pounds of body armor in brutal heat, being shot at, being attacked by brutal IEDs. Yes, it is hot in Baghdad, and it is hot in more ways than one.

We need to care about our troops, and we need to care for our troops. We all say we support our troops. Well, let's support them, all 100 of us, all 100 Senators. Regardless of party and how we voted on the war, let's say we support our troops. Then if we really do support them, let's support the Webb amendment.

The Webb amendment does support our troops and our families and also the employers of those in the Guard and Reserve. But it supports our troops. The Webb amendment gives our troops a breather, and if the Pentagon will not do it, Congress needs to do it. That is why I support the Webb amendment.

I salute the Senator from Virginia. Senator WEBB is a freshman Senator, but he is no stranger to war. He is a warrior's warrior, a combat veteran. He also was the Secretary of the Navy. He knows full well the stresses the men and women in our military are facing and their families are facing.

The Webb amendment is simple and straightforward. It supports our troops by giving them more time at home between deployments. It deals with troop fatigue. It deals with troop exhaustion. For our men and women in the military, if you are in the full-time military, the all-volunteer military, your time at home would be at least as long as the length of your last deployment. For the Guard and the Reserve, no one would be redeployed within three times of their previous deployment.

Why is this important? Our military is overstretched, and our troops are exhausted. Their families are also living with tremendous stress. Every time they hear a news report about another attack, they wonder how their loved one is and if they are surviving. They have an unending, agonizing fear of a strange car pulling up to their home with unbearable news. Whether you are a spouse, a mom, or a dad, or children, you are bearing the stress of this war. The Webb amendment gives our troops a breather and some relief to our families.

This current President says the struggle in Iraq will be long and will require continued sacrifice. Sacrifice from whom? There is no shared sacrifice. The sacrifice is falling on our troops now serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. The sacrifice has been made by those who died in Iraq, by the 85 Marylanders who died in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Mr. President, you are from Maryland. You know that some of the men and women who died came from our service academies—West Point, the Naval Academy. Some came from renowned schools and universities. Some of our kids came from the school of hard knocks. One, named Kendall Frederick, only had a green card. He died when a bomb hit his convoy when he was driving to get his fingerprints taken so that he could become an American citizen. Thousands of others are wounded.

Some say we are micromanaging the war. You know what. I am for micromanaging the war. Maybe if we micromanaged the war, it would not be costing us $12 billion a month, and maybe we wouldn't be going it alone. So no matter how one feels about deadlines or benchmarks, we must support our troops. And I believe this is the way to do it.

I conclude by saying this: While our troops are out there every day in 115-degree heat, let's see what the Iraq Parliament is doing. Our guys are fighting for a military solution. Let's see what they are doing for a political solution.

The Iraqi Parliament cannot even reach a quorum. Mr. President, 12 members of the Iraqi 38-Member Parliament no longer attend Cabinet meetings. So one-third of the Cabinet doesn't show up for meetings. Seventy-five Members of the Iraqi Parliament are boycotting, refusing to do any work at all so that the very Parliament cannot get a quorum. While the Iraqi Parliament doesn't show up and stays home in its air-conditioning, our guys and gals are out there patrolling Baghdad in 115-degree heat with 100 pounds of equipment and body armor. Listen, if you support the troops, support Webb.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 1558, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1585) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Nelson of Nebraska (for Levin) amendment No. 2011, in the nature of a substitute.

Webb amendment No. 2012 (to amendment No. 2011), to specify minimum periods between deployment of units and members of the Armed Forces for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Nelson of Florida amendment No. 2013 (to amendment No. 2012), to change the enactment date.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 11:30 a.m. will be for debate only, with the time equally divided and controlled between the chair and ranking member of the Armed Services Committee or their designees, with the 20 minutes immediately prior to 11:30 a.m. divided equally between the two leaders, with the majority leader controlling the final 10 minutes.

Who yields time?

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I would ask the sponsor of the amendment if he would like to begin or does he choose to have me discuss this amendment? I am amenable to either course.

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, I am comfortable with the Senator from Arizona beginning the discussion. We are waiting for the chairman to arrive.

Mr. MCCAIN. Well then, Mr. President, I will go ahead.

I understand there is 20 minutes equally divided; is that correct, Mr. President?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arizona controls 20 minutes.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I will yield myself just 4 minutes and then save some of the remaining time.

Mr. President, this amendment calls for a congressionally mandated fence that would surround every soldier, sailor, airman, and marine and every military unit in the Armed Forces. If their days at home don't equal the days deployed, these soldiers, by law, could not be deployed in support of operations in Iraq or Afghanistan. It is quite a restriction.

I have done some research recently, since I heard about this amendment, and it is certainly without precedent in wartime, and we are in wars, both in Iraq and Afghanistan. Rather than get into the debate about the length of the war in Iraq again, I think most people appreciate the fact that the war or the conflict in Afghanistan will be with us for a long time. I mention that because I have yet to see a congressional proposal to end our engagement in Afghanistan where we were successful in ousting the Taliban, but, obviously, there are more challenges we have to meet in the future.

In the Defense authorization bill, we have provisions to increase the size of the Marine Corps and the Army, which I hope will alleviate some of the enormous strain that has been placed on our Guard, Reserve, and Active-Duty Forces. I understand the deep concern of the Senator from Virginia about this issue. Our Guard and Reserve are being stressed in a way that is unprecedented, probably since World War II, when everybody was called to serve, just about, and I certainly understand the concerns raised here. I share them with Guard members and members of the Reserve all the time.

We have called people back to active duty in an almost unprecedented fashion, so I understand the intent of this amendment. But if we put such a requirement into law in wartime, I think it would be bad congressional micromanagement. It would be a precedent that no President could live with and an expression of distrust in military leaders, particularly of the Secretary

of Defense, Mr. Gates, who promptly established dwell-time policies on assuming office and is doing his utmost to enforce them.

Senator WEBB has expressed his belief that this amendment would do no harm. Well, those whom we charge with the responsibilities—both the Department of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff—have indicated that if enacted, the amendment would have immediate adverse effects on their ability to accomplish their military missions.

The Joint Staff told us this amendment would ''eliminate the flexibility of the services to manage and mitigate exceptions to dwell time planning goals'' and that ''future support to IAF/OEF may be severely impacted.''

The Joint Staff went on to say, ''The requirements will result in future capability gaps in combat and combat support forces both in IAF and OEF units.'' For reservists, the requirement will ''exacerbate the stress on the current force, providing sourcing challenges and creating shortfalls.''

The Department of Defense stated, ''In emergency situations, where forces are needed quickly, the waiver process could affect the war fight itself by delaying forces needed in theater.'' And they went on to say, ''The proposed language stipulates minimum periods between deployments in both units and individuals. The requirement to meet both criteria for units and individuals before deployment could severely limit options for sourcing rotations.''

That is the view of the people we entrust with the responsibilities to defend our Nation, and I do not diminish the responsibility of the Congress as well. This amendment could—and according to military planners, would—do harm. And it shouldn't be a surprise.

So the amendment has a Presidential waiver provision, which I am sure will be emphasized in the course of this discussion, but it doesn't make the amendment better. Attempts at using it would only lead to endless delays and bickering about whether deployment ''meets an operational emergency posing a vital threat to national security interests.'' Those kinds of decisions should clearly be made by the President of the United States. That is what the Constitution says when it outlines specifically that the President of the United States shall serve as Commander in Chief.

Now, the Congress, as they have in the past, has the power of the purse, and if we don't like what the President—the Commander in Chief—is doing, then we can cut off those appropriations. Sometimes we have done that, much to our dismay in afterthought. For example, I referred earlier—yesterday—to a decision to cut off any military assistance or any kind of assistance to Cambodia, and we watched helplessly as 3 million people were slaughtered in a genocide of proportions almost unmatched in the 20th century. I say ''almost.'' So I believe this kind of decision should be made by the Commander in Chief.

I wish to assure my colleague from Virginia that I will work with him in every way to get this legislation passed, which increases the size of our Marine Corps and Army, and we should continue, just as quickly as we can, to recruit these brave individuals and to maintain the standards we think are important in order to have this highly qualified All-Volunteer Force.

I would also again point out that there are men and women who want to go back to Iraq. There are men and women who want to serve again in Afghanistan. There are men and women who feel a sense of urgency and a desire to serve. Would the amendment of the Senator from Virginia preclude them from additional service? I don't know.

So I hope we can continue to work together on this issue, and I hope we can turn down this amendment, even though I certainly agree with the sentiments and the concern of the Senator from Virginia.

Mr. President, I reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PRYOR). The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I will yield a moment first to Senator WEBB to comment on the question which Senator MCCAIN just raised about whether people can voluntarily go back before the dwell time period is over, and then I will yield myself 8 minutes, after which I will yield the remainder of my time to the control of Senator WEBB.

Mr. WEBB. I thank the Senator for yielding for a factual reference on the one point the Senator from Arizona raised, and I will reserve the remainder of my time for later on.

There is a waiver provision in this amendment that allows anyone who wants to return to duty in Iraq or Afghanistan to do so and without affecting the rights of other people to be deployed, according to the amendment.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, there is ample evidence that 4 years of war has stressed our Armed Forces to the breaking point. Our Army and Marine Corps are stretched dangerously thin. They are wearing out. Earlier this year, we watched as they scrambled and pulled together the personnel, equipment, and training to meet the surge of additional forces to Iraq. They will continue to struggle to sustain this higher surge force level if it extends beyond this fall.

Unit rotations into and out of an overseas mission has been a fixture of U.S. military operations for many years. However, unit-rotation schemes have significant strategic risks, and risks are increased when deployed force levels spike or drop as our military strategy changes in the political or security environment, such as was done for past elections or the recent surge.

Short-notice deployment accelerations and extensions are inherently risky and complicate unit preparation and operations on the ground. Risks increase when we do not have sufficient ground forces overall to accomplish what we are asking them to do and still allow time for nondeployed units and individuals to fully recover from their last or prepare for their next deployment.

Multiple deployments with insufficient dwell time contribute to several problems among our troops: Insufficient dwell time increases operational risk as troops and units deploy without the time necessary to fully man, equip, and train before they leave their home station. Insufficient dwell time between rotations contributes to the retention problems we are seeing, especially among midgrade officers and sergeants. Insufficient time between rotations creates higher rates of mental health issues among troops with multiple and extended deployments. Insufficient dwell time puts much higher stress on our military families, resulting in higher than normal levels of divorce or abuse.

Last January, the Secretary of Defense announced a new approach to unit rotation. Among our Active component forces, he wanted to immediately achieve a minimum 1-to-1 deployed to at home or dwell time, on the way to achieving a goal of 1-to-2 or greater dwell time. Our Guard and Reserve forces would deploy for no longer than 12 months from start to finish, with a goal of no less than 5 years between deployments.

Well, the Webb amendment reflects those policy goals. The Webb amendment mandates that for each day deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan, an Active-Duty servicemember will spend 1 day at home, and it mandates that our Guard and Reserves get a minimum of 3 years between deployments. It is essential that as we vote we understand that the amendment provides waiver authorities to the President and service chiefs to ensure the flexibility to respond to any emergency the Nation may face in the future, and those decisions are left to the President.

Mr. President, there is precedent for the Webb amendment. Congress took action in 1999 to relieve some of the deployment burden our forces were facing at that time and to drive the Department of Defense to a more precise management system that would take better care of troops and their families. It is true that Congress has the power of the purse, but under that same Constitution, we also have the power to regulate the Armed Forces by law, and that is what the Webb amendment seeks to do.

Congress established in law an annual deployment threshold for Active and Reserve forces above which servicemembers are entitled to special pay. We put that in law as part of our constitutional authority to regulate the Army and the Navy. The Secretary of Defense exercised his national security waiver authority of that requirement right after 9/11. It is not unusual to

have a waiver authority in law. It is not unusual for the executive to use that waiver authority, as they have done before.

Due to the deployment management standards of this earlier legislation, the services have in place the systems necessary to plan and execute the requirements of this amendment, and so it has served its purpose, and this one will as well.

It is a very useful amendment. The Defense Department will have to make earlier strategic and operational decisions, which will allow greater precision in planning unit and individual rotations, and that will result in greater predictability and stability for our troops and their families.

The Webb amendment promotes the health of our troops, ensuring time for post-deployment evaluation and recovery. The Webb amendment also promotes readiness, ensuring that units and personnel have the time—the most precious of resources—to man, equip, and train for any future mission.

I hope the Senate will adopt the Webb amendment. It will be a useful contribution to the readiness and well-being of our Armed Forces.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, however the Senator from Michigan wants to handle it—I have 12 minutes remaining. I wish to yield to the Senator from South Carolina for 5 minutes, the Senator from Georgia for 5 minutes, and I will take the remaining 2 minutes. If the Senator from Michigan or the Senator from Virginia wants to intervene between those two, that will be fine.

I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from South Carolina and, following whatever remarks on the other side, the Senator from Georgia for 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, as to the effect of this amendment, whether it is good or bad, I am here to say I think it is a terrible idea. I don't think it is remotely a good idea. The intent of the amendment is to take care of the troops. I don't question anybody's intent or motivation. If you want to take care of the troops, let them win. What we are about to do with this amendment is something we have never done in the history of this country. We are about to go down the road where the Congress steps into military operations and creates congressional mandates that will basically change the relationship between the commander—the executive branch—and the congressional branch in a way that I think is very ill-suited to winning the next war. It is a dangerous precedent to allow troop rotations to be governed by politicians who are looking for the next election.

Commanders do not get elected. They make decisions in the national security interest apart from the next political election. The moment you put politicians in the role of making troop deployments, then you are allowing the political moment to determine what the outcome of the war will be. Not only is this constitutionally ill-advised and unfounded, politically it is a disaster in the making, to allow any Congress during any war to step in and say troops can only go here and they can't go there, they have to stay home this much—it basically destroys the ability of commanders in the field to get the resources they need to fight and win the wars we send them to fight and win.

The easy way to do this, the right way to do it, is to stop the war. The consequences of this amendment are devastating, in terms of a constitutional relationship between the branches. It interjects politics into military decisions in a way that will come back to haunt this country. The effect of this amendment on the surge will be to kill it. Why don't you say you want to kill it? Why create a situation, through troop rotations, that will have the effect of making sure the surge cannot go forward, because the ripple effect of this ever becoming law would be to stop the surge at a time when the additional troops do matter and are making a difference when it comes to defeating al-Qaida.

The waiver provision—the President of the United States is not going to begin to entertain this. No President would. No President could sit on the sidelines and watch the authority of the Commander in Chief be taken over by the political moment. The relationship this amendment would create between future Commanders in Chief and the Congress and the military is a dangerous precedent because it would allow the political moment to take over troop deployments. The needs of the war at the time would become no greater than the poll for the moment. We cannot win a war that way.

In World War II you were in for the duration—and it is tough. My Lord, the troops need to be praised. They need to be paid more. They need to have better benefits. Their families need more services. But the last thing in the world we should do, in the name of helping them, is to put 535 people in charge of where they go and how they go—because we are not exactly visionary. I don't think we have risen to the level in this Congress of being able to say we are visionary leaders for this country. I think what we have done is reinforced at every turn that this is about the political moment.

Congress is at 20-something percent for a reason. What I can't understand is what the 20 percent see and like.

