Mr. Speaker, when hundreds of billions of dollars

of U.S. taxpayer money is being spent on a war overseas, it is

important there be benchmarks and consequences if they are not met.

Last week the House approved an emergency war supplemental that will

finally hold the Iraqi Government accountable by measuring its

performance on standards that President Bush himself outlined earlier

this year.

Under the plan passed here last week, the President must report to

Congress this summer on the progress the Iraqi Government has made on

these key benchmarks. If the Iraqi Government lives up to its promises,

our troops will remain there until next year. If, however, they do not

meet the President's own benchmarks by this summer, we will begin to

redeploy our troops out of Iraq immediately. This accountability is

particularly critical after the release of a Defense Department report

showing that the Iraqi Government is not close to meeting any of these

benchmarks.

Mr. Speaker, it is time that the Iraqi Government realizes that the

American troops are not going to be in Iraq indefinitely, and that they

have to begin seriously taking responsibility for their own nation.