I would simply like to point out something to my colleagues. Unlike the supplemental bill that will soon be voted on—or what I would like to call our surrender document—the Iraq Study Group Report does not call for us to walk away from our mission. This bill does. But the Iraq Study Group Cochair, James Baker, recently had this to say about artificial deadlines:

So here we are, a must-pass bill that flies in the face of what the Iraq Study Group has recommended. But the Democratic majority is more interested in what effect slowing down passage of the supplemental means to the Department of Defense as a whole. Particularly, the House of Representatives has dragged its feet in appointing conferences to the supplemental spending bills the House and Senate passed. In fact, the report specifically opposes that approach. As many military and political leaders told us, an arbitrary deadline would allow the enemy to wait us out and would strengthen the positions of extremists over moderates.
There is no doubt we face extremely difficult challenges in Iraq. We have not made enough progress. Citizens of Iraq must be willing to fight for their own freedom. The President recognizes this, and his new plan is the result of increased commitments from the Iraqi Prime Minister. The President has developed a new plan with new leadership. We should not jerk the rug out from under those we have put in charge in Iraq.

I ask my colleagues to reject this bill and let us craft a clean funding bill that will meet the priorities and needs of our men and women in Iraq.

Mr. President, that concludes my remarks.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, I want to follow on the remarks of my dear friend from Colorado related to the current situation in Iraq. It appears some movement has been made on the war supplemental. Unfortunately, it is a flawed piece of legislation, one of the crafters of it will know will be vetoed by the President. It will be vetoed for good reasons—because it contains completely unacceptable language being pointed at the military.

It is impossible for us to micro-manage what is happening in the field. It is a bad idea for politicians in Washington to tell generals when and how they should move forces in a battle. It is a bad idea for us to slow-bleed our military as they face an unrelenting enemy. It is a bad idea for us to simply not have the wherewithal to stick with the fight at a time when it is difficult. The President this week again reiterated his commitment that he would veto a bill that had artificial time-frames for withdrawal and that would empower the enemy. It gives the enemy hope and an opportunity to wait us out. There is no question about that. A deadline simply tells the enemy what date they need to know that the American commitment is over.

Imagine the confusion for someone in Iraq trying to make a decision whether to cast their lot which, in fact, may mean the death of himself or herself, and their family, to support our effort there toward a democratic country. If they had no anticipation that our commitment was equal to theirs, they might simply wait it out. So how can we ever turn the political tide on favor in Iraq? I don't think the commitment the people of Iraq must have in order to make a commitment to our stated goals?

General Petraeus is here. He met with the President yesterday; he will be meeting with Members of Congress. It is important that we ask him his assessment of the current situation.

I know there are many who would be ready to suggest that the surge is not working. In fact, the full surge is not in place yet; some of the troops are yet to be deployed for the surge, but some who already said it wouldn't work are now saying it hasn't worked. I wish to have General Petraeus's assessment of it. I want to know what the general on the ground—not a politician in Washington—thinks about the effort of success we are meeting with our effort at this point in time.

The Iraq Study Group has been mentioned. Congress should drop fixed deadlines for withdrawals of U.S. forces. As Commander in Chief, the President needs flexibility on draft deployments. This is from the cochair of the Iraq Study Group, Democrat Lee Hamilton:

It is important that we recognize the Iraq Study Group not only when it is convenient but also when it might be inconvenient.

I think it is very important that we not sound the voice of defeat. Imagine the surprise that must have come to our enemies—and whether we like it or not, we have enemies—imagine the delight that must have come when, from the halls of the Congress, from the leader of the Senate, they were told that they had, in fact, won; that the war was lost.

This is not the right thing to say at a time when our troops are engaged in the fight against their enemy. Their lives are at stake in the next 24 hours. This is a difficult time. It is not a pleasant time. It is not an easy assignment. So how can we continue to have difficulty?

I have shared these comments publicly and privately. Whenever you face something as contentious as the matters we face—matters of war and peace, the making of Medicare financially solvent, the question of prescription drugs and their cost—you simply can't do it by taking a unilateral position over and over on either side of this aisle; it has to be that people have to come together and work it out. There also has to be a sense of mutual trust of people telling the truth to each other, of doing what the standards were in the old days where a man's word was his bond. Until we get that, we are going to continue to have difficulty.

I have shared the problems now in a war that is certainly a difficult one. We all share the same goal: that the interests of America are furthered if we can stabilize Iraq. How do we get there? There has been so much mistrust and suspicion that has been bred because of all the inconsistencies and lack of information and misinformation and massaged information. But that is then; now is now. What do we do? Thus far, it looks as though the White House and the leadership in Congress can't work together. There is too much distrust.

I have said before and I will say again, thank goodness the Secretary of State is out on a new diplomatic initiative. It is not catty to say it is about time, because there certainly have been those forces within the administration that have wanted this much more in the past, but I think the Secretary of State is making a very valiant effort now, because you are not going to solve the problems unless you can get all the neighbors in the region involved to make a political solution stick.

Is a political solution viable? This Senator cannot say at this point that it is. There is no basis for a political solution because of the sectarian hatred we have seen play out over the last several months. But this hasn't just been going on for months; this has been going on for 1,327 years, ever since the Battle of Karbala. I say to my colleagues, which is my friend and I, and those who wish for our country to be defeated? We should pull together, Republicans and Democrats all, to try to find the common ground that will bring us to a sensible solution, to a sensible outcome, so America is not defeated, but the enemies of America are defeated.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.