I ask my colleagues not to make a mistake for the ages. Not in the name of taking care of the troops should we fundamentally put politics in military decisions, as we have never done before. In the name of protecting the troops we should not destroy a surge the troops are involved in that is beginning to defeat the most vicious enemy known to the planet, al-Qaida. The effect of this amendment, regardless of its intent, is to destroy a strategy that we sent General Petraeus off to execute, in a back-door way, and to fundamentally put politics in decisions in a way that will haunt this country forever, so I urge a resounding ''no'' vote.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the Webb amendment and urge my colleagues to vote against the cloture motion. This amendment is about restricting the President and his military leaders' ability to prosecute a war that we have asked them to execute, and for which we unanimously confirmed General Petraeus to carry out. It is an unwise and harmful effort to limit the ability of the President and his military leaders and handicap their use of personnel and resources available to them.

Senator WEBB's amendment would preclude ''deployment'' of certain active and reserve forces based on the number of days they have spent at home. Keep in mind these restrictions would apply to the Nation's most experienced and capable troops during a time of war when we face an unpredictable and highly adaptive enemy.

Keep in mind that during World War II and other wars of this country, servicemembers participating in those wars deployed for 3 and 4 years with little or no break. With this in mind the current proposal by Senator WEBB seems out of step with history and what it has taken to win the wars of this country. I can think of no way in which the Webb amendment will help our Nation succeed in Iraq.

This amendment ignores the fact that we are at war and that artificial conditions imposed by Congress on the use of troops are not helpful. Senator WEBB is not alone in worrying about the effects of this war on the readiness of the Armed Forces, on the soldiers and marines and their loved ones, and on the ability of our all volunteer force to continue to perform under this demanding schedule of rotations. Senator WEBB's amendment, however, is not a solution to any of these problems. Senator WEBB stated that his amendment ''does not micromanage the military nor does it tie the hands of our operational commanders in theater.'' The Pentagon disagrees. The Pentagon has said that if the Webb amendment passes, operations and plans would need to be significantly altered. Units or individuals without sufficient ''dwell time'' would need a waiver to deploy based on threat. This waiver process adds time, cost, and uncertainty to deployment planning.

In emergency situations the waiver process could affect the war fight itself by delaying forces needed in theater. Units would need to be selected for deployment based on dwell criteria that may in fact cause significant disruption to needed reset, planned transformation or unit training schedules.

And from the Joint Staff: For fiscal year 2008, four Army brigade combat

teams are projected to incur ''dwell violations;'' gaps in manning would be seen in aviation, intelligence, engineer, medical and military police; gaps would be seen in high demand units, specifically EOD, security forces, forces supporting detainee operations, and mobility aircrews. For individual members: ''anticipate high operational impact due to breakdowns in unit cohesion and problems in filling individual shortfalls in tasked units.''

Public approval ratings for the President and for Congress may be at all time lows, but the admiration of the American people for our military only gets higher. Why? Well, one reason is they take their responsibilities seriously and they train, prepare, and plan to win. And we should let them win—not legislate a recipe for failure which the amendment clearly does.

The power of the Congress under article 1 of the Constitution to ''make rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval forces'' is well understood, as is the President's authority under article 2 to command our military forces as Commander in Chief. This amendment, however, is an unprecedented wartime attempt to limit the authority of the President and the military leaders by declaring substantial numbers of troops and units ''unavailable.''

Putting aside all concerns about potential contingencies that might arise, this amendment is unworkable and will make the task of generating cohesive units for rotations impossible. Here is the Joint Staff's bottom line on the Webb amendment: If a 1:1 dwell policy is codified in law, eliminating the flexibility of the services to manage and mitigate exceptions to the dwell planning goals, future support to OIF/OEF may be severely impacted. Specifically, the requirement to provide 15 months of dwell for Army units scheduled to execute forthcoming planned 15 month deployments will result in future capability gaps in both OIF and OEF unless the force requirements are simultaneously reduced to a substantial degree. The same will apply to Marine Corps units.

I am also concerned by the provision in the amendment that would allow individual members to ''volunteer'' to forego their ''dwell time to deployment'' ratio and seek a waiver from the Chief of Staff, CNO or Commandant of the Marine Corps to allow them to—voluntarily—return to the combat zone. I don't think it could be more clear that this provision in the amendment would undermine unit cohesion and readiness by encouraging debate in the ranks about when to deploy next. It would pit one soldier against another, leaders against those led, and encourage the kind of ''cross leveling'' that has been called ''evil and corrosive'' by our Reserve and Guard leaders. This notion in the amendment would introduce a whole new meaning to the concept of an ''All Volunteer'' military force: volunteerism instead of duty. It would drive wedges between soldiers and between marines, and could only hurt discipline and undermine the effectiveness of troops in the field.

I would like to take a step back and talk more generally about our ongoing debate on Iraq and reflect on some of the dialogue that has transpired over the past few days and weeks, both in this body and elsewhere. I am very concerned that so many of my colleagues, and observers elsewhere, are declaring the President's change in strategy for Iraq—which he embarked on this past January—a failure when all the troops to implement that strategy have only been in Iraq for 3 weeks.

In my opinion, leaders—particularly in elected offices—should do what the word implies, and that is ''lead.'' It does not take a leader to follow opinion polls, which is what I am afraid that many of my colleagues are doing.

Our commanders and ambassador do not believe that the war is lost. Asked whether the U.S. could win in Iraq and leave behind a stable government, GEN David Petraeus said, ''If I didn't believe that I wouldn't be here.''

We have seen promising indicators since the President announced the new strategy in January. While al-Qaida and other extremists have conducted a counter-surge resulting in numerous horrific mass-casualty terrorist attacks, and while it is too early to declare the surge a success or failure, we have seen: A substantial drop in sectarian murders in Baghdad since January; arms caches found at more than three times the rate of a year ago; attacks in Anbar at a 2-year low; total car bombings and suicide attacks down in May and June; signs of normalcy in Baghdad, like professional soccer leagues, amusement parks, and vibrant markets; recruiting for Iraqi police forces drawing thousands of candidates; young Sunnis signing up for the army and police and more Shia rejecting militias.

Some believe that setting a timeline and pulling troops out of Iraq regardless of conditions on the ground would be a responsible end to the conflict and/or would put needed pressure on Iraq's government. The collective judgment of our intelligence community is that this would increase, not decrease, the violence and hinder national reconciliation. In fact, a rapid withdrawal would almost certainly lead to a significant increase in the scale and scope of sectarian conflict in Iraq, intensify Sunni resistance to the Iraqi Government, and have adverse consequences for national reconciliation.

Some have said that General Petraeus does not believe the U.S. military can make a difference in Iraq. While General Petraeus has indeed said the ultimate solution to Iraq's problems is a political one, he has consistently argued that such a solution can only come with the improvements in security he is trying to achieve.

I was last in Iraq in early May and learned several things during my trip that have convinced me that the President's plan deserves a chance to work and that a change in strategy now is the wrong course. For example: There has been a significant reduction of sectarian murders and assassinations in Baghdad; attacks in Ramadi have eased by 74 percent in the past 3 months; there have been 263 weapons cache discoveries in the past 3 months, a 192 percent increase; over the past 6 weeks, daily attacks in Ramadi have dropped from an average of 20–25 a day to less then 3 per day. Last year, only two tribal areas were viewed as cooperative with U.S. forces and 17 were uncooperative. Today, all 23 tribal areas in Ramadi are cooperating with U.S. forces to fight al-Qaida militants. There are no uncooperative tribes. Iraqis are now volunteering by the thousands to join local police and army forces. At the end of March, there were over 1,200 army recruits in just 2 days.

Also from my trip to Iraq I learned that there are still issues that we and the Iraqis need to work on and watch closely. There are several political issues the Iraqis need to address, including passing a hydrocarbon law, continuing reconciliation efforts, debaathification, and holding provincial elections. These are keys to political progress.

We need to work to emplace additional provisional reconstruction teams—PRTs—in Iraq to help with reconstruction.

However, the foundation for these political issues being resolved and for the Iraqi Government continuing to mature and take responsibility is improved security throughout the country. That is the approach the President has taken, that General Petraeus is executing, and that is showing signs of progress. We should not abandon it because we live in an impatient society that wants to see results before the President's strategy is even fully implemented. We should stick with the plan, give it a chance to work, and listen to our military and civilian leaders when they report back on the strategies progress in the coming months.

I ask my colleagues to vote against cloture.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, I know the Senator from Arizona wanted to have 2 minutes. Does he want to take it now?

Mr. McCAIN. We retain the balance of time, Mr. President. I withhold at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. He will take his time later.

Mr. WEBB. How much time does the Republican side have?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican side only has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. WEBB. I wish to reserve 2 minutes for our side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I will notify the Senator when 2 minutes remains.

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, first I say I think there is a lot of misunderstanding and misrepresentation that has been made over the past couple of days with respect to this amendment.

Before I get into the amendment, I wish also to express, again, my admiration for the Senator from Arizona—we have been friends for many years—and my appreciation for his service. I watched his comments yesterday with respect to the end of the time in Southeast Asia. I think he knows I still adamantly support what we attempted to do in Vietnam and I have written about those days with some frequency and clarity over the years. In my view, this is not about the situation in Southeast Asia.

I warned against what I believe is the strategic blundering of going into Iraq in the first place, but I will set that aside today. There was a lot of talk this morning and yesterday, some of it about process—the Senator from New Hampshire mentioning he wanted to see side by side, that he was going to oppose this amendment based on the cloture process itself.

The Senator from South Carolina—I want to address some of the things he said. He keeps talking about the political moment here. I don't think there is a political moment in this issue. There may be on other issues. I approach this issue from the perspective, among others, as someone who served 3 years as Assistant Secretary of Defense, where I was responsible for dealing with mobilization issues and was required to learn with a great deal of detail what they used to call war maps. Those are manpower flow issues.

I also point out, because of the some of the other comments that were just made, that the Commandant of the Marine Corps, when he took office, mentioned that his ultimate goal was to see a 2:1 rotational cycle with respect to deployment of marines. I point that out because this amendment sets out a bare minimum floor for the use of American troops of 1:1. If you have been gone a year, you should get a year back. If you have been gone 7 months, you should get 7 months back. If we were arguing optimal scenarios, I would understand a little bit more the pushback we are getting from the other side. We are not trying to put optimal historical scenarios on the table here. We are trying to get a bare minimum floor that will protect the well-being of our troops.

We have data that has been shown—we don't need to go over it today—about how this is affecting the retention of high-quality people, how it is affecting emotional difficulties people are having. We need to step forward and act responsibly.

Some Republicans have questioned the constitutionality of this amendment. There is no issue here. Article I section 8 says the Congress has the power to make rules for government and regulation of the land and naval forces, and we have done so many times in the past. Some say this is meddling in the President's warmaking authority. To the contrary, the Congress has the power and the duty to place proper restraints on executive authority, particularly when it comes to the well-being of our troops. We did that in Korea in 1951.

It was not, as the Senator from South Carolina might allege, meddling in the Korean war. It was a situation where the Department of Defense was sending soldiers overseas before they had been fully trained. We stepped in, the Congress, our predecessors, stepped in. They put a law into place saying you cannot deploy anybody until they have been in the military at least 120 days. This is what we are doing, only on the other end of it.

We are saying: After 4 years of a ground occupation in Iraq, we have a responsibility to get some stability into the operational tempo. Yesterday my colleague from Alabama, Senator SESSIONS, warned that the amendment would, in his words, alter the traditional power of the President as it relates to all future wars, any war now, or series of wars in the future.

My friend, I hope, will reread my amendment carefully. He will find that this amendment applies to Iraq, Afghanistan, and certain NATO-sponsored activities. Senator SESSIONS also stated his concerns, as he put it, that this is another amendment trying to set another strategy written by a group sitting in air-conditioned offices.

I would like to emphasize a few points. The first is, this amendment does not represent strategy. It is an amendment that protects the well-being of our troops by setting a bare minimum floor on how they are being used no matter what strategy is in place.

Second, the experiences that led some of us to this conclusion did not come from sitting in air-conditioned offices. I would like to point out, as far as I can determine, Senator CHUCK HAGEL is the only ground combat veteran on the other side of the aisle. He certainly is the only ground combat veteran from Vietnam on the other side of the aisle. He is a lead cosponsor of this amendment.

On this side of the aisle, all the ground combat veterans are cosponsors, along with 35 Members of the Senate. I believe, if I may say, we collectively understand a truth acquired the hard way and a truth that transcends politics. We are trying in all good faith to do something about it.

Finally, I would like to point out, again, this amendment has the full support of the Military Officers Association of America. This is the largest association of military officers in the country, 368,000 members. And these are officers who are not restrained from speaking their opinions by having to serve inside today's political process.

VADM Norbert Ryan wrote a letter—I will quote one paragraph of it—a letter supporting the necessity of this amendment. He pointed out his association is very concerned that steps must be taken to protect our most precious military asset, the All-Volunteer Force, from having to bear such a disproportionate share of national wartime sacrifice.

He also said, and I think this is vital to the decision we are making on this amendment:

> If we are not better stewards of our troops and their families in the future than we have been in the recent past, our organization believes strongly that we will be putting the all-volunteer force at unacceptable risk.

These officers, 368,000, are joining us in a very real concern; that under current policy many of our ground forces are actually spending more time in Iraq than they are at home. This is 4 years into an occupation. There is not a strategic justification for this at this point in our commitment in Iraq. And there is no political reason, in my view, to oppose an amendment that places proper restraints on this sort of conduct by the executive branch.

This amendment recognizes that the Congress has a duty to exercise leadership when it comes to the well-being of our men and women in uniform. In the words of Admiral Ryan, it is a recognition that we have a responsibility to become better stewards of our troops and their families than we have been in the recent past.

I will say to my colleagues, as I did yesterday, the American people are watching us. They are watching us closely with the expectation that we will finally take some sort of positive action that might stabilize the operational environment in which our troops are being sent again and again.

They are tired of the posturing that is giving the Congress such a bad reputation. They are tired of the procedural strategies designed to protect politicians from accountability and to protect this administration from accountability. They are looking for concrete action that will protect the well-being of our men and women in uniform.

So the question in this amendment is not whether you support this war or whether you don't, it is not whether you want to wait until July or September to see whether one particular set of opinions or benchmarks or summaries might be coming in. The question is, more than 4 years into the ground operations in Iraq, that we owe stability and a reasonable cycle of deployment to the men and women who are carrying our Nation's burden. That is the question. That is the purpose of this amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time? The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, how much time remains on both sides?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican side has 2 minutes, and the Democratic side has 3 minutes 36 seconds.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask to be recognized for the remaining time.

Very briefly, I have made my comments about this amendment. America has been engaged in other wars at other times, and we have not put time limitations on the periods that they would be in rotation. I think it is clearly executive branch decisionmaking, which is clearly pointed out in the Constitution.

I just want to add, while my friend from Michigan is on the floor of the Senate, we are probably not going to get cloture on this amendment. Then it will be a decision of the majority leader as to whether we go forward. If there is another amendment that will be brought up, I fully expect to have the same right that has been extended to the minority over the 20 years that I have been here as a Member of Congress; that is, that I be allowed to propose an amendment from our side.

