Madam President, this has been called a very

unusual occasion for us to come to the floor on a Saturday to vote on a

resolution or to vote on any matter, but this is a very special

occasion today because we need to vote up or down on this resolution.

I want to make it clear that while it is unusual, I believe it is, in

fact, necessary. But I want to make it clear also that I support and

prefer the Warner-Nelson-Collins resolution, which sets forth

benchmarks and conditions for staying and requirements for the Iraqi

Government and the Iraqi Prime Minister to meet in connection with

that. But this resolution, while it may be more simplistic, still

expresses support for the troops, a very strong statement of support

for the troops and what they do, funding for the troops, and continuing

to support their needs. It also states an opposition to the surge plan.

The Warner-Nelson-Collins resolution, which I prefer, makes it very

clear that the opposition to the surge plan is sending our troops into

Baghdad to put them in harm's way between the Sunnis and the Shias and

the sectarian violence that has been described as being far worse than

a civil war. We do not believe that is the appropriate plan. We have

asked in that resolution that the President reconsider, consider all

alternatives and other plans that might not put our troops into harm's

way in the middle of a civil disobedience and a civil conflagration, as

we have seen it. I thank Senators Warner and Collins for their support

and the cosponsors of this other resolution that I have referred to.

Today, it is pretty clear there has been much debate about the

debate. My friend from Kentucky indicated he is frustrated. We are all

frustrated. We are frustrated because it is time to end the charade and

move forward to the consideration of the resolution so the Senate can

be on record with Senators voting for or against the surge plan.

The American people can see what is happening. They know some want to

prevent a vote at all costs. There have been Members complaining about

the vote cast a little over a week ago, cast against moving forward.

Then they said in the Senate, it is time to have a vote after having

voted against having a vote.

It is time to move beyond the debate about the debate and move toward

the consideration of this resolution. It is time for the Senators to be

on record with the question: Are you for deploying thousands of troops

to the crossroads of civil war in Iraq or do you oppose that plan?

This is the second opportunity the Senate has had to allow an up-or-

down vote on a resolution on the Iraq surge. Let the Senate debate and

vote on this resolution. We owe it to the American people. We owe it to

the American people because of the importance of this resolution making

clear that we do not support, or that we do support, putting our troops

in harm's way in the middle of a civil war or a war that is simply

between Shias and Sunnis, Shias and Shias, and other civil groups

within the community. We do not have to understand the 1,400 years of

this battle to know it is inappropriate to put our troops into the

middle where it is impossible to identify the enemy. We put our troops

into a situation where they are going to go door to door, hopefully

with some support from the Iraqi troops, hopefully with some support

from Prime Minister Maliki, hopefully with some support from the Iraqi

Government.

In any event, the surge which the President said is going forward

will put our troops in that condition and that situation. I, for one,

do not believe that is an appropriate use of our troops. I believe

today is the opportunity for the Senate to be able to say no, by saying

yes to moving forward on this resolution.

I yield the floor.