are dying. And while the Parliament was

on vacation as some commentators said because, after all, it is so hot,

about 120 degrees, our young men and women were fighting and dying in

their body armor and helmets and heavy packs and weapons out in that

120 degree heat, dying at numbers greater than ever.

And, of course, not included in those numbers has been not only the

the number of U.S. troops that have died, but the dollars that have

been spent. These are the dollars that we know about right now. Per

year, not overall in the war, but per year $120 million; per month $10

million. Actually, I have heard $12 million is the new number. Per

week, over $2 million. Per day, $329,000. Per hour, we are doing this

for 1 hour right now, almost $14 million an hour. And over $228,000,

almost $229,000 a minute is being spent in Iraq. And yet, the political

reconciliation which was the goal of expanding the numbers of troops

that we have in Iraq has not achieved that; that it has actually gone

backwards. And so right now I think what we are seeing is a dog and

pony show.

The good news is that a lot of people, unlike the lead-up to the war

in the first place, aren't buying it. The front page of U.S.A. Today

records 60 percent of Americans seek a date for a pullout: Public wary

of report on Iraq, polls show. And there have been many other reports.

The Jones report that says it is not working.

Check the information and be skeptical about the progress. Let's get

out of Iraq.