I have managed many bills on the Senate floor. I have never prevented—I have never prevented—an amendment from being proposed. I hope the Senator from Michigan will extend me that same courtesy.

By the way, we now are finding significant criticism about our insistence on the 60 votes in side by sides, something that was a standard procedure when the other side was in the minority. So history clearly indicates that is the way we have been doing business. Whether it is correct or not, and whether it causes gridlock is another subject. But to criticize this side because we are insisting on the same parliamentary procedures as were insisted upon by the other side when they were in the minority, it seems to me, is a bit inconsistent.

I hope I would be able to, if the Webb amendment is disposed of, propose an amendment from my side as has been the custom all of the years that I have been here; otherwise, I think we may spend some time in a parliamentary situation. I am not ready to give up that right of the minority.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time? The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, I would just particularly like to, again, emphasize that there are no constitutional issues here. There is no issue of moving units around or micromanagement in the way that the Senator from South Carolina was alleging. This is a very simple amendment, and I am ready to proceed to a vote.

I yield the floor

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, am I correct the leaders have reserved the final 20 minutes before the vote on cloture?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Their time begins in 1 minute.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, is the Senator from Michigan correct that if cloture is not invoked, the pending amendment would remain the Webb amendment?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, let me first respond to the question earlier in the day of my good friend, the majority whip, about whether votes at the 60-vote level are somehow a new addition to debates of Defense authorization bills. Of course, the answer is emphatically no. The question is, frankly, almost laughable. A quick review of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD shows, contrary to Senator DURBIN's assertion, the Republican majority agreed to a 60-vote threshold on the Kennedy amendment during last year's Defense authorization debate.

Indeed, the Kennedy amendment was part of a UC agreement that set up side-by-side votes on the Enzi and Kennedy amendments. Both, of course, were given 60-vote thresholds, the same exact format that we offered on the Webb and Graham amendments yesterday.

Senator DURBIN said there was never a 60-vote threshold. He was wrong. What Republicans are asking for is not unprecedented. It is not even uncommon. It is there for the distinguished majority whip to review online. But I certainly appreciate him asking the question.

We are just a couple of days into this debate. But a familiar and troubling pattern is already beginning to emerge. We could have voted on the Webb amendment yesterday. The Republicans were willing to move forward with votes on the side-by-side amendments. We said so at the time. Yet the Democratic majority insisted on a cloture filing instead that had no other effect than to simply slow things down. We are about to have that same vote with the same threshold and the same result that we could have had yesterday, all for no apparent reason.

Two days into this debate, we are already heading down the same fruitless road we went down with the emergency supplemental bill when the Democratic majority delayed the delivery of funds for our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan for more than 3 months.

The bill we finally sent to the President's desk was guaranteed to draw a veto, so the Democratic majority delayed it some more. In the end, they gave the President the bill he asked for. They wasted 3 months of the Senate's time fussing and fighting over the original request and then gave him what he wanted in the first place. It was a total and complete waste of time.

Now, here we go again. Two days into this debate, we are already wasting time on an amendment we know the President will veto. The Webb amendment contains many good things that Republicans strongly support. But it also limits the President's authority as Commander in Chief, and combined with other objectionable provisions in this bill will provoke, of course, a veto.

The President vetoed the emergency supplemental because it carried restrictions on his constitutional authority as Commander in Chief. He will do it on this bill too. We know that for a fact. No one here disagrees with the idea that our forces should be rested, trained, and well-equipped. Republicans showed yesterday that we are committed to giving our soldiers and marines everything they need. That is why the underlying bill begins the expansion of the Army and Marine Corps. That is why Republicans offered a side-by-side amendment yesterday that would have given our men and women in the field all of these things without language that would draw a Presidential veto.

If the Democratic majority would have allowed us a vote on the Graham amendment, we could have stood here today and told the troops that rest, training, and equipment are on the way. But, instead, we are going to dangle all of these things in front of them knowing they won't be delivered. The Democratic majority is trying to force us to make a false choice between these two options, to pit the troops against their Commander in Chief. This is not just foolish, it is wrong. By putting limits on the President's authority to control forces in the field, the Webb amendment also amounts to a back-door effort to hamstring the Petraeus plan. It is the first vote on a strategy that has not been fully manned for just about a month. Every Senator in this Chamber knows we will get a progress report on General Petraeus's strategy in September, 2 months from now. We should wait for that assessment before rushing to judgment.

A Democratic-led Senate sent General Petraeus to Iraq, confirmed his nomination unanimously. He has a plan. He is executing it. We need to let him do his work. Let me say again, the Webb amendment contains a policy objective that Republicans enthusiastically share. What we do not share is the belief that the President's constitutional powers as Commander in Chief should be eroded by politicians in Washington in a time of war as this debate proceeds.

We will debate a number of amendments that seek to limit the President's authority and dictate operational plans for the war in Iraq. I expect that at least some of them will seek to order an immediate withdrawal of our combat forces. These amendments would provide a direct way to end our involvement in Iraq, and the Senate will consider them in due course. But the Webb amendment is

different. It would curtail the deployment of reinforcements to Iraq, denying our military commanders the ability to sustain current force levels in Iraq, especially in Anbar Province, where most agree there has been considerable evidence of success. The Defense Department establishes dwell times through policies that have been developed over time by our commanders and leaders. Those leaders in turn respond to the requests of commanders in the field. The waiver contained in the Webb amendment sets an unreasonably high bar.

Republicans, meanwhile, will insist on amendments that protect the Nation's ability to defeat terrorists and wage war against al-Qaida. Therefore, I urge a ''no'' vote against the Webb amendment as it seeks to limit the President's authority as Commander in Chief and will deny our field commanders operational forces. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Before yielding the floor, I wish to go back a minute to the 60-vote threshold issue with which I began my remarks. The suggestion has been made from the other side that somehow it is unusual to have a 60-vote threshold. Let's take a look at some of the votes we have had on Iraq proposals this very year. We agreed to a 60-vote threshold on the Gregg and Murray amendments as side by sides which answered the all-important question of whether to fund the troops. We have had 60-vote thresholds on vote No. 43, the Biden resolution; vote No. 44, the Levin resolution; vote No. 51, the Reid resolution; vote No. 74, the Reid resolution; vote No. 117, the supplemental funding bill; vote No. 167, the Feingold amendment; vote No. 168, the Warner amendment; vote No. 169, the Cochran amendment; and vote No. 171, the Reid amendment. On all of these controversial Iraq proposals, we didn't have a simple majority threshold but a 60-vote threshold. So the notion that is being spun on the other side that this is somehow an unusual event is absurd on its face. All you have to do is look at the record this year and, not to mention, be reasonably alert to the way the Senate has operated. For most of the time since I have been here, controversial measures, we know, require 60 votes. Let me explain the reason for that.

Any one of the hundred Senators can object to a time agreement that would allow a matter to be dealt with, with under 60 votes. That is an option frequently exercised in this body on both sides of the aisle. What we have done, as a practical matter in dealing with the Iraq debates this year, is recognize the obvious, which is that it would be difficult on these controversial measures for the leaders of either party to produce an up-or-down vote. Therefore, we have simply agreed to have a 60-vote vote, and it considerably expedites consideration of measures and prevents having to file cloture, running the risk that if cloture is invoked, somebody will require that we use 30 more hours in addition to that. In short, there is a sensible way to move forward on this bill. I hope we will adopt it later this afternoon and move on through with this very important measure for the defense of our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I was in college a number of years ago. One of the things we studied was George Orwell's ''1984,'' which is a classic. It is a classic because George Orwell points out a futuristic society as he sees it. One of the things that has become known as Orwellian thought is where someone says something and the opposite is true. That is what George Orwell's book was all about. What we have heard now from my friend, the distinguished Republican leader, is Orwellian. His words were: Democrats are slowing things down. I mean, if there were ever anything in the world that is Orwellian, referring back to the book ''1984,'' it is that Democrats are slowing things down.

As a result of the envy of Republicans for losing the elections last November, they have done everything they can to slow this body down so we would look bad. We have had to file cloture many times, 43 times. Never, ever in the past history of this country has that been done. I have been in the minority, and I have held leadership positions in the minority. For years past, people picked their fights on relatively few issues where cloture would have to be filed. Not with the Republicans—on everything we have done. They are filibustering things they support now. So ladies and gentlemen of the jury, which is America, understand, we have heard Orwellian speak here this morning: Democrats are slowing things down.

Yesterday marked 6 months from the day that President Bush introduced his temporary troop escalation plan to the American people. Six months ago President Bush implicitly acknowledged the Iraq policy he had been pursuing for nearly 4 years had failed. He asked the American people to overlook those 4 years of failure and trust his new plan to place tens of thousands of additional American troops in the middle of an intractable civil war, and it would bring about success. Six months ago, nearly 4 years after taking us into a war based on deception and falsification, including there being no weapons of mass destruction, the President asked us for trust. Despite his failure to convince other countries to share the burden of war with us, forcing our own brave troops to shoulder the burden of war virtually alone, he asked us for trust.

After nearly 4 years of strategic blunders and tragic mismanagement that left our troops without either the equipment they needed or the strategy for success they deserved, he asked us for trust. At a time when more than 3,000 American lives have already been lost, tens of thousands more wounded, and Iraq in flames, President Bush asked us for more trust so he could put tens of thousands of additional American troops in harm's way. Since then, 6 months, 600 more dead Americans, and $60 billion, that is where we are. Sectarian violence has not diminished. Importantly, the Iraq Government has failed to take meaningful steps to begin taking responsibility for its own country's future. Still, President Bush and his Republican allies ask us for more patience, more trust, more time.

They say that after more than 4 years of incompetence and mismanagement, they finally think they are entitled to more trust. I don't think so. That is akin to a quarterback throwing three interceptions—one, two, three interceptions—comes to the coach and says: Coach, trust me. I am not going to change anything, but trust me. Leave me in the game.

There is no evidence that the escalation is working. They refer to Anbar Province, and there are some good things happening there, but everybody knows that the bubble is being squeezed and terrible things are happening in other places. They are no longer bombing police stations only and health clinics and markets. They are now destroying villages. Three days ago they set off a 5-ton bomb and blew up a town. The town is gone.

Conditions are deteriorating and more lives are being lost every day. The days of trust have long since passed. Some would rather wait until September before forcing the President to change course. If there were real signs of progress or real reason for hope, that might make sense. If the real costs being borne by our troops and their families were not so high, perhaps we could afford more patience and more trust. If we wait until September, more Americans will die, more Americans will be wounded; a third of the troops being wounded are wounded grievously; our treasure will be more depleted; and the Middle East will become ever more destabilized. Our efforts to focus on the real war on terror will be impeded.

What do we have in the Middle East now? We have a civil war raging in Lebanon. The Palestinians are fighting among themselves. There is civil war. We have ignored Israel. We have Iran thumbing their nose at us and a conflagration in Iraq.

If the real costs being borne by our troops and their families were not so high, we could afford more patience and more trust. But the costs are high. Waiting until September is not the answer. Holding out hope, blind hope, blind trust that progress will appear out of thin air for reasons no one is able to articulate is not the answer. This Department of Defense authorization bill and the amendments that will be offered to it are the next chance we have to chart a responsible new course

out of Iraq. The American people demand the new course. Democrats demand it. Republicans demand it. Independents demand it. They deserve it.

Our brave men and women in uniform also deserve it. They deserve more than speeches expressing disapproval or dismay with the current course. Our votes, not our voices, will determine whether we heed the call for a new course. Our votes, not our voices, will demonstrate whether we reject President Bush's failed policy. Our votes, not our voices, will prove whether our resolve is firm and whether we are prepared to lead.

We will work hard this week and next week to pass a Defense authorization bill that reflects a resolve to pursue a responsible and binding new policy. That is going to require Republican support. Already we are seeing some Republicans speak out against the President's Iraq policy. We hope that they and other Republicans will put their words into action by not just saying the right things but voting the right way. That can start today. We have an amendment before us that is critical for the strength of our military and the well-being of our troops. Regardless of where we stand on this ill-advised war, I would hope we stand as one in our commitment to keeping our military the strongest in the world. We should all agree we can't sustain that strength if our men and women in uniform are not being given the protection and care they need.

That is not a Democratic talking point or a Republican talking point. It is common sense. That is why I rise to support the amendment offered by my friend and colleague, Senator JIM WEBB of Virginia, and cosponsored by dozens of others. It is also why I am so surprised the Republican leadership has decided to block this amendment, and that is what they are doing. They are blocking the amendment, once again, to stand for obstruction and stand against progress. I fear it is a sign of what is to come from the minority party in the tough votes ahead.

In the Roll Call publication this morning, the Republican leader is quoted as saying there will be a 60-vote requirement on anything we do on this bill.

Senator WEBB's readiness amendment begins the critical and long overdue process of rebuilding our badly overburdened military. Who better to offer this amendment than the top two cosponsors: Senator JIM WEBB of Virginia. I say to these young people who are pages, you are seeing on the Senate floor a real American hero, a Marine captain at age 23, a Naval Academy graduate about whom books have been written for his heroism, two Bronze stars, a couple Purple Hearts, Silver Star, Navy Cross.

CHUCK HAGEL is the other cosponsor. One of the great stories I have heard in my life is a story of CHUCK HAGEL and his brother. You go to his office and there is a picture of CHUCK HAGEL and his brother in Vietnam, arm in arm, as soldiers. CHUCK HAGEL saved his brother's life in Vietnam.

These are the two cosponsors of this amendment. Do they know what it means to go to battle, do they know what it means to go to battle unprepared and unrested? Yes, they do.

Also, Senator WEBB has another little niche I would like to talk about, and that is his son Jimmy is also a Marine who just got back from fighting in Iraq. The Marine JIM WEBB knows the consequences of overburdening the military and knows that ours is stretched nearly to the breaking point. Senator JIM WEBB knows the consequences of overburdening the military, and he knows that ours is stretched nearly to the breaking point. So does CHUCK HAGEL.

Here are a few signs—and there are many—of that burden: Among the Army's 44 active combat brigades, all but one has served at least one tour in Afghanistan. Thirty-one of them have had two or more tours. Among the National Guard and Reserves, more than 80 percent have been deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan, with an average of 18 months per deployment.

This week, the Army announced that recruitment has fallen short by 15 percent for the second month in a row. The qualifications they are looking for have been so written down. Now you do not have to graduate from high school. Now you can have committed crimes before joining the military.

Last year, the active Army was 3,000 officers short, and that is only projected to increase. So much of the equipment and supplies meant for Guard and Reserve use here at home has been sent to Iraq and Afghanistan, and now only about 30 percent of essential equipment remains. That shortfall is costing an estimated $36 billion—just one of many hidden costs of this war.

We have all heard of the heavy personal costs this overburdening of the military is causing: higher rates of post-traumatic stress disorder. Eighty percent of the married men and women coming home from Iraq are divorcing.

Our troops are not machines. They are human beings. They are parents missing Little League games, spouses missing anniversaries, children of mothers and fathers who wait and worry for their safety. These honorable men and women wearing our uniform need and deserve time off from the trauma of war. War is trauma, and no war has been more traumatic than this war, where there is a faceless enemy blowing up streets.

Could we have order, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASEY). The Senate will come to order. Please take your conversations off the floor.

