The President will veto this measure. He should. It is

one of the worst ideas to ever come out of the Congress in the history

of warfare that the United States has been engaged in. It sets a date

for withdrawal. I think it is October. It intrudes on the President's

Commander in Chief role. It is letting the enemy know exactly what they

have to do in terms of date and time to win in Iraq. Everyone who dies

waiting on the time to pass, what have they died for? What have they

been injured for?

What I would like to point out is that we should talk about those who

have lost their lives in Iraq wearing the uniform, and civilians

included, who have been serving our country. But we shouldn't use their

deaths as a reason to withdraw from a war we can't afford to lose--and

we have not lost. We should be honoring their service and their

sacrifice, their ultimate sacrifice, because they are standing for our

national security interests. Why do they serve? Why do they go to Iraq?

Why do they keep reenlisting in the Iraqi theater and the Afghan

theater at a higher rate than the military as a whole? What do they see

about Iraq that people here in the Senate are blinded to? Why would

they keep going back to a war they believe is lost? Why would they go

three and four times? Why would they enlist at levels beyond any other

group in the military?

Because they know after having gone that if we win in Iraq, their

children, their grandchildren, the Nation as a whole is more secure.

And if we lose in Iraq, the war is not over, it just gets bigger, and

the likelihood of their children being involved in a war in the Middle

East goes up, not down. So that is why they go. That is why they are

not withdrawing. That is why enlistments are up, not down, because they

get it.

The Senate doesn't get it. The Democratic leadership doesn't get it

at all. Blinded by a dislike of this President, they can't see clearly

what is going on in Iraq. Whether we should have gone or not is over;

we are there. There are other people who are there who would like to

win this war. Al-Qaida is there in large numbers, trying to kill this

infant democracy, because they know if a democracy can flourish in

Iraq, their agenda has taken a mighty blow.

How are they trying to drive us out? By killing civilians and

coalition forces in as large a number as they can muster.

So is it going to be the foreign policy of the United States when it

comes to fighting terrorism that if they can kill enough of us--

whatever that magic number is--we leave? You win? Do you think for one

moment declaring Iraq lost makes us safer? There is sectarian violence

in Iraq, but there are plenty of people of the Shia, Sunni, and Kurdish

persuasions that want the same thing for Iraq that we want. There are

Shia extremists who want to align with Iran. There are Sunni extremists

who want to come back in power and have the good old days of Saddam.

They are in the minority. There is not open civil war in this country.

There are extremists groups representing the Sunni and the Shia sects

that are trying to change Iraq for their purposes, bend Iraq to their

will, against the majority of Iraqis, and in the middle of these sects

is al-Qaida. In the middle of these sects is Iran.

Why is Iran playing so hard in Iraq? The biggest nightmare to this

Iranian theocracy would be a democracy on their border, where different

groups would live together, where a woman could have a say about her

children, where people could vote for their leaders, not be dictated to

from on high. That is why they are playing in Iraq. That is why al-

Qaida is there.

The question is, Why do we want to leave? It is tough to watch young

Americans killed and maimed in war, but we didn't start this war. War

is inevitably about young people getting hurt and getting killed. That

is why the world--after so many thousands of years, it seems as if

mankind would have learned that war is not the way, but we haven't

learned that lesson as mankind. The people who attacked us on September

11, 2001, there will never be a surrender document negotiated with

them.

Iraq was about replacing a dictator who was trying to make a joke of

U.N. inspections, trying to make the world and his neighbors believe

that he was acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

It was a dictatorship that was sending money to suicide bomber families

in Palestine. It was a dictatorship that was making everything in the

Middle East harder. It was a dictatorship that was shooting at American

airplanes every day in violations of U.N. agreements. It was a

dictatorship that is now in the ash dump of history. From this

dictatorship we are trying to do something new and different for the

Mideast, and it will inure to our benefit greatly as a nation: create

the ability of different people from different backgrounds to vote for

their leaders, to live under the rule of law, and not the rule of the

gun. That makes us safer. It changes the Mideast, and it is a great

blow to the terrorists. That is why they enlist. That is why they keep

reenlisting. That is why they are dying.

Now, our majority leader, Senator Reid, who is a fine fellow, and I

have enjoyed working with him, has made a colossal mistake for the ages

by declaring this war lost. Not only does it run against the grain of

the way Americans feel about combat when our Nation is at war, it runs

against the reality of the consequences of having declared the war

lost. To me, it shows a lack of understanding of what that statement

means because when you say the war is lost, the next question to ask

is, if we lost, who won? In war, there are winners and there are

losers, and if the majority leader has declared us the loser, then the

question needs to be asked by the world and this country: Who won that

war in Iraq?

Well, I will tell you who will claim credit for winning the war in

Iraq--al-Qaida. They will put on their Web site and in their propaganda

to anybody who will listen: We won in Iraq. I guarantee you, if we

lost, they won. Do you feel comfortable with that as a Senator

representing the United States of America? I don't.

