I would like to thank my friend from New York for taking

this time out this evening and sharing it with those of us who feel a

real need to come to the floor of this fourth anniversary of the war in

Iraq and share with the people of America how we really feel about what

is going on.

First, I think it is important for the people of America to know that

some of us are listening. We hear what they are telling us. We know

what their expectations are. The polls today are very, very clear about

the overwhelming number of Americans who want us out of Iraq.

This war has truly taken a toll on this country: over 3,200 dead;

24,000 injured. And I don't mean just minor injuries. Serious injuries.

It has been documented what is happening at Walter Reed, brain

injuries, eyes gouged out, limbs lost. Serious injuries. And the

information that was just shared with us, about 20 percent of the

returning troops with mental illness.

Not only is it taking a toll on these young men and women who are

sacrificing in this war; it is taking a toll on our domestic agenda,

over $400 billion spent on this war in Iraq and Afghanistan. The

President now has a supplemental appropriation before this House asking

for $100 billion more. The President recently came to us and told us he

was going to increase the troops there by another 21,000, and a few

days ago he added to that another 8,500. The requests keep coming: more

troops, more money. And there is no end in sight.

The President has said we should listen to the generals on the

ground. Whenever we try and share our feelings and give some advice, he

rejects it out of hand. Well, he just got information from General

Petraeus on the ground, and he said to the world there will be and can

be no military solution. But this President continues to persist in

increasing the military and misrepresenting to the American people what

is going on.

With this request that he has made, the supplemental request, there

are those who truly believe that we can ask him for progress reports

and he will give us good information. I listened very carefully early

this morning to what the President and all of those in his

administration would say on this 4th-year anniversary. They simply are

spinning the information about this war the way they have always spun

the information about this war.

First of all, as it has been said over and over again, they told us

we would be welcomed with open arms. They told us there were weapons of

mass destruction. They told us we were making progress with the

training of soldiers, Iraqi soldiers, and they were just around the

corner, they would be prepared and willing to take over the security of

that country.

Well, I listened as they did their spin this morning. In the middle

of all of this carnage, in the middle of the fact that we wake up to

more suicide bombings, more loss of American soldiers, and the

expansion of the bombings in putting chlorine into the bombing and into

the materials, they were spinning it again this morning saying we are

making progress. And that is what I expect them to say if we give them

the opportunity to tell us what progress is, come July, as it is

indicated in the legislation that some would like to go forth from the

floor.

We cannot depend on them to tell us the truth. We cannot depend on

them to follow and honor benchmarks that a lot of people are alluding

to. We cannot depend on this President to get out of Iraq as long as we

are giving him the money. We said that we didn't support the surge, but

there are those who could suggest that we turn around and

support the surge, $90 billion to support the expansion of this war.

Why should he get out as long as we are giving him the money?

What are we supposed to accomplish? What are we trying to do? The

President would tell you that somehow we are supposed to provide the

security and we are supposed to train so that the Iraqis will be able

to provide security. We are supposed to make the Shiites get along with

the Sunnis and the Sunnis get along with the Kurds. I don't think so. I

think that we don't understand the history. And I don't think that we

understand, no matter who we think we are, we cannot forge the kinds of

relationships that somehow we are going to stay there until we make

people love and like each other and work together.

Who wants us in Iraq? They call us the occupiers. As a matter of

fact, we find that legislators that are supposedly in this new

democratic government, one was revealed this morning to have all kinds

of weapons found at his house. All kinds of weapons. And they found

traces of chemicals in his four automobiles. This is one of the so-

called elected members of the parliament. They do not want us there.

The Shiites don't want us there, the Sunnis don't want us there, the

Kurds don't want us there. And we have our young people at risk. They

are at risk. They are being attacked by the militias, and they are

being attacked by the very police forces that are supposed to be on the

ground helping to provide security.

Well, in the final analysis, our only response must be to have an

exit strategy. The Out of Iraq Caucus that was organized 1\1/2\ years

ago did not say when we should get out; it did not tell the President

exactly what the strategy should be. We simply created a platform for

discussion and debate so that the Members of Congress would keep their

eyes on the ball so that they would understand what was going on and

not have information swept under the rug. We invited in speakers. We

had generals to come in; we had writers to come in. We had many people

come in and talk with us about what is going on there. But this

President doesn't get it. He is intending to stay there until he does

something called ``win,'' with young people losing their lives, the

children of families all over America, not just from inner cities but

most of them now we are finding coming from rural America. They will

continue to die.

In another year we are going to have thousands that will be dead. In

another year there will be thousands that will be injured. And the

shame of it all is that they won't find the kind of medical care. They

had a big article today and information about the homeless veterans

returning from Iraq. They are homeless, they are not being cared for,

they are not getting the benefits. But we are going to continue this

war. I would submit to you it is time for a change. Bring our soldiers

home.