Mr. REID. These gallant men and women need time off from the trauma of war, as I said, to see their families and reconnect to their normal lives.

The Webb amendment is simple. It states if a member of the active military is deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan, they are entitled to the same length of time back home before they can be redeployed.

It also states that members of the Reserves may not be redeployed within 3 years of their original deployment, which will not only give them time to recover from deployment, but will restore our Reserve forces to respond to emergencies here at home.

Mr. President, I am going to use my leader time right now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Anyone who watched the tornadoes in Kansas and other States' emergencies knows how crucial a well-maintained and supported Reserve force is to our domestic safety. Some have tried to confuse this issue by calling it an infringement of Presidential authority. This is not true. It is false.

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution empowers Congress to ''make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces.'' That is in our Constitution. And this amendment provides ample Presidential waivers in the case of an emergency that threatens our national security.

The Webb amendment sets a standard and binding policy, but it does not tie the President's and Congress's hands to respond to an emergency.

If we are committed to building a military that is fully equipped and prepared to address the challenges we face throughout the world—and I know we are—then we must support this amendment.

If we are committed to repaying in some small measure the sacrifices our brave troops are making every day—and I know we are—then we must support this amendment.

I am discouraged that the Republican leadership chose to block this troop readiness amendment. If Republicans oppose troop readiness, they are entitled to vote against it. If Republicans do not believe our courageous men and women in uniform deserve more rest, including mental health downtime, they can vote ''no'' on this amendment. If they do not agree that constant redeployments and recruiting shortages are straining our Armed Forces, they can vote ''no'' on this amendment.

But to block this amendment—to not even give it an up-or-down vote—shows that some of my Republican colleagues are protecting their President rather than protecting our troops. But just because some in the minority party are choosing obstruction does not mean all Republicans must follow in lockstep.

I think it should alarm everybody to read the New York Times newspaper today. On the front page of the newspaper, it talks about what this administration does to people who they appoint to high-ranking positions. This one was a Surgeon General of the United States. To show how this administration is directing its employees

to act—and I am afraid leaking over into the legislative branch of Government—listen to some of the things the Surgeon General was directed to do.

Dr. Carmona said the administration ''would not allow him to speak or issue reports about stem cells, emergency contraception, sex education, or prison, mental and global health issues.''

''Dr. Carmona said he was ordered''—now, listen to this one—''he was ordered to mention President Bush three times on every page of his speeches.'' Any time he gave a speech, he had to mention President Bush's name three times or he could not give the speech.

. . . administration officials even discouraged him from attending the Special Olympics because, he said, of that charitable organization's long-time ties to a ''prominent family''. . . .

Now, we know that President Kennedy's sister got this started many years ago. He could not even attend the event.

''I was specifically told by a senior person, 'Why would you want to help those people?' ''. . . .

We are Senators. We have the ability, by virtue of our constitutional duties, to have a say in what goes on in this country. We are separate and equal branches of Government. My Republican colleagues must speak out against what the administration is directing this Congress to do. We need to stop protecting the President and start protecting our troops. That is what this amendment is all about. And to think that this administration is getting down into the weeds of things by saying how many times you have to mention his name in a speech speaks volumes of what is going on here in the Senate.

I urge all my colleagues who believe we need a new course to support this amendment, to vote for cloture. It is a crucial first step on the path toward a responsible end to this war.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the Webb, et al., amendment No. 2012, to H.R. 1585, Department of Defense Authorization, 2008.

Jim Webb, Richard J. Durbin, Daniel K. Akaka, Jack Reed, Carl Levin, H.R. Clinton, Russell Feingold, Jeff Bingaman, Christopher Dodd, Frank R. Lautenberg, John Kerry, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Sherrod Brown, Ken Salazar, B.A. Mikulski, Joe Biden, Harry Reid.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on amendment No. 2012, offered by the Senator from Virginia, Mr. WEBB, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) is necessarily absent.

Mr. LOTT. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 56, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 241 Leg.]

YEAS—56

Akaka	Feingold	Nelson (NE)
Baucus	Feinstein	Obama
Bayh	Hagel	Pryor
Biden	Harkin	Reed
Bingaman	Inouye	Reid
Boxer	Kennedy	Rockefeller
Brown	Kerry	Salazar
Byrd	Klobuchar	Sanders
Cantwell	Kohl	Schumer
Cardin	Landrieu	Smith
Carper	Lautenberg	Snowe
Casey	Leahy	Stabenow
Clinton	Levin	Sununu
Coleman	Lincoln	Tester
Collins	McCaskill	Warner
Conrad	Menendez	Webb
Dodd	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Dorgan	Murray	Wyden
Durbin	Nelson (FL)	

NAYS—41

Alexander	DeMint	Lott
Allard	Dole	Lugar
Barrasso	Domenici	Martinez
Bennett	Ensign	McCain
Bond	Enzi	McConnell
Bunning	Graham	Murkowski
Burr	Grassley	Roberts
Chambliss	Gregg	Sessions
Coburn	Hatch	Shelby
Cochran	Hutchison	Specter
Corker	Inhofe	Stevens
Cornyn	Isakson	Thune
Craig	Kyl	Voinovich
Crapo	Lieberman	

NOT VOTING—3

Brownback	Johnson	Vitter

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 56, the nays are 41. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The Senator from Virginia is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 2012, WITHDRAWN

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, I withdraw my amendment and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2087 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2011

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, on behalf of myself, Senators REED, SMITH, HAGEL, KERRY, SNOWE, BIDEN, OBAMA, and CLINTON, I send an amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Michigan [Mr. LEVIN], for himself, Mr. REED, Mr. SMITH, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. KERRY, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. OBAMA, and Mrs. CLINTON, proposes an amendment numbered 2087 to amendment No. 2011.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide for a reduction and transition of United States forces in Iraq)

At the end of subtitle C of title XV, add the following:

SEC. 1535. REDUCTION AND TRANSITION OF UNITED STATES FORCES IN IRAQ.

(a) DEADLINE FOR COMMENCEMENT OF REDUCTION.—The Secretary of Defense shall commence the reduction of the number of United States forces in Iraq not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION OF REDUCTION AS PART OF COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY.—The reduction of forces required by this section shall be implemented as part of a comprehensive diplomatic, political, and economic strategy that includes sustained engagement with Iraq's neighbors and the international community for the purpose of working collectively to bring stability to Iraq. As part of this effort, the President shall direct the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States at the United Nations to seek the appointment of an international mediator in Iraq, under the auspices of the United Nations Security Council, who has the authority of the international community to engage political, religious, ethnic, and tribal leaders in Iraq in an inclusive political process.

(c) LIMITED PRESENCE AFTER REDUCTION AND TRANSITION.—After the conclusion of the reduction and transition of United States forces to a limited presence as required by this section, the Secretary of Defense may deploy or maintain members of the Armed Forces in Iraq only for the following missions:

(1) Protecting United States and Coalition personnel and infrastructure.

(2) Training, equipping, and providing logistic support to the Iraqi Security Forces.

(3) Engaging in targeted counterterrorism operations against al Qaeda, al Qaeda affiliated groups, and other international terrorist organizations.

(d) COMPLETION OF TRANSITION.—The Secretary of Defense shall complete the transition of United States forces to a limited presence and missions as described in subsection (c) by April 30, 2008.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 2088 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2087

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I send a second-degree amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Rhode Island [Mr. REED] proposes an amendment numbered 2088 to amendment No. 2087.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

At the end of the amendment add the following:

This section shall take effect one day after the date of this bill's enactment.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, our intention, after discussing this with the ranking member, is that we will now set aside these amendments and then the Republican side would designate another amendment that would then be offered. We understand it relates to Iran. That is our intention. I don't know if the sponsor of that amendment is ready.

I wonder if the Senator from Connecticut could introduce the amendment and, if he is not ready to speak on it, yield to other persons who could speak on other matters and his amendment.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I thank the Chair and I thank my friend from Michigan. I am prepared to go forward whenever the Chamber would like. I understand the Senator from Massachusetts has a statement as in morning business.

Mr. LEVIN. If the Senator from Massachusetts is ready, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Massachusetts be recognized and afterward the Senator from Connecticut be recognized—if that is the intent of the ranking member.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, and I will not object, perhaps the Senator from Connecticut could have his amendment pending, and then the Senator from Massachusetts could speak in morning business. I ask the Senator from Massachusetts, for planning purposes—and I know he is traditionally and characteristically brief—I wonder how long he might be.

Mr. KENNEDY. With the persuasion of my friend from Arizona, I expect to be 20 to 25 minutes. I am glad to do it at any time. I would like to speak on the amendment that has been offered. I understand that generally the authors of the amendment are usually recognized first. I am prepared to wait my turn. I would like to talk for 20, 25 minutes after that.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, in deference to the age and seniority of the Senator from Massachusetts, I am more than happy to agree that after Senator LIEBERMAN proposes his amendment, the Senator from Massachusetts be recognized and then we return to debate on the Lieberman amendment, if that is agreeable to my friend from Michigan. If so, I ask unanimous consent for that.

Mr. LEVIN. Yes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Connecticut is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 2073 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2011

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, pursuant to the unanimous consent agreement entered into, at this time I call up my amendment No. 2073.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Connecticut [Mr. LIEBERMAN] proposes an amendment numbered 2073 to amendment No. 2011.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require a report on support provided by the Government of Iran for attacks against coalition forces in Iraq)

At the end of title XV, add the following:

SEC. 1535. REPORT ON SUPPORT FROM IRAN FOR ATTACKS AGAINST COALITION FORCES IN IRAQ.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Since January 19, 1984, the Secretary of State has designated the Islamic Republic of Iran as a "state sponsor of terrorism," one of only five countries in the world at present so designated.

(2) The Department of State, in its most recent "Country Reports on Terrorism," stated that "Iran remained the most active state sponsor of terrorism" in 2006.

(3) The most recent Country Reports on Terrorism report further stated, "Iran continued [in 2006] to play a destabilizing role in Iraq . . . Iran provided guidance and training to select Iraqi Shia political groups, and weapons and training to Shia militant groups to enable anti-Coalition attacks. Iranian government forces have been responsible for at least some of the increasing lethality of anti-Coalition attacks by providing Shia militants with the capability to build IEDs with explosively formed projectiles similar to those developed by Iran and Lebanese Hezbollah. The Iranian Revolutionary Guard was linked to armor-piercing explosives that resulted in the deaths of Coalition Forces."

(4) In an interview published on June 7, 2006, Zalmay Khalilzad, then-United States ambassador to Iraq, said of Iranian support for extremist activity in Iraq, "We can say with certainty that they support groups that are attacking coalition troops. These groups are using the same ammunition to destroy armored vehicles that the Iranians are supplying to Hezbollah in Lebanon. They pay money to Shiite militias and they train some of the groups. We can't say whether Teheran is supporting Al Qaeda, but we do know that Al Qaeda people come here from Pakistan through Iran. And Ansar al Sunna, a partner organization of Zarqawi's network, has a base in northwest Iran."

(5) On April 26, 2007, General David Petraeus, commander of Multi-National Force-Iraq, said of Iranian support for extremist activity in Iraq, "The level of financing, the level of training on Iranian soil, the level of equipping some sophisticated technologies . . . even advice in some cases, has been very, very substantial and very harmful."

(6) On April 26, 2007, General Petraeus also said of Iranian support for extremist activity in Iraq, "We know that it goes as high as [Brig. Gen. Qassem] Suleimani, who is the head of the Qods Force. . . . We believe that he works directly for the supreme leader of the country."

(7) On May 27, 2007, then-Major General William Caldwell, spokesperson for Multi-National Force-Iraq, said, "What we do know is that the Iranian intelligence services, the Qods Force, is in fact both training, equipping, and funding Shia extremist groups . . . both in Iraq and also in Iran. . . . We have in detention now people that we have captured that, in fact, are Sunni extremist-related that have, in fact, received both some funding and training from the Iranian intelligence services, the Qods Force."

(8) On February 27, 2007, in testimony before the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate, Lieutenant General Michael Maples, director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, said of Iranian support for extremist activity in Iraq, "We believe Hezbollah is involved in the training as well."

(9) On July 2, 2007, Brigadier General Kevin Bergner, spokesperson for Multi-National Force-Iraq, stated, "The Iranian Qods Force is using Lebanese Hezbollah essentially as a proxy, as a surrogate in Iraq."

(10) On July 2, 2007, Brigadier General Bergner detailed the capture in southern Iraq by coalition forces of Ali Musa Daqdaq, whom the United States military believes to be a 24-year veteran of Lebanese Hezbollah involved in the training of Iraqi extremists in Iraq and Iran.

(11) The Department of State designates Hezbollah a foreign terrorist organization.

(12) On July 2, 2007, Brigadier General Bergner stated that the Iranian Qods Force operates three camps near Teheran where it trains Iraqi extremists in cooperation with Lebanese Hezbollah, stating, "The Qods Force, along with Hezbollah instructors, train approximately 20 to 60 Iraqis at a time, sending them back to Iraq organized into these special groups. They are being taught how to use EPFs [explosively formed penetrators], mortars, rockets, as well as intelligence, sniper, and kidnapping operations."

(13) On July 2, 2007, Brigadier General Bergner stated that Iraqi extremists receive between $750,000 and $3,000,000 every month from Iranian sources.

(14) On July 2, 2007, Brigadier General Bergner stated that "[o]ur intelligence reveals that senior leadership in Iran is aware of this activity" and that it would be "hard to imagine" that Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of Iran, is unaware of it.

(15) On July 2, 2007, Brigadier General Bergner stated, "There does not seem to be any follow-through on the commitments that Iran has made to work with Iraq in addressing the destabilizing security issues here in Iraq."

(16) On February 11, 2007, the United States military held a briefing in Baghdad at which its representatives stated that at least 170 members of the United States Armed Forces have been killed, and at least 620 wounded, by weapons tied to Iran.

(17) On January 20, 2007, a sophisticated attack was launched by insurgents at the Karbala Provincial Joint Coordination Center in Iraq, resulting in the murder of five American soldiers, four of whom were first abducted.

(18) On April 26, 2007, General Petraeus stated that the so-called Qazali network was responsible for the attack on the Karbala Provincial Joint Coordination Center and that "there's no question that the Qazali network is directly connected to the Iranian Qods force [and has] received money, training, arms, ammunition, and at some points in time even advice and assistance and direction".

(19) On July 2, 2007, Brigadier General Bergner stated that the United States Armed Forces possesses documentary evidence that the Qods Force had developed detailed information on the United States position at the Karbala Provincial Joint Coordination Center "regarding our soldiers' activities, shift changes, and defenses, and this information was shared with the attackers".

(20) On July 2, 2007, Brigadier General Bergner stated of the January 20 Karbala attackers, "[They] could not have conducted this complex operation without the support and direction of the Qods Force."

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the murder of members of the United States Armed Forces by a foreign government or its agents is an intolerable and unacceptable act of hostility against the United States by the foreign government in question; and

(2) the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran must take immediate action to end all training, arming, equipping, funding, advising, and any other forms of support that it or its agents are providing, and have provided, to Iraqi militias and insurgents, who are contributing to the destabilization of Iraq and are responsible for the murder of members of the United States Armed Forces.

