

storm of the century. There is \$30 million requested in that supplemental to assist them.

The health, housing, small business and community development needs of the gulf are also finally heard and responded to in this measure, with a provision for community disaster loan forgiveness to assist local governments in meeting the needs of their displaced and devastated people.

There is also \$4.3 billion of FEMA disaster recovery grants and a social services block grant extension; \$25 million for small business disaster loans, and \$80 billion for HUD tenant-based rental assistance.

In the area of health care, two great needs are addressed in this bill with \$1 billion to purchase vaccines, emergency vaccines, that would be needed to protect this country in the case of a global flu pandemic; and another \$750 million to make sure that the children's health insurance programs, which cover millions of children in 14 States and some of the territories, will continue uninterrupted.

These are just some of the important areas funded in this bill, and it's why it must go forward. If we don't do it in this supplemental, a measure that is reserved for critical issues like these, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to get them done at all.

The American people are looking at us and wondering if their priorities are our priorities. This legislation demonstrates that we not only know what the priorities are, but that we are ready to stand with them and act on the issues they have told us are important to them.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### A BREAK IN THE PURSUIT OF PEACE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, today the Associated Press reported that in the middle of the Iraq civil war, their parliament will be taking a 2-month break starting in July. While our troops are dying, while they are being wounded, while they are trying to provide security to the Iraqi people, the Iraqi leadership is planning to take 2 months off.

I hope that this does not mean that the Iraqis are giving up on providing a peaceful resolution to this conflict. If anything, the parliament should be re-dedicating themselves to providing security and hope to the Iraqi people, not taking a break, not letting any hope

for a peaceful resolution slip through their fingers.

Our best hope for peace in the region, actually, will have to come through hard work, through negotiations, through constant attention. Every day we turn a blind eye to the real situation on the ground in Iraq, more people die, more American troops, more Iraqi civilians die. I don't know about anyone else, but this is simply unacceptable to me.

The American people have said again, and they have said again, that they want our troops out of Iraq. This administration must demand that the Iraqi leaders stay in town, stay at the table, and not go on vacation.

After all, how can we stand down if the Iraqis aren't there to stand up?

This is a very serious problem, Mr. Speaker. How can we have a partnership with the Iraqi people, as our administration has promised, a partnership that they say is working to bring peace in Iraq, if half of that partnership goes on vacation?

My position has remained the same from the very beginning: We need to fully fund the withdrawal from Iraq. We need to bring our troops and military contractors home. We need to provide real and reliable health care to our returning troops. We need to work with the international community to provide for a dependable and safe future for the Iraqi people.

The way to bring peace to Iraq is not through building walls around neighborhoods, creating walled-in villages, breaking up lives and breaking up families. The way to bring peace to Iraq is to give sovereignty to the Iraqi people and to have a surge of peaceful negotiations. The only way to bring about peace is to bring our troops home, to empower the Iraqi people to build a future based on hope and equality.

And I ask you, Mr. Speaker, if not now, when?

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#### THE PRESIDENT CUT FUNDING FROM THE TROOPS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SARBANES). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my disappointment and outrage at President Bush's veto of the Iraq War supplemental bill. By vetoing this bill, the President has vetoed the will of the American people, and it is the President who is denying funding for our troops.

The President has vetoed a responsible funding bill for the troops that would have provided more funding for our troops and military readiness than the President requested. The President rejected a bill that reflects the will of the American people to wind down this war. The American people sent this message very strongly last November.

By vetoing this bill, Mr. Speaker, President Bush vetoed: One, fully funding our troops, and providing \$4 billion more than the President requested; honoring our veterans by providing \$1.8 billion more for veterans health care. Is \$900 million for treating traumatic brain injury pork? Is \$20 million to repair facilities at Walter Reed pork?

By vetoing this bill, the President has vetoed accountability for the Iraqi Government, and he has vetoed his own benchmarks that he laid out January 10 in his speech to the Nation. Let me quote from that speech.

"A successful strategy for Iraq goes beyond military operations. Ordinary Iraqi citizens must see that military operations are accompanied by visible improvements in their neighborhoods and communities. So America will hold the Iraqi Government to the benchmarks it has announced.

"To establish its authority, the Iraqi Government plans to take responsibility for security over Iraq's provinces by November. To give every Iraqi citizen a stake in the country's economy, Iraq will pass legislation to share oil revenues.

"To empower local leaders, Iraqis plan to hold provincial elections next year and allow more Iraqis to re-enter their nation's political light, the government will reform de-Baathification laws and establish a fair process for considering amendments to Iraq's Constitution. America will change our approach to help the Iraqi government as it works to meet these benchmarks."

Mr. Speaker, the supplemental contained these benchmarks directly quoted from the President's speech. So was the President's call for benchmarks a sincere request or what?

Providing the President with a clean supplemental bill simply provides him a blank check for the same failed policies in Iraq he has rejected and vetoed, his own benchmarks, as I simply quoted his speech.

New evidence keeps emerging that clearly points to a new direction in Iraq. Despite the President's constant claims of "progress," the facts are otherwise. The U.S. death toll in Iraq reached 104 in April, making it the deadliest month of the year and one of the deadliest of the entire war.

Republican Senator CHUCK HAGEL recently returned from Iraq and paints a bleak picture. "This is coming undone quickly, and Prime Minister Maliki's government is weaker by the day. The police are corrupt, top to bottom. The oil problem is a huge problem. They still can't get anything through parliament." That is a quote from someone who just went there, Senator CHUCK HAGEL.

Over the weekend, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction released his quarterly report and paints a dispiriting picture of our \$20 billion rebuilding efforts. For example, an audit of the facilities in Iraq discovered serious maintenance and operational problems, with seven out of