May I, with kindness, challenge a statement my friend

just made. My friend from Washington said the administration is rushing

as quickly as they can to provide the armament our soldiers need. I

think that is not the case. The only company that produces up-armored

Humvees that the Pentagon does business with is an Ohio company from my

State of Ohio. That company is located in Fairfield, Ohio. They are

capable of producing up-armored Humvees at the number of about 500 per

month. The Pentagon, although we desperately need them, is only buying

about 300 a month. So even in this case, where they should be

protecting our soldiers as quickly as possible, they are not doing what

they could and should be doing and they are not doing it, certainly, as

rapidly as possible.

So when it came to the body armor, and the President has actually

accused his opponent for the Presidency, the Democratic nominee, of

voting against body armor for our troops, I think they are talking

about that $87 billion supplemental, the fact is that at the beginning

of the war in Iraq, when our soldiers first went into that country,

many of them went in without body

armor to protect them. That was many months before we voted on that

supplemental. Many months. It was the President, it was Mr. Rumsfeld,

it was this administration, this Pentagon that sent our soldiers into

harm's way without adequate body armor. It took them an entire year

from March when the war started until March the following year before

all of our soldiers were outfitted with this body armor. Even tonight

as we sit here and stand here in the safety of this House Chamber,

there are soldiers in Iraq who are driving around in Humvees that are

not adequately armored, and this Pentagon is not solving that problem

as quickly as they can. I thank my friend for yielding.

It is a matter of life and death.