(c) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 60 days thereafter, the Commander, Multi-National Forces Iraq and the United States Ambassador to Iraq shall jointly submit to Congress a report describing and assessing in detail—

(A) the external support or direction provided to anti-coalition forces by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran or its agents;

(B) the strategy and ambitions in Iraq of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran; and

(C) any counter-strategy or efforts by the United States Government to counter the activities of agents of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Iraq.

(2) FORM.—Each report required under paragraph (1) shall be in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, as the Senate resumes debate on Iraq, our heartfelt support and appreciation go to our troops in harm's way. All Americans support our troops. They have fought bravely and continue to do so under extraordinary circumstances. They have answered the call to service. Many are on their third or fourth tour of duty in Iraq, separated from their families and loved ones for years. They have borne a great burden, and we owe them an extraordinary debt of gratitude.

History will write, however, that the President has repeatedly failed them by failing to have a policy worthy of their sacrifice. The President failed our troops from the outset by sending them into this misguided war without a plan to win the peace and by refusing to send sufficient troops to keep the peace.

Who can forget the words of GEN Eric Shinseki, who warned that America would need several hundred thousand troops to secure Baghdad? Who can forget the way the administration shunted him aside, ignored his advice, and allowed the looting and violence to spiral out of control? The administration's insistence that a small rapid force could achieve regional change and maintain a stable Iraq was utterly wrong, and chaos took the place of peace.

The President also failed our troops by repeatedly sending them into battle without proper equipment. Secretary Rumsfeld's callous comments that ''stuff happens'' and his mindless assertion that you go to war with the Army you have, not the Army you might want or wish to have at a later time still ring loud and clear in this Chamber, a constant reminder of the failure of leadership at the highest levels of the Pentagon.

The President failed our troops by relying for too long on a military solution to politically inspired violence and failing to engage in sustained regional diplomacy. We have been behind the curve every step of the way rather than leading, reaching out, and working to find solutions with Iraq's neighbors.

The President has also failed our returning troops home. Who can forget the horror we felt over the reports of our injured soldiers being housed in mold-infested rooms at Walter Reed Hospital? The services and medical care our troops need and deserve have fallen far short of meeting our responsibility.

We have given this President every opportunity. He has failed our troops by clinging to an unworkable policy that delivers less and less for our military and our mission in Iraq and stands no chance of succeeding now, in September, or ever.

The best way to honor our troops is to bring America's involvement in this misguided war to an end, not to pour more and more American lives into the endless black hole of our failed policy in Iraq.

The American people know this war is wrong. Voting against it was the proudest vote of my entire career in the Senate. It is wrong to abdicate our responsibility by allowing this failed war to drag on and on and allowing casualties to mount higher and higher. We don't need to wait until September to know that the surge will prove to be no better than the surges and failed strategies that preceded it.

President Bush keeps trying to buy more time for his failed policy by promising yet again that hope and change is around the corner. But after more than 4 years of such smoke and mirrors, Congress and the American people have lost faith in the President's competence in managing the war.

The American people have heard these new pleas before from the President. The death of Saddam's sons was supposed to have quelled the violence. It didn't. Capturing Saddam and bringing him to justice was supposed to stop the violence. It didn't. Three elections and a new Iraqi Constitution were supposed to have brought stability. They didn't. At every critical step, the administration has promised calm, but there is no calm. Our soldiers have constantly been faced with an increasingly violent and lethal insurgency.

The promise of success around the corner through the surge is no different. Initially, the administration told the American people the surge would add 21,000 troops to Iraq, but they didn't reveal the fact that there would be a wave after the surge, and we ended up sending nearly 30,000 troops.

In January, Secretary Gates said:

> It's viewed as a temporary surge.

In February, Secretary Gates told the Senate Appropriations Committee:

> I think General Petraeus believes that we will have a pretty good idea whether this surge and whether this strategy is working, probably by early summer.

In April, Secretary Gates told us more time would be needed. He said:

> I think it's been General Petraeus' view all along that . . . some time, at some point during the summer, mid to late summer, perhaps, he has thought that he would be in a position to evaluate whether the plan was working so far.

In May, President Bush said even more time would be necessary. He told us:

> As General Petraeus has said, it will be at least the end of the summer before we can assess the impact of this operation. Congress ought to give General Petraeus' plan a chance to work.

A week later, Secretary Gates said the administration would ''make their evaluation of the situation and the surge in September.''

Temporary surge, early summer, mid to late summer, at least the end of the summer, September—these are the administration's desperate efforts to hide its failure just a little longer. I have no doubt that in September the administration will ask for yet another chance, but there are no more chances. Time is up. It is wrong to ask the American people and our military to cling to the false hope that September will bring change. It is wrong to ask our troops to bear the brunt of a failed policy. It is past the time to acknowledge that the administration's policy has failed and adopt a new course now to begin to withdraw our troops from Iraq. The facts are clear.

President Bush argued that the surge would bring security, create an opportunity for political reconciliation, and enable reconstruction to make progress. When he announced the surge last January, the President said:

> America will change our strategy to help the Iraqis carry out their campaign to put down sectarian violence and bring security to the people of Baghdad.

Yet, more than 6 months later, the violence continues unabated in Baghdad.

The Pentagon's own June report on Iraq, which covered the months of February through May, stated:

> Violence against coalition and Iraqi security forces remained consistent with previous levels.

Unidentified bodies continue to be found in Baghdad at an alarming rate. Press reports say that in April, 411 unidentified bodies were found. In May, 726 bodies were found. In the first 6 days of June alone, 167 bodies were found. Many showed signs of torture and execution. Some have been beheaded. U.S. casualties have also increased in Baghdad during the surge. Our troop losses in Baghdad this year

have more than doubled over the same period as last year. The number of Americans killed in Baghdad from January through June in 2006 was 96, but the number from January through June of 2007 was 250—2½ times higher.

The presence of additional U.S. troops in Baghdad has also resulted in the spread of violence outside the city. The Pentagon's June report confirmed this trend. It said:

Many insurgents and extremists have moved operations to Diyala, Ninewa, and the outlying areas of Baghdad Province . . .

American soldiers are bearing the brunt of the violence, and they understand this trend as well. From January through June of this year, we lost 86 troops in Diyala—more than four times the number of troops killed there in all of 2006.

Attacks against Iraqi civilians are spreading across the country as well. According to the Associated Press, nearly 1,900 Iraqis have been killed in suicide attacks in 2007 and more than 4,400 have been wounded.

Our troops continue to be attacked and killed at a higher rate than ever across Iraq. Every month in 2007, American casualties have been higher than the same month in 2006. In January of this year, 83 of our soldiers were killed, compared to 62 the same month a year ago. In February of this year, 80 of our soldiers were killed, compared to 55 in the same month a year ago. In March of this year, we lost 81 of our soldiers, compared to 31 in March a year ago. In April of this year, 104 of our soldiers were killed, compared to 76 in the same month a year ago. In May of this year, 126 of our soldiers were killed, compared to 69 in the same month a year ago. In June of this year, 100 of our soldiers were killed, compared to 61 in the same month a year ago.

We don't need to wait until September to conclude that the surge has led to greater violence, not less, and that the time has come to bring our troops home.

Political progress has been nonexistent. In announcing the surge in January, President Bush told the American people that it would facilitate reconciliation. He said:

Most of Iraq's Sunni and Shia want to live together in peace—and reducing the violence in Baghdad will help make reconciliation possible.

In fact, it has not happened.

In December 2006, the Iraq Study Group outlined a list of commitments made by the Iraqi Government and stated that by the end of 2006 or early 2007, Iraqis would need to approve a provincial election law, set an election date, approve a petroleum law, approve a debaathification law, and approve a militia law. In fact, none of the dates have been met and none of the crucial Iraqi legislation so essential to reconciliation has been approved.

The Pentagon's report in June made this point bluntly. It said:

Key legislative or reconciliation actions—such as the Hydrocarbon Law, de-Ba'athification reform, and Article 140 (Kirkuk)—were not completed during this reporting period.

The Pentagon's June report also addressed the problem more generally. It said:

Reconciliation remains a serious unfulfilled objective.

It said:

Mass-casualty attacks on Shi'a targets and the April 2, 2007 attack on the Council of Representatives have made the Shi'a wary of reconciliation.

It said:

There is also significant evidence of violence against Sunni Arabs, sometimes involving government security forces, that undermines reconciliation efforts.

It said:

Public perceptions of violence have adversely affected reconciliation.

As long as the commitment of our troops continues to be open ended, there is unlikely to be progress on reconciliation. It won't be until the Iraqis know our troops will not fight their civil war indefinitely that they will begin to make the hard political choices necessary to achieve reconciliation.

Importantly, the surge has not even been able to deliver on the President's goal of enabling reconstruction to go forward and fulfill its promise of a better standard of living for the Iraqi people.

On the fundamental issue of providing basic services for the Iraqi people, the Pentagon report in June said:

The Iraqi government has made little progress.

Despite the billions and billions of dollars our Government has spent on reconstruction, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction found that Iraq is still plagued by power outages, inadequate oil production, and shortages of clean water and health care. Electricity levels in Baghdad are half of what they were before the invasion. At the Baghdad International Airport, almost $12 million was spent on electrical generators, but more than half the money invested has been wasted.

Problems with reconstruction are not limited to Baghdad. Of eight reconstruction projects that the United States had declared a success 6 months to a year earlier, the special inspector general found that seven of them were no longer operating as designed because of plumbing and electrical failures, lack of proper maintenance, or apparent looting. Of the 142 primary health care clinics planned for Iraq, only 15 have been built, and of those 15, only 8 are open to the public. Mr. President, 800 schools have been built and thousands of teachers have been trained, but less than a third of the Iraqi students attend class.

No one in this administration can tell the American people in good faith and good conscience that we are making progress in Iraq. Bringing this war to an end will not destroy the administration's policy. The policy has already self-destructed. Nothing good will come of staying on the same perilous failed course.

Iraq is sliding deeper and deeper into civil war. Instead of solving the problem, the open-ended presence of our military is only making it worse.

The choice is clear: Do we continue to put our trust in those who have led us astray, or do we end this failed policy and begin a new course in Iraq?

Finally, the cost in precious American lives for this failed mission is reason enough to end this mistaken and misguided war. But the costs here at home hit us again this week when our Congressional Research Service raised the estimate of what we are spending in Iraq from $8 billion to $10 billion a month. With the passage of this latest Defense spending bill, we will have spent $450 billion on the war.

We know where this money comes from. It comes from America's families, and it means that urgent domestic priorities at home are going unmet because they are starved of funds.

We know we must deal with the soaring cost of health care and finding a way to cover the millions of Americans who have no health insurance at all. This festering crisis is a major worry for families across America, and we owe it to our people to address it.

Six million uninsured children in America should be enrolled in the Children's Health Insurance Program, but there is not enough money to do that. For the cost of 6 weeks in Iraq, we could cover every one of these children.

For less than the cost of 1 month in Iraq, we could double the budget for the Centers for Disease Control to keep American families safe from bioterrorism and other deadly epidemics.

For the cost of 2 weeks in Iraq, we could double the funding for the National Cancer Institute, which is vital to finding a cure for that deadly disease.

For the cost of 1 day in Iraq, we could double the ability of the Food and Drug Administration to protect Americans from unsafe foods by increasing inspections, upgrading facilities, and hiring more safety personnel. For less than the cost of a day in Iraq, we could allow a million uninsured Americans to be served by community health centers.

In education, the price of Iraq is also very high. Each year, 400,000—400,000—high school graduates do not go to 4-year colleges because they cannot afford it. For the cost of less than a week in Iraq, every one of those students—every one—could receive the assistance they need to go to college.

We know that early education programs, such as Head Start, make an enormous difference to a child's future. But Head Start now serves only half of the millions of children who are eligible for the program. For the cost of 3 weeks in Iraq, we could serve every eligible child and family in the Nation.

The administration has failed to fund the No Child Left Behind Act by $56

billion since its enactment in 2002. For the cost of less than 6 months in Iraq, we could make our public schools whole by providing all the funding they have been denied over the past 5 years. For the cost of only 49 days in Iraq, we could fully fund this important program for every public school in this country.

The war in Iraq is also denying urgently needed resources for the first responders and emergency personnel who are keeping us safe at home in all 50 States. For the cost of 1 month in Iraq we could provide 3 million portable radios to our first responders, enabling them to communicate during a natural disaster or terrorist attack. We could provide our heroic firefighters with 12 million additional units of breathing gear or 40,000 new firefighting vehicles.

The list goes on and on and on. Countless high-priority items at home must go underfunded or unfunded because the war in Iraq is draining vast amounts of resources. In the days ahead, the Senate will debate these all important issues. For the sake of our men and women in uniform, for the sake of our values and our ideals, we must adopt a new course and bring our troops home to the heroes welcome they have so clearly earned and get about the business of putting America back on track.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MENENDEZ). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2073

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, a short while ago, I called up amendment No. 2073, which would require a report on support provided by the Government of Iran for attacks against coalition forces, American forces, in Iraq.

I am going to speak about this now at some length, but let me say at the beginning that I offered this amendment in the hope that it will bring forth a strong, unified statement by the Senate that we have noted the evidence presented by our military of the involvement of the Iranian forces in the training and equipping of Iraqi terrorists, who have then gone back to Iraq and are responsible for the murder of hundreds of American soldiers there, and, I would say, thousands of Iraqi soldiers and civilians as well. So in the midst of the controversy that exists in our country, and as reflected in the Senate over the war in Iraq in general, I am hopeful this amendment will offer an opportunity for us to come together to accept the evidence our military has given us of Iran's involvement in the murder of hundreds of American soldiers and together to stand and say to the Iranians that this must stop. Here is the evidence. We know what you are doing. This must stop.

Then, in an operational clause of the resolution, to ask, finally, within 30 days after enactment of the act and every 60 days thereafter, the commander of multinational forces in Iraq and the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq shall jointly submit to Congress a report describing and assessing in detail external support or direction provided to anticoalition forces by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran or its agents.

There are some other points in that which I will get to in a minute.

Whether you are pro-war in Iraq or antiwar in Iraq, whether you think we ought to mandate a withdrawal of some or all of our troops or you disagree with that, it seems to me every Member of this Chamber ought to come together around the evidence that our military has provided of what the Iranians are doing to kill our soldiers and to tell them we know it and we want them to stop it.

Yesterday I came to the floor to speak at the beginning of the debate about what I thought was involved. I quoted our colleague and friend from Indiana, Senator LUGAR, who made a very thoughtful speech with which I agree in large part, disagree with in small part. I cited with appreciation Senator LUGAR's statement in his remarks. Again, obviously, we all know Senator LUGAR is a skeptic when it comes to the strategy we are following in Iraq or the course that it has taken or the concern about the political timetable here in Washington. We are not talking about that, but to acknowledge for the record that I know Senator LUGAR is skeptical about where we are now. Nevertheless, he had a very strong statement in that speech he made here on the Senate floor with which I agree totally in which he outlined the national security interests of the United States in how the war in Iraq ends. One of them was to prevent Iran from dominating parts of Iraq. Another was to preserve our credibility in the region, in the Middle East, the credibility that has been so important in attempting over decades, now, to maintain some minimal level of stability in the Middle East—clearly a region of the world that is important to us in many ways. In the most direct way, unfortunately, because of our failure to adopt an independent energy policy, we continue to depend too much on oil and gas that comes from the Middle East so we have an interest in keeping it stable. Obviously we have tremendous spiritual ties to the Middle East as well as more broadly political and economic ties.

