Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may

consume.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the majority chairman of the committee

bringing this bill before the House because we do need the money, not

for our troops at home, not for the basic bill, because that basic bill

was signed by the President yesterday. What we need is to make sure

that our troops in the field have the equipment that they need, the

force protection measures they need, the body armor that they need, the

MRAPs that they need, the ammunition they need, whatever they need to

take on the enemy to accomplish their mission, to protect themselves

while they are doing it. So I want to speak directly to the bill rather

than to the politics or the history of the political aspect of this

legislation.

Fifty billion dollars is a good number. I wish it would have been a

little higher because I don't think it takes us all the way to where we

need to be for a supplemental next spring as far as what we are doing

in Afghanistan and Iraq, but the $50 billion that is in this bill, the

dollars are good. What is provided by those dollars is needed for our

troops in the field. That has to be the important decision that we make

tonight: Are we going to fight a political battle here on the floor

while our soldiers overseas are facing the enemy of terrorism? I don't

think that is what we are here for today. I think we are here to pass

this bill.

The gentleman from Wisconsin mentioned a policy change; that this

bill is going to bring about a policy change. There was a policy change

earlier in the year. Most everybody referred to it as the surge, and

many Members of this body opposed the surge. But if you listened to the

briefers this afternoon in the Rayburn building, that policy change has

produced a lot of very positive effects.

So there was a policy change. But, nevertheless, whether you still

support the policy change or not, that is up to everybody's individual

decision. Despite what your position is on the war, on the battle, you

have got to be prepared to provide for the troops that are there,

whether you like the fact that they are there or not. I want them home.

I want them home as soon as we can get them home.

Along with Chairman Murtha of the subcommittee, I have seen too many

wounded soldiers and marines in our military hospitals. We have both

attended too many funerals of our war heroes who were sent home after

having lost their life on the battlefield. So I want this war over and

I want our troops home as soon as we can get them home in victory;

victory in a war that didn't start on September 11 and it didn't start

in March of 2003 when we went into Iraq or Afghanistan. It started back

in 1983, October 23 of 1983. Terrorists bombed our Marine barracks in

Beirut. Those marines were there as peacekeepers, not as part of any

other expeditionary force, other than to keep the peace, and 241 of our

military marines and soldiers lost their lives there.

In 1993, the World Trade Center was bombed; in June of 1996, the home

of the airmen in Saudi Arabia in the Khobar Towers were bombed, and 19

of our airmen lost their lives. In August of 1998, our embassies in

Kenya and Tanzania were bombed by terrorists and 11 Americans lost

their lives and hundreds of others were injured. In October of 2000,

the USS Cole, on a peaceful mission off the shore of Yemen, was bombed

by terrorists and 17 lives were lost. All this started before September

11, and of course I don't think anybody denies what happened to us on

September 11. So this war started a long time ago, and this threat is

basically the same threat that we saw starting in 1983.

I am pleased that sufficient funds are included for the Army

operation and maintenance account to allow for 6 months of war

operations. Other accounts would apparently allow for only 4 months of

operations, however. The size of the package is secondary to the policy

provisions that have been attached to the bill. Many Members have

stated they cannot vote for war funding without language requiring a

withdrawing from Iraq. The reality is most of them have already done

that.

When we passed the Defense appropriations bill, the basic Defense

appropriations bill for 2008, we provided transfer authority, large

amounts of transfer authority so that if we didn't get a bridge fund

passed, if we didn't get a supplemental passed, the Services could

reach into their basic accounts to pay for fighting the war in

Afghanistan and Iraq.

So those who voted for that bill have already voted to fund the war,

whether they like it or not. That legislation has now been signed into

law, so the money is there to borrow. We are going to start hearing

about cuts in services at military bases here in the United States if

we don't pass a supplemental or a bridge fund and the Services will

have to borrow from their basic funds. We don't want that to happen. We

don't want the Services to run short on anything that they have to do

to provide for the security of our Nation.

So whatever your position on the war, whatever decisions are going to

be

made about withdrawal from Iraq, this money, this $50 billion and more

will be needed in the next 6 months and it needs to be passed.

This bill was only filed last night. Some of the provisions have not

been sufficiently reviewed, in my opinion.

I have read this bill twice, word for word, and I am concerned about

some of the sections of this bill.

Section 102 regarding interrogations says in part that ``nothing in

this section shall be construed to affect the rights under the United

States Constitution of any person,'' and I will repeat, ``any person in

the custody or under the physical jurisdiction of the United States.''

Now, to me, that means that terrorists who we capture on the

battlefield, who have been killing our own American soldiers on the

ground, I read that to mean that they will be given the same

constitutional protections as any citizen of the United States of

America. And I object to that. I don't think they deserve the

protection of the Constitution.

I wonder, does that mean we have to read the terrorists their rights

under the Miranda ruling? Can they be released on a technicality? Can

they get out on bail? Those are protections guaranteed to American

citizens. Are we going to give terrorists that same right? Well, this

bill says that we are going to give terrorists that same right.

Terrorists go by no rules. They do not subscribe to the Geneva

Convention and they do not deserve the same protection under our

Constitution that our constituents enjoy.

I think this bill needs a lot of repair work before it can become

law.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds just to

point out, and I agree strongly with Mr. Murtha's statement about

torture. I don't think Americans want to be known as a Nation that do

torture.

But we have put prohibitions on torture in our Defense appropriations

bills almost from the beginning of the war, and so we have made it very

clear that we are opposed to the use of torture. We just wish the other

side would go by the same rules.

I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from

California, the former chairman of the Armed Services Committee, Mr.

Hunter.