Mr. Speaker, once again on this

floor we have heard an argument stated much like was stated in the

argument on the bill immediately preceding. Here we are dealing with a

rule on a spending bill, and we are told by a number of speakers on the

other side of the aisle that they would prefer that we do the

constitutional thing, that is, that we exercise the power of the purse

in the way we are allowed to; that is, to cut off funding for our

troops to immediately get them home.

But we have heard the reason why they don't bring that to the floor:

they don't have the votes. And they use that as a reason why they

bring, therefore, unconstitutional restrictions on the power of the

President as Commander in Chief. Much like we heard on the bill before

this, because it is the right thing to do with respect to the District

of Columbia, we should ignore the words of the Constitution.

The problem is, once again, we are being told by those on the other

side of the aisle that the Constitution, the Constitution, is an

inconvenient truth.

The fact of the matter is the Founding Fathers tried to create a

delicate balance between the war powers in the House and the war powers

in the executive branch. And they said the President is Commander in

Chief and once we go to war, he makes those decisions. We have the

power of the purse. We have the power of the purse. If you truly

believe that we are in the wrong position in Iraq, have the courage to

present to this floor that question which we are given the power to

consider under the Constitution. But don't come to the floor and use as

your excuse for bringing something which is unconstitutional that you

don't have the votes to do the right thing.

This goes beyond this question of the war, as important as it is. It

is whether or not we as Members of the Congress who swear an oath to

uphold the Constitution can on a daily basis ignore that Constitution.