I mention this because Senator LUGAR did talk about Iran and the importance of maintaining American credibility in the region. To me, nothing illustrates the stakes here and the larger conflict we are dealing with in the Middle East more clearly than the deadly and destabilizing role that is being played today by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and its agents in Iraq.

The fact is that for months and months now, our military commanders and diplomats have been telling us about a proxy war the Iranians have been waging against our soldiers, other coalition forces, and our allies in Iraq. GEN David Petraeus, the commander of multinational forces, and others, have spoken bluntly and publicly and I would say repeatedly about how the Iranian Quds Force, an elite unit of the Iranian Guard Force, has been training, arming, funding, equipping, and directing the extremists in Iraq, terrorists who then go back into Iraq and attack our troops. This past February, senior military officials of ours in Baghdad described forensic evidence that implicated Iran at that time in the deaths of at least 170 American servicemembers, and one may assume that the number has gone up significantly since then. That is 170 American servicemembers killed as a result of the involvement of Iran through Iraqi terrorist allies in Iraq; lost lives of Americans as a result of what Iran and its proxies are doing.

Last week, the United States military spokesman for the Multi-National Force Iraq, BG Kevin Bergner, presented new and I think stunning details about Iran's complicity in deadly attacks against our servicemembers. I present this resolution to say to our military, at the beginning: We hear you, but also say to the Iranians: We see what you are doing and we are simply not going to accept it.

The fact is, the previous warnings that have been given, and disclosures given by our military about Iranian involvement in Iraq, in some sense have drifted up into the media air which is so cluttered with so much else from the Middle East, from Iraq—so much controversy that it seems to not have settled into the collective consciousness of Members of Congress, let alone the American people, about what Iran is doing to our soldiers, our sons and daughters, our husbands and wives, our friends, our neighbors.

It is time for the Senate to say to Iran: We know what you are doing. It is time for you to stop it.

Last Monday, according to General Bergner—he made the statement last Monday—he said Iran has been using its territory—this is more specific than has ever been said publicly by the American military before—Iran has been using its territory to train and organize Iraqi terrorists who then go back and kill Americans in Iraq.

General Bergner said groups of up to 60 Iraqi militants at a time have been taken to three training camps near Tehran—again, more specific information than ever has come out before publicly—three training camps operated by the Quds Force near Tehran, where these extremists from Iraq have received instruction in the use of mortars, rockets, improvised explosive devices, bombs used by suicide bombers, or those set off in sophisticated ways from a distance, and other deadly tools

of warfare that they then use against our troops in Iraq.

Iran is also, General Bergner pointed out—and this I thought was stunning and should not be allowed to fade after a day's news cycle away—Iran is using the Lebanese Islamist terrorist group Hezbollah as a surrogate to help build up its terrorist allies in Iraq. That is what General Bergner, our general, our spokesperson in Baghdad, said. So they are bringing their Hezbollah terrorist clients from Lebanon, which is threatening and fighting the established Seniora Government in Beirut, which is our ally, a moderate government, an ally of ours—the Iranians are bringing Hezbollah from Lebanon to Iraq and Iran, to train Iraqis to kill Americans and Iraqis. We know this in part, General Bergner made clear, because our forces have captured one of the Hezbollah leaders, Ali Moussa Dakdouk, inside Iraq. He was captured, a Lebanese Hezbollah Islamist terrorist leader captured inside Iraq. Documents were recovered attendant to that, that detailed the relationship between the Iranian regime and the extremist groups that they are sponsoring in Iraq. So said BG Kevin Bergner, spokesperson for our forces in Iraq.

General Bergner also reported last Monday that the U.S. military has concluded that the senior leadership—that is a quote, ''the senior leadership''—in Iran is aware of the activities of the Quds Force in sponsoring attacks against our soldiers in Iraq and that, in his words, it is ''hard to imagine'' that the Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, does not know of them.

These are very serious statements, very serious charges by a respected and authoritative spokesperson for the U.S. military.

Those who follow the complicated inner world of Iranian Government know, to the best of our ability to follow it, that this elite military/terrorist group, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, IRGC, and the Quds Force that is part of it—their leadership is selected and reports directly to the Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, not to President Ahmadinejad.

So there is plenty of basis in the evidence that we have, in the involvement of the Quds Force and the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, which we know reports to the Supreme Leader of Iran, that the Supreme Leader of Iran knows what they are doing and presumably has approved it. If he didn't know what they were doing, he certainly does now because the American military has been telling the world. They are probably wondering whether anybody has been listening, for months and months now, that this is exactly what Iran has been doing.

It goes without saying, but I want to say it, that no one in this Chamber is looking for a fight with Iran. But that does nothing to alter the fact that Iran has, through its proxies, initiated a fight against us. That is a reality we no longer have the luxury of ignoring. It is a reality we must confront in the defense of the men and women who wear the uniform, the proud uniform of the United States of America in battle in Iraq today. Iran's actions in Iraq fit squarely within a larger pattern of expansionist, extremist behavior by the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Middle East over all the years, more than a quarter of a century now, since 1979 when the revolution occurred in Iran, when the American Embassy was seized, when the hostages were held in an outrageous act for more than a year.

We know the Iranian Government has used radical Islamist groups throughout the years since then as its regional proxies. We know these proxies have been dispatched to attack and murder American soldiers and citizens in the past.

What am I speaking of? I am speaking of the Marine Corps barracks bombing in Beirut in 1983, 24 years ago, which killed 241, I believe, American marines. All the evidence that was gathered after that to me makes a compelling case that that attack was carried out by Hezbollah, which is sponsored, supported, equipped, trained, directed by Iran.

Then there was the Khobar Towers attack in Saudi Arabia in 1996, where American military and other personnel lived. Again, American blood on the hands of Iran from all the evidence that I have seen about the cause of that attack, the perpetrators being agents of the Iranian Government.

We know these proxies who have worked aggressively and consistently on behalf of the extremist regime in Tehran to undermine moderate governments in the region, to extend Iranian influence. It is happening now in a way that seems to me to be more concerted, more aggressive than ever before. You can pick your reason for it. You can say the Supreme Leader Khamenei, President Ahmadi-Nejad, fanatics, anti-Americans shouting, urging their followers by the thousands to shout: Death to America. Death to America. They have been doing that since 1979, continue to do it. You can't take it as a meaningless chant. We have to take extremists at their word because we have seen too often in our history, most recently with all that Osama bin Laden was telling us he would do to us in the 1990s, that in fact he did it, most tragically on 9/11.

But some would say that this move throughout the region by Iran is to take the mind of the unhappy Iranian majority off the failure of the Ahmadi-Nejad Government to help make the economy go. Others would say that this is the moment when the Iranians think that American and other powers who have kept the balance and stability in the region will not respond to their aggression. Whatever. We have to open our eyes and see what is happening in the Middle East today. In addition to sponsoring attacks on Americans and Iraqis in Iraq, Tehran is also training, funding, and equipping radical terrorist groups that are working to destabilize Lebanon, the Palestinian Authority, and Afghanistan. Afghanistan is a fascinating example because there they are now, by all the evidence our military has, the U.S. military, Iran is now supporting the Taliban, which historically has been its enemy. The Taliban now, according to what our military tells us, appears to be receiving Iranian weapons in their ongoing war against the Government of President Hamid Karzai, our ally, the hope for a new Afghanistan, and the American and NATO forces there.

In fact, in one sense, it makes perfect sense that Iran is using Hezbollah to aid extremists in Iraq. The fact is, each of the seemingly separate conflicts I have described in the Middle East has a connection. They are part of a larger regional war that we are involved in, but so are so many of our allies in the region. Israel, obviously; but also broadly in the Arab world. If you have been to the Middle East, as I have recently, within a month, you find the level of anxiety—beyond concern, anxiety—in the Arab world among our allies about the movements and intentions of Iran is palpable.

The fear, of course, is that Iran is moving to establish itself as the dominant power in the region and to establish its own brand of Islamist extremism as the dominant ideology-theology in the region. In some sense, this is an undeclared war, but it is nonetheless very real. This is a fight the Iranians want to wage in the shadows, I suppose so they can escape some responsibility for blood on their hands. But it is also evident, as the American military and Governments of Lebanon and Afghanistan and Palestinian Authority have themselves made clear.

In debating this bill, which is the Department of Defense authorization bill, our first and foremost responsibility—in fact, it expresses itself so many ways in the language of this bill, which was unanimously reported out of the Senate Armed Services Committee on which I am honored to be a member—our first and foremost responsibility is to protect our national security and to protect our troops who are protecting our national security.

If we do not respond to the evidence that has been presented to us about the acts of the Iranian Government and their agents, I fear—I conclude—we will have failed on both counts. Our troops are being attacked and killed by the agents of Iran. The very least that we in this Chamber can do is to send a clear and unmistakable message to the Government in Iran that we know what you are doing and we insist that you stop.

That is why I am offering this amendment today to the Defense Authorization Act. I hope my colleagues will see it as a commonsense, common-ground amendment that confronts the Government of the Islamic Republic of

Iran with the evidence of its attacks on American soldiers in Iraq.

The amendment details the evidence already in the public record that has been put forward over the past year by General Petraeus and other senior U.S. officials about Iran's involvement in violence and destabilizing activities in Iraq.

I repeat what I said at the outset. Whether you are for or against the war in Iraq, whether you are for or against an amendment mandating a deadline or a timeline for withdrawing our troops, I hope we all can find common ground in making this statement, that we see the evidence of Iran's complicity in the deaths of American soldiers and we insist they stop. This amendment is not a call for war against Iran. I—as do all the Members of this Chamber, I am sure—always favor diplomacy first.

But this is a call to defend our troops and our vital interests which are under attack by Iran. It is a call for all of us to wake up to the outrageous actions that are being undertaken by the extremist Government in Tehran. It is important that we no longer deceive ourselves. If Iran can get away with the murder of American soldiers and pay no price, it will do it again and again and again. We cannot allow Iran to have a license to wantonly and deliberately murder our troops.

For if we sit silently by while this is happening, they will continue to take actions that are hostile to us, and the chances of us achieving what I think everybody in this Chamber would want us to achieve, which is to stop the Iranians from developing nuclear weapons, will simply be impossible.

The choice we face with Iran is not a choice between war and peace, it is at this moment a choice between turning a blind eye to the murder of our troops and confronting those who are murdering them. It is a choice between sending a message of determination and deterrence, which hopefully will end this action by the Iranians and sending a message of weakness and appeasement.

Just as our men and women in uniform are serving in Iraq to protect and defend all of us, they respond to what their Nation asks them to do, so too do we in this Chamber have a responsibility that I know we all acknowledge. It comes out of this Department of Defense authorization bill loudly and clearly. We accept our responsibility to do everything in our power to defend the men and women in uniform who serve us.

Support our troops I know is not just a bumper sticker, it is a solemn pledge of this Government, and everyone who serves it, including those of us who are privileged to serve in the Senate.

I hope this resolution can form the foundation for a larger, longer conversation that we in Congress need to have about the struggle we are in with Iran regionally, the threat its Government possesses to the security not just of our soldiers whom I have talked about but to our allies in that region whom I have talked about, and, ultimately, I fear to our country, the United States of America, and the way our policy must take account of that reality.

The threat posed by Iran to our soldiers' lives, our security as a nation and our allies in the Middle East is a truth that cannot be wished or waved away, it must be confronted. This amendment gives the Senate the opportunity to do that. So let us then with one voice tell the fanatical, anti-American leaders of the Government in Tehran, who I believe do not represent the majority of the Iranian people, that they cannot attack our troops without consequence. Let us with one voice tell our brave soldiers in Iraq, that Iran's assault on them will not go unnoticed or unanswered by this Senate. The regime in Iran, I fear, is betting that our political disunity about Iraq will constrain us in responding to its attacks. I do not believe that.

For the sake of our Nation's security, for the sake of our soldiers, we must—and I am confident will—prove them wrong.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, first, let me commend the Senator from Connecticut for his amendment. There is an awfully important message that is in that amendment about the threatening activities of Iranians against us in a number of parts of the world but more specifically in Iraq. This amendment is intended to capture some of the problems which are created by those activities of Iranians in Iraq particularly.

What we are trying to work out with the Senator from Connecticut, and again I commend him on his initiative, I think it is a very important one and I think it is possible the Senate can speak with one voice and we should speak with one voice on this issue.

There are language modifications which we are suggesting and which I have already had a chance to talk to my good friend from Connecticut about. I think if we either can have a brief quorum call or if anybody else who is here wishes to address the Senate on this or other subjects, they could be recognized at this point. But in the absence of that if I note——

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I wish to respond to my friend from Michigan, to thank him for his general expression of support for the amendment I offer and also for some of the suggestions he has made to me. Our staffs are working now.

Again, I wish this to be a clear statement, but I wish it to be a unified statement. I believe that, together, we can achieve that result. So I thank him. I will continue to work on it.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASEY. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, the Senate is once again debating future U.S. policy in Iraq. I, like others, have long advocated a new direction for our policy. I will continue to vote in a manner consistent with changing course in Iraq. However, today I rise not to speak about policy, tactics, or strategy. I will speak today only about our troops and their families.

First, the numbers are important. At last count, 3,609 Americans have lost their lives in Iraq, including 169 from Pennsylvania, the third highest death toll in the Nation. Over 25,000 have been wounded in Iraq, including more than 1,100 from Pennsylvania. Approximately 156,000 Americans, both Active-Duty and Reserve forces, are currently serving in Iraq, including more than 8,000 from Pennsylvania.

Certainly, numbers don't tell the whole story, especially when we consider the traumatic effect this war has had on individual families. These fighting men and women were born into families, not divisions and brigades. They are sons and daughters, wives and husbands, brothers and sisters, and, of course, fathers and mothers. Their love for their families is matched only by their devotion to our Nation. This war has impacted these families in many different ways.

We remember today and every day with gratitude and reverence those more than 3,600 soldiers and marines who have died, who gave, as President Lincoln said, the last full measure of devotion to their country. Their families have loved and lost, and the sharp pain of that loss may, we pray, diminish over time, but certainly the ache and the hurt will long endure because someone they loved, someone whose strong, warm embrace gave them comfort, will no longer be there for them. In fact, that person in the family is missing.

Some families have a loved one who served in Iraq and returned home, thank God, but, like 25,000 others, was wounded in Iraq. These families have paid a terrible price for the courage and dedication of their family members.

Today, we remember the bravery of our fighting men and women. Their bravery is so inspiring to all of us. I met one of them in March who represents so many across this land of the brave, this country we call America, our America. His name is Joshua Humberger, of Grapeville, Westmoreland County, PA, 20 years old from a small town, like many of our fighting men and women from small communities across America, in this case southwestern Pennsylvania. Joshua is in the Army National Guard. He received a Purple Heart and other commendations after he was wounded when

the vehicle he was riding in was hit by a bomb, killing his commander, SFC Daniel Brozovich of Greenville, PA, way up in Mercer County near the Ohio border. Two others, Ryan Griffin and Robert Kaminiski, both of Allegheny County, were injured as well in the attack.

To say that Joshua was injured in this attack is an understatement. Here is what one news article said about his injuries:

His left leg was amputated at the knee. His stomach was pierced by shrapnel and surgeons had to remove part of his lower bowel.

Despite all of the pain he and his wife Jessica have endured, he said during my visit: I want to go back. I want to go back to continue serving.

Where do these young men and women find the strength? We have to ask that. I have to say I don't know because it is hard for me to fully appreciate or comprehend such courage. They must be finding this courage from a reservoir of faith, love for and from their family, and an abiding allegiance to this Nation.

We know other families have loved ones who are in Iraq now or have had family members there for a long time. But even if a soldier returns home from Iraq and is not killed or wounded, even if that is the case, in a family, they are still missing while they are there, even if the Lord keeps them safe.

Today, we think of a lot of expressions of how to talk about this. One of them that comes to mind is from the great rock music icon Bruce Springsteen, who has roots in New Jersey, the Presiding Officer's State. I know he is proud of that. His words come to mind today. Written in the aftermath of 9/11, they help explain what our families have endured during this war. Bruce Springsteen's song ''You're Missing'' says in part:

Your house is waiting. Your house is waiting for you to walk in. But you're missing. You're missing when I shut out the lights. You're missing when I close my eyes. You're missing when I see the sun rise. You're missing. Children are asking if it's alright. Will you be in our arms tonight?

We ask that question as well, Mr. President.

To pay small tribute to those who are missing from their homes and families because they lost their lives far away on a battlefield in Iraq, I wish to take a few moments to read the names and hometowns of the 169 Pennsylvanians killed in action:

Shawn M. Davies, Aliquippa/Hopewell; Aric J. Barr, Allegheny; Joseph P. Goodrich, Allegheny; Luis O. Rodriguez, Contrera-Allentown; Larry Parks, Jr., Altoona; Russell G. Culbertson III, Amity; Stevon Alexander Booker, Apollo; Joshua J. Henry, Avonmore; Todd M. Siebert, Baden; Allan R. Bevington, Beaver Falls; Clint Richard Matthews, Bedford; Russell A. Kurtz, Bethel Park; Christopher D. Coffin, Bethlehem; Frederick A. Carlson, Bethlehem; Brent W. Dunkleberger, Bloomfield; Paul D. Karpowich, Bridgeport; John H. Todd III, Bridgeport; Christopher E. Loudon, Brockport; Tristan Smith, Bryn Athyn; and Carl J. Morgain, Butler.

George A. Pugliese, Carbondale; Oliver J. Brown, Carbondale; Kimberly A. Voelz, Carlisle; Nicholas B. Morrison, Carlisle; Gregory A. Cox, Carmichaels; Aaron M. Genevie, Chambersburg; Brandon M. Hardy, Cochranville; John T. Bubeck, Collegeville; Nils George Thompson, Confluence; Shelby J. Feniello, Connellsville; Timmy R. Brown, Jr., Conway; Matthew C. Bowe, Coraopolis; Michael W. Franklin, Coudersport; Michael J. Cleary, Dallas; Joseph M. Kane, Darby; Jason A. Shaffer, Derry; Kenneth E. Zeigler II, Dillsburg; Colby J. Umbrell, Doylestown; Travis L. Manion, Doylestown; and Steven R. Tudor, Dunmore.

Corey L. Small, East Berlin; Christopher Scott Seifert, Easton; Joshua P. Klinger, Easton; Ashly L. Moyer, Emmaus; Ernest G. Bucklew, Enon Valley; Donald Samuel Oaks, Jr., Erie; Victor M. Cortes III, Erie; Jeremy R. Horton, Erie; Mark T. Resh, Fogelsville; Bradli N. Coleman, Ford City; Sean P. Huey, Fredericktown; Dylan R. Paytas, Freedom; Mark P. Phelan, Green Lane; Roger Alan Napper, Jr., Greenburg; Eric W. Slebodnik, Greenfield Township; Michael A. Marzano, Greenville; Daniel A. Brozovich, Greenville; William L. Evans, Hallstead; Lee A. Wiegand, Hallstead; and John Kulick, Harleysville.

Sean Michael Thomas, Harrisburg; Barton R. Humlhanz, Hellertown; Ronald E. Baum, Hollidaysburg; Brandon E. Adams, Hollidaysburg; Daniel R. Lightner, Jr., Hollidaysburg; Curtis J. Forshey, Hollidaysburg; Keith A. Bennett, Holtwood; Landon S. Giles, Indiana; Randy D. McCaulley, Indiana; Bradley G. Kritzer, Irvona; Robert H. Dembowski, Ivyland; Michael R. Cohen, Jacobus; David Michael Veverka, Jamestown; Dennis J. Veater, Jessup; Andrew Joseph Baddick, Jim Thorpe; Raymond R. Buchan, Johnstown; Christopher A. Golby, Johnstown; Aaron J. Rusin, Johnstown; Andrew R. Jodon, Karthaus; and Ross A. McGinnis, Knox.

Jacob Walter Beisel, Lackawaxen; Jason L. Frye, Landisburg; Jsoeph Basil Maglione III, Lansdale; Maurice J. Johnson, Levittown; Jae S. Moon, Levittown; Ryan S. Ostrom, Liberty; Stephen P. Snowberger III, Lopez; David E. Dietrich, Marysville; Keith A. Callahan, McClure; Christopher E. Cutchall, McConnellsburg; Mark Joseph Kasecky, McKees Rocks; Edward W. Carman, McKeesport; Micheal J. Smith, Media; Michael E. McLaughlin, Mercer; Jeremy M. Campbell, Middlebury; Louis E. Allen, Milford; Zachariah W. Long, Milton; Edward W. Shaffer, Mont Alto; Daniel L. Arnold, Montrose; and Nathaniel E. Detample, Morrisville.

Thor H. Ingraham, Murrysville; Travis C. Zimmerman, New Berlinville; Clifford L. Moxley, Jr., New Castle; Albert Pasquale Gettings, New Castle; Orlando E. Gonzalez, New Freedom; Jennifer M. Hartman, New Ringgold; Brandon J. Van Parys, New Tripoli; Timothy L. Hayslett, Newville; Kyle J. Grimes, Northampton; Justin W. Dreese, Northumberland; Brett D. Swank, Northumberland; John R. Priestner, Leraysville; Jonathan Roy Kephart, Oil City; Kyle J. Renehan, Oxford; Jeremy E. Maresh, Penn Forest Township; Brian R. Faunce, Philadelphia; Francis J. Straub, Jr., Philadelphia; Adam C. Conboy, Philadelphia; Carl W. Johnson II, Philadelphia; and Edward W. Brabazon, Philadelphia.

Joseph M. Nolan, Philadelphia; Rodney A. Jones, Philadelphia; Nicholas J. Zangara, Philadelphia; Brahim J. Jeffcoat, Philadelphia; Gennaro Pellegrini, Jr., Philadelphia; Albert M. Nelson, Philadelphia; Wesley J. Williams, Philadelphia; David R. Bernstein, Phoenixville; Douglas J. Weismantle, Pittsburgh; Rafael L. Navea, Pittsburgh; Nicholas A. Tomko, Pittsburgh; Robert E. Hall Jr., Pittsburgh; Patrick Brian Kenny, Pittsburgh; Mark W. Melcher, Pittsburgh; Jason M. West, Pittsburgh; Thomas E. Vandling, Jr., Pittsburgh; Steven Freund, Pleasant Hills; Andrew W. Brown, Pleasant Mount; Sherwood R. Baker, Plymouth; and Jaror C. Puello-Coronado, Pocono Summit.

Craig S. Ivory, Port Matilda; Anthony L. Sherman, Pottstown; Scott R. Smith, Punxsutawney; Tamarra J. Ramos, Quakertown; William V. Fernandez, Reading; Joseph Minucci II, Richeyville; Tony L. Knier, Sabinsvilie; Timothy J. Lauer, Saegertown; Robert T. Mininger, Sellersville; Matthew J. Sandri, Shamokin; Douglas E. Kashmer, Sharon; Kurt E. Krout, Spinnerstown; William R. Sturges, Jr., Spring Church; Tristan Neil Aitken, State College; Eric A. McIntosh, Trafford; Carl F. Curran, Union City; Eric R. Hull, Uniontown; Jeffrey P. Toczylowski, Upper Moreland; Lonny D. Wells, Vandergrift; and Neil Anthony Santoriello, Verona.

Steven W. Szwydek, Warfordsburg; Michael T. Gleason, Warren; Ryan J. Kovacicek, Washington; Dale Thomas Lloyd, Watsontown; Brent A. Adam, West View; William J. Maher III, Yardley; Allen J. Dunckley, Yardley; Martin W. Kondor, York; and, finally, Sean R. Mitchell, Youngsville.

May they rest in peace.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to reassert my support for a change of course in Iraq and to briefly address some of the

amendments we are going to consider in the next few weeks concerning Iraq policy.

Two weeks ago, I had the honor of experiencing firsthand one of the more memorable events to occur in this Senate in the 6 months since I have been here. It was late on a Monday evening, and just as you are right now, Mr. President, I was sitting in the Presiding Officer's chair. It was around 10 o'clock at night, and I was thinking that maybe the day's events had been about concluded. Well, OK, I was thinking maybe I was the only Senator left at the Capitol and that it was time to go home. Then onto the floor came Senator LUGAR.

In my short time in the Senate, I have come to know the senior Senator from Indiana as a man with the deepest respect both from and for his colleagues, a leader who always puts principle above politics, and a Senator who earned the right to speak and be heard long before I came to Washington.

For the next 15 minutes, I listened to Senator LUGAR—standing right over there—as he delivered a poignant, pragmatic assessment of our Nation's position in Iraq. Rising far above the partisan crossfire that too often fills this Chamber, the Senator from Indiana urged his fellow Members of Congress and members of the administration to suspend their party differences and to come together.

As he said that night:

> In my judgment, the costs and risks of continuing down the current path outweigh the potential benefits that might be achieved. Persisting indefinitely with the surge strategy will delay policy adjustments that have a better chance of protecting our vital interests over the long term.

I hope all of my colleagues will recognize that our current strategy in Iraq is not working, that a new strategy based on the drawing down of U.S. forces is necessary, and that this strategy must be implemented now.

After 4 years, over 3,600 American soldiers have been killed; over 25,000 have been wounded; and almost $450 billion has been spent. We cannot wait until next year or even next month to change strategy.

After 4 years, we cannot wait for the Iraqi Government to demonstrate progress before we begin bringing our soldiers home, when it has shown no indication of a commitment to compromise and reconciliation.

And after 4 years, we cannot ask our men and women in the field to continue to risk life and limb indefinitely in pursuit of a policy that is not working.

As Senator LUGAR said that night:

> A course change should happen now, while there is still some possibility of constructing a sustainable bipartisan strategy in Iraq.

Well, certainly, what we saw today on the floor of the Senate did not demonstrate that kind of bipartisan strategy. I personally thought it was obstructionism that we were not allowed to at least continue the debate and to vote on Senator WEBB's amendment. I believe we have to have a change of course.

Our troops have done what we have asked them to do. They deposed an evil dictator. They guaranteed free elections in the country of Iraq. They gave the Iraqi people the opportunity to vote and to establish a new government.

We all know there can be no purely military solution in Iraq. This has been agreed on by so many military commanders, experts, and Members of this body on both sides of the aisle that it does not need to be argued anymore. And we all recognize true stability in Iraq will only come through political and economic compromises between Iraq's main ethnic groups, and only the Iraqis themselves can reach these compromises.

Given this, shouldn't our strategy be focused on transitioning to Iraqi authority now, not at some undefined time in the future?

We must push the Iraqi Government to assume the duties it was elected to perform and to lead the process of meaningful negotiation and dealmaking. Our open-ended commitment is impeding this process and inhibiting the will and the ability of the Iraqi people to stand up and take responsibility for their own country.

Nine months ago, the Iraq Study Group proposed a pragmatic change of course that focused on political and economic initiatives, intense regional and international diplomacy to tie all nations with an interest in Iraq together, and the beginning of a phased redeployment of U.S. forces from Iraq.

Since the issuance of the Iraq Study Group report, some conditions on the ground have remained the same, and a number have gotten worse. In the last 3 months, more U.S. troops were killed than in any other 3-month period during the entire war.

I urge my colleagues to set aside differences, to forget about past disagreements or voting records, and to focus on what is best for our troops in the field going forward. We owe it to these brave men and women in the field to get this policy right.

I believe the best thing we can do—for our troops, for our national interest, and for the Iraqis themselves—is to begin bringing our troops home and to remove the bulk of the U.S. combat forces by the spring of next year. We would still maintain a presence capable of protecting U.S. personnel, training Iraqi forces, and conducting counterterrorism and other specific operations.

Keeping the 150,000 U.S. soldiers in Iraq is undermining our ability to achieve our objectives there and in the region. We need to start bringing them home. As Senator LUGAR said that night:

> A diplomatic offensive is likely to be easier in the context of a tactical drawdown of U.S. troops in Iraq. A drawdown would increase the chances of stimulating greater economic and diplomatic assistance for Iraq from multi-lateral organizations and European allies, who have sought to limit their association with an unpopular war.

In March, I visited Baghdad and Fallujah and saw, firsthand, the bravery and commitment of our troops. Of the 22,000 troops involved in the surge, 3,000 of them are from my State of Minnesota. I met a number of these troops. Some of them just came up to me in cafeterias or on the street, and they were from Minnesota. I can tell you that they did not complain. They did not complain about their tour extensions. Some of them—in fact, nearly all of them—had been set to come home in January. They did not complain about that. They did not complain about their equipment. They did not complain about the heat. All they asked me was—first of all—what was the score of the State high school hockey tournament, and then they asked me if I would call their mom and dad, and if I would call their husband or wife when I got home to tell them they were OK.

My most lasting memory of that trip was standing on the tarmac at the Baghdad Airport, when nine Duluth firefighters called me over to stand with them. And they were there in front of their firetruck for one purpose, and that was to salute as six caskets, each draped with the American flag, were loaded on a plane.

They did not know who the brave soldiers were who died, but they knew when they were sent home, and when their families were there to meet them, their families' lives would never be the same. And they were there to show their respect.

Whenever I speak with the moms or dads or husbands or wives of soldiers who were killed, I always ask them how they are doing. When I asked this question of a mom recently from western Minnesota, she said: You know, people keep asking me that. They keep asking me how I am doing. And, you know, I really don't know what to say. She said: Do you have any ideas about what I should say? And I told her: Well, I can tell you what the other mothers have been saying. They have been saying that they wake up every morning, and they try so hard to hang together for their family, and then something happens—they see a picture or they remember something—and they are never the same for the rest of the day. And they have their good moments, but their lives will never be the same.

We owe it to these families to honor the sacrifices their sons and daughters have made and to begin bringing our troops in Iraq home so that other families do not experience similar anguish.

This is a different kind of war we are fighting. It has made demands on the National Guard that are unprecedented. At times, up to 40 percent of the troops fighting in Iraq have been members of the National Guard and Reserves. In many respects, this war has involved a different kind of soldier.

In Vietnam, the average age of an American soldier was 19 years old. In

Iraq and Afghanistan, the average age of Active-Duty soldiers is 27, and the average age of National Guard members over there is 33 years old.