Who else won, if we lost? The Shia extremists who are trying to turn

Iraq into a theocracy aligned with Iran. Does that satisfy you as a

United States Senator? Is that OK with you? It is certainly not OK with

me. The Sunni extremists, they won, the ones who are trying to take

Iraq back to the good old days of Saddam.

Who are the biggest losers beyond us? We know who the winners are,

the extremists in Iraq and al-Qaida, the ultimate extreme group. If you

believe giving these groups Iraq makes us safer, you know nothing about

human behavior or history as a whole.

This is not Vietnam, I say to my colleagues. This is the 1930s all

over again where we have world leaders trying to appease a tyrant--give

him Czechoslovakia, give him one more country, him being Hitler. Did

that satisfy his appetite? The moral of the story is that when we let

tyranny go unchecked, when we give into the dark forces of humanity,

when we allow people who slaughter the innocent to win wars, we don't

end their desire, we whet their appetite.

We have not lost this war. We will never lose this war as long as we

have the will to win. If we have half the political courage as those

who reenlist and go back three and four times, or the physical courage,

there is nothing we can't accomplish in Iraq.

Some people worry about their next election, and they are trying to

get right with the polls. My focus is on those who reenlist time and

again and who are literally sacrificing everything they have to offer

to their family and to their country.

So when we mention the death of someone wearing the uniform in the

service of our Nation as a reason to withdraw from a war we cannot

afford to lose, shame on this body. This bill will be vetoed. This new

general, General Petraeus, is committed to winning, has a plan to win,

and the question is, Are we going to undercut him?

If you passed the legislation and this legislation went to the

President's desk and he did not veto it, then you would be cutting the

legs out from under General Petraeus. You would be making everything

that he is doing impossible to accomplish because you would change the

dynamics on the ground so he would have no chance. And, yes, it is

working. Violence is part of the 21st century. Israel lives with this

every day. They don't let suicide bombers define the fate of Israel.

Are we going to let suicide bombers define the foreign policy of the

United States? If we give them Iraq, you better double the size of the

military because we are going to go back with a bigger war, not a

smaller war. So I hope once the President vetoes it, we will understand

that this new general with a new strategy is our best chance for

success--with no guarantee because we have made so many mistakes in the

past.

The biggest mistake was not having enough people to secure the

country. If we want political reconciliation, which we know we have to

achieve to win in Iraq, how can we have it without security? Why don't

we have security? We let the country get out of control. We didn't have

enough troops on the ground or enough capacity to train and fight.

We are doubling the size of the combat capability in Baghdad, and it

is working. Mr. President, 16 of the 21 sheiks in Anbar Province have

rejected al-Qaida and aligned with us. Six months ago, Al Anbar

Province, where the Sunnis live, I would have written off. But now it

is the greatest success story of the new strategy. We are still losing

people in Anbar, but we are fighting along with the sheiks to combat

al-Qaida because they have seen what al-Qaida holds for them and they

have said, no, they don't want to live under the al-Qaida banner. They

have tasted it and it doesn't taste well. They are coming our way.

Four thousand marines in Anbar province are making a huge difference.

The sheiks, the tribal leaders, called for the young people of Anbar

Province to join the police--before, we could not get anybody to join

the Iraqi police--and they came in such large numbers that hundreds

were turned away because we could not process them. Diyala is a result

of success in Baghdad. Al-Sadr left Sadr City because we are in there

now and are going to places we have never gone before. The mayor of

Sadr City aligned with us, and they tried to kill him. He is in the

hospital clinging to life. He tasted what the Shia extremists had for

his people, the Shia, and he said no.

The only people I know of right now who seem to believe walking away

from the fight in Iraq doesn't have severe consequences for the world

are the ones in this body. I cannot envision a failed state in Iraq

leading to a more secure United States. I cannot envision walking away

from Iraq, declaring the war lost, not empowering al-Qaida beyond any

other single event that we have engaged in since 9/11. The consequences

of destroying General Petraeus's chance to be successful are enormous

for the national security interests of this country.

Declaring a war lost by the Senate majority leader is unprecedented,

ill-advised, and it is something we need to quickly correct because if

we have lost, the people who will claim victory are our worst

nightmare. We will be sending young men and women back to the Middle

East to fight extremism in other countries as far as the eye can see or

we can give this new general a chance to be successful, give him the

time, the money, and the resources he needs to be successful, honor

each death as a noble sacrifice for the cause of our freedom--for our

own freedom, for the alignment of moderation against extremism--or we

can let the car bomber and the suicide bomber drive us out of Iraq. We

can let them dictate our foreign policy.

If we do that, we can come back home thinking we are safe, but we

will have unleashed Pandora's box. The Gulf States are next if we lose

in Iraq, and then eventually Israel. The consequences to our national

security interests could not be greater.

Americans understood what it was like to live without freedom 200

years ago. That is why they died for it. There are people in the

Mideast getting a taste of it. Let's side with those who believe in

freedom against those who want to take us to the dark ages.

I yield the floor.