Three-fourths of all soldiers serving in Iraq and Afghanistan have families of their own, and fully one-half of those who have been killed have left families behind.

Almost 22 percent of all Reserve and Guard members have had multiple deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. I have met some of these families. When I was up in Duluth, I met a brother and a sister—teenagers. Both of their parents had been in Iraq, and they were both going back again.

For 4 years, these citizen soldiers have gone above and beyond the call of duty and made extraordinary sacrifices. It is time to begin bringing them home.

We are finally starting to see some of our National Guard and Reserve members in Minnesota coming back, just as others across the country are taking their place. These men and women from Minnesota are completing one of the longest deployments of any U.S. military unit since the war began. They were originally scheduled to return home at the beginning of this year, only to find out weeks before they expected to ship back home that their tours had been extended as part of the President's surge strategy. Already a few hundred of these Guard members have been reunited with their loved ones, and by August the entire unit should be back in Minnesota, reconnecting with friends and family, beginning the process of transitioning to normal life. Having served and sacrificed for 16 months, these men and women have earned their rest and the right to live their lives in peace.

That is why I cosponsored and voted for the amendment offered by my friend from Virginia, Senator WEBB, also cosponsored by Senator HAGEL. This amendment, as my colleagues know, would require regular units deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan to remain at home at least as long as they were deployed and give Guard and Reserve members 3 years at home for every 1 year they are deployed.

The President's policies have placed unprecedented demands on our military in the 4 years of this war. Our forces are exhausted and overstressed. It is critical, both for morale and for operational safety, that units be given proper time to rest, recuperate, and retrain before redeploying. America's Armed Forces have a proud history and tradition that is unparalleled in the world, but when their ability to function properly is in danger, Congress must step in and address this situation.

I am disappointed that most of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle chose to block this responsible proposal rather than allowing a simple majority vote. This amendment would begin the process of repairing and rebuilding our military, while maintaining our Nation's ability to meet any threat to our Nation's security. We owe this to the members of the National Guard and Reserve and to their fellow soldiers across the country.

Since I have been in the Senate, I have joined many of my colleagues on countless occasions in asking when this war's supporters would publicly acknowledge the realities on the ground and finally allow a change of course that begins bringing our forces home. Each time we ask this question, we are told to be patient, that progress is just around the corner, and that it would be counterproductive to establish a timetable for withdrawal. After my trip to Iraq, I met with the President with three other Senators, and I talked to him about this. He said he supported the Iraq Study Group, but he didn't believe in the timetables. He didn't want the deadlines. Again, we were told it will be counterproductive to establish a timetable for withdrawal.

Now we have reached a point where the patience of many of even the most loyal supporters of this war—and I am someone who opposed this war from the beginning—but the patience of even the most loyal supporters of this war has been exhausted.

We have reached a point where Senators who have dedicated their lives to serving our national interests cannot stand silent as America's strength and standing in the world is continually undermined. We have reached a point where the necessary changes in our strategies in Iraq may finally be possible. I urge my colleagues to vote for these changes. We simply cannot wait any longer.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California is recognized.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, it is my understanding that the Levin-Reed amendment has been laid down. I wish to say a few words about it and the situation in Iraq in general.

Once again, the Senate is confronted with a series of votes over the future of Iraq. These votes present a very simple choice: Continue with more of the same, or change course. To me, the choice is crystal clear. The United States should and must change course in Iraq. We must begin to redeploy our forces and reevaluate what is truly in our national interests.

This is not the first time we have been confronted with such a choice. Many of us have voted over and over and over again for change, yet this President has refused to listen. He has worn blinders. He has ignored the views of Congress and the American people. Majorities in both the Senate and the House have voted to redeploy our forces from Iraq, but the President vetoed the legislation and there were not the votes to override, so we are back again facing many of the same questions. Will the President listen this time?

In this current debate new voices have emerged, raising significant concerns about the progress of the war. This includes Senator LUGAR, the deeply respected Senator from Indiana, who said in a very eloquent speech before this body—and I have had the privilege of reading it in detail and I wish to quote him:

> In my judgment, the costs and risks of continuing down the current path outweigh the potential benefits that might be achieved.

This includes Senator WARNER, who has said that waiting until September is too long. This includes Senator VOINOVICH, Senator HAGEL, Senator SMITH, and Senator SNOWE, who have questioned the current path. Will this President listen?

Moving from the Halls of Congress to the streets of Baghdad, it is clear to see that this is not a rhetorical game. It is about facts on the ground, and the facts are this: It has been 4½ years since U.S. forces entered Iraq. That is longer than we conducted World War II. Yet, the nation remains in chaos. Violence continues unabated. The insurgency is as strong as ever. The internecine fighting between Shia and Sunni is strong. Every day, there are more bombings, more IEDs, more deaths. In total, we have lost 3,600 brave men and women, almost 500 since this surge began 5 months ago. On average, four U.S. troops are being killed every day in Iraq.

Has the surge worked? Five months into it, it is clear that the surge has failed to stop the violence. Fatalities and sectarian attacks are on the rise. At no period in the war have we lost as many American troops as in the last 3 months. If the trend continues, 2007 will be the deadliest since the war began.

The promise of the surge was not that it would solve all of Iraq's problems, but that it would increase security and stability so that Iraq's government could confront the difficult political questions. So we must ask the question: Has it? But in this area too, there has been no progress; no progress on passing an oil revenue-sharing law; no progress on reforming the de-Baathification system which, to a great extent, was responsible for this insurgency in the first place; no progress in holding provincial elections, and no substantial progress on any other benchmark.

In fact, the Maliki government seems to be under siege. Sectarian tensions are mounting, and there have been calls for a no-confidence vote in the Prime Minister. So the vaunted surge has not worked and there has been no political progress. Yet, this President has asked for more time and more resources, and he gives no hints that he

now recognizes how dire the situation is. He gives no indication that he believes the course must be changed. He provides the American people with no exit strategy. To me, this represents a major failure of leadership.

I believe America's continued mission in Iraq is counterproductive. Therefore, the time has come for a change of course. I believe that within 120 days, we must begin to redeploy our combat troops. The goal would be to transition the majority of U.S. troops out of Iraq by April 2008, and that is exactly what the Levin-Reed amendment does. A small supporting force would remain in Iraq for the purposes of training, counterterrorism, border security, and force protection. This would move the vast majority of our troops out of harm's way.

Just as importantly, moving out of Iraq would open the door to a reevaluation of our national security interests in the region. Our Nation faces major challenges, and the primary focus on Iraq has allowed these problems to fester unaddressed. These include preventing terrorists from gaining safe haven in Afghanistan or, yes, Iraq. That is an abiding national security interest of this country. Senator LUGAR alluded to it in his remarks. I certainly agree. To prevent Iraq from becoming a safe harbor for terrorists should remain a national security goal of the United States.

Secondly, preventing the violence from spreading throughout the Middle East, Afghanistan, and the cities of Europe.

Third, thwarting Iranian domination of the region, and persuading the Iranian government that continued development of nuclear weapons is not in its best interests. This can't be done by not talking with Iran; it can only be done by talking with Iran. This is what we should be doing.

Fourth, pursuing an Israeli-Palestinian peace settlement. Yesterday afternoon, I met with the Foreign Minister of Egypt and he agreed. This is a window of opportunity to move toward a peace settlement between the Israelis and the Palestinians. To once again overlook that opportunity is a big mistake.

Finally, containing the damage done to our credibility around the world. Our credibility has suffered. The war has spawned terror. Over this past weekend, I happened to hear Peter Bergin, the distinguished expert on Osama bin Laden, speaking on CNN. He estimated that terrorism has increased sevenfold because of our involvement in Iraq.

Many people say if we leave Iraq, the Middle East collapses. I don't believe that. If we leave Iraq, we leave Shia and Sunni to come to grips with the problems between them, without the United States being a buffer and creating the point of attack for terrorists and insurgents.

I say remove that point of attack and begin to solve some of the problems. The simple truth is that none of these initiatives can be pursued adequately so long as we are bogged down in Iraq. So I believe the time has come to change course. We are 4 years and $450 billion into the war. Costs are increasing at $10 billion a month. We are losing 100 soldiers a month. Our Armed Forces are stretched thin, equipment is worn, recruiting is down, and no one can estimate what the impact will be come next April, when forces will be unable to meet the rotations.

We will be paying the costs of this war for decades to come. Thanks to medical science and battlefield medicine, many soldiers ordinarily would have died, but they have been saved. Some have egregious injuries. We have all seen the people with traumatic brain injury, amputees—single, double, quadruple amputees, people who will need care for the rest of their lives.

We have a choice: more of the same or change course. The Levin-Reed amendment represents a change of course. It represents this Senate standing up and saying forcefully we want our people out. We want redeployment within 120 days, and we want us off the streets, no longer to be that point of attack between Shia and Sunni. So the choice could not be clearer. It is time to act. I am very much in support of a Levin-Reed amendment. I very much hope we will have a chance to vote on the substance of it.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Kentucky is recognized.

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for 15 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. MENENDEZ. Reserving the right to object, and I don't intend to object, I ask my colleague from Kentucky if he would amend his request to have myself recognized after he finishes speaking.

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I so amend the request.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss my strong feelings about our dialog in Congress on the war in Iraq. I am concerned not only with the defeatist message some of us are sending our brave men and women in our Armed Forces on a daily basis but also with the message being sent to terrorists and those who wish to harm us. Instead of focusing our attention this week on how to provide our Armed Forces with the best equipment possible to complete their mission, many in this body continue to play political games with the war. This political game is deflating troop morale and strengthening our enemies.

Some of our colleagues believe they know the situation on the ground in Iraq better than my friend General Petraeus, the commander of the multinational force in Iraq. They believe we should begin a withdrawal of our troops from Iraq. The people who are best qualified to decide our troop levels are the commanders on the ground, not the politicians in Washington, DC.

I wish to talk specifically to the Democrats who want to immediately withdraw. Contrary to what the base of the Democratic Party may think, this war is not a Republican war and it is not just a President Bush war; it is an American war. When we vote to send troops into battle, they fight under the American flag. If we win or lose in Iraq, the United States of America wins or loses—not the Republican Party and not just President Bush.

I saw yesterday the Democratic Senatorial Committee is now running ads in selected States asking Republican Senators to vote to immediately bring our troops home from Iraq. I watched the ads. I played them on my television, and I played them on the computers in my office. Not surprisingly, they did not mention once what would happen if American forces withdrew quickly from Iraq. Nor did they mention that the head of the DSCC and the Senate majority leader voted to authorize the war. There is a shocker.

If we take the advice of the political arm of the Senate Democrats and pull out of Iraq, chaos will rule the day in Iraq and spread throughout the Middle East, in spite of what some of our colleagues on the other side have said.

That is why many of the Democrats who want to bring our troops home now don't talk about the harsh consequences of pulling out. This is precisely why we should not politicize war in 30-second sound bites.

I also wish to briefly address my Republican colleagues who may be feeling the political pressure back home as we debate this war. Our constituents sent us to Washington, DC, to make tough decisions, not to cast votes based on public opinion polls. Many of you know the consequences of pulling out of Iraq. I know because we have talked about it in our conferences. But stay strong enough until September, when General Petraeus will brief us on the effects of the change in strategy. Let us all then reevaluate the changes we made. The changes we made have only been fully implemented for less than a month. I acknowledge that the signs of success have been slow and, yes, many mistakes have been made with past strategies. But that is how war is. Mistakes sometimes are made. We learned from our mistakes and we moved forward with a new strategy. This new strategy is now in place.

General Petraeus is working, with the increase of thousands of American troops, to bring safety and stability to Baghdad and Anbar Province, putting insurgents on the run. The partnership between the United States and Iraqi forces against terrorist insurgents is increasing. Last month, more than 10,000 Iraqi tribes in the Baghdad area reached agreements with the United

States and Iraqi forces for the first time to oppose al-Qaida. These tribe members fought alongside al-Qaida in the past, and they are now providing our troops with information about their former allies.

We are at a critical point in our fight against al-Qaida and the extreme terrorist insurgents. I urge my colleagues to look at the long-term consequences of prematurely abandoning our mission in Iraq. Anyone who believes we can bring an abrupt end to our involvement in this conflict and still conduct successful counterterrorism operations in Iraq is wrong. Defeat in Iraq will come with a hefty price that will be paid by future generations of Americans. If the United States leaves, there will be a regional explosion of Islamic terrorism and extremism that will throw the entire Middle East into greater upheaval. The Iraqi Government may well collapse and throw the country into a state of chaos. Iran will dominate the Middle East, and our national security will be severely compromised.

It is because of these consequences that we should allow General Petraeus and the troop surge the opportunity to succeed. We cannot pull the rug out from underneath him right after we give him more tools to try to succeed in his mission. That would be both irresponsible and unfair. We promised to give him until September to report back with the progress on the surge, and we should hold true to this promise. That is 2 months from now—2 months from now.

Finally, I also wish to address the efforts made by some of my colleagues across the aisle to overturn effective policies that we have in place to fight against terrorism.

I oppose changing the 2006 Military Commissions Act to give legal rights to suspected terrorists. Detained enemy combatants are not ordinary criminal defendants and are not entitled to a trial in a civilian court, or to habeas corpus review.

Make no mistake about it, these terrorists are at war with us and we should treat them like it. We already have the mechanisms in place for detainees to challenge their enemy combatant status. These procedures are more protective of detainees' rights than any military commission in American history.

I find it ridiculous that we are faced with debating this issue again. The Senate has already voted on four separate occasions in the past 2 years to ensure that suspected terrorists do not have automatic access to Federal courts to challenge the legality of their detention.

How many more times are we going to be forced to vote on this issue? Let me be clear. I oppose weakening our current procedures. The changes being proposed will only end up strengthening the rights of terrorists.

I also oppose efforts to close the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. I realize there have been several negative reports and stories in the media in the past about this facility.

Let me set the record straight. The vision of Guantanamo Bay the media tries to portray to the American people is very different from the reality of the facility. I have personally visited the facility at Guantanamo Bay and found it to be nothing like what is described in the media. The facility includes air-conditioning, good meals, religious worship areas, and a top-notch hospital and health care facility. The terrorists there are treated with dignity while they show contempt for our troops. Don't forget that these terrorists are the worst of the worst. They are all extremely dangerous.

The job our troops do there is critical to our war effort. If those terrorists stay locked up there, they cannot harm us and they cannot bomb and do all the things that are being done presently more effectively in Iraq by being detained in Guantanamo Bay. And they do provide us with intelligence.

I applaud our troops for their efforts. They are working very hard to secure our freedom. It is thanks to their efforts and those made in the war in Iraq and the war on terrorism that our Nation's freedoms remain protected. The brave men and women of our Armed Forces and their families sacrifice on a daily basis for our freedoms because they believe their mission is too great to fail. I ask my colleagues: Are we really ready to declare their mission already lost? Are we really ready to do that when we finally have discovered a new method of attack?

I, for one, am ready to stand behind our troops and stand side by side with General Petraeus. I will vote against any amendments that restrict the flexibility of our military commanders to run this war or hurt our fight to end terrorism. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the unanimous consent agreement, the Senator from New Jersey is recognized.

The Chair advises the Senator from Virginia that under a previous unanimous consent agreement, the Senator from New Jersey is to be recognized.

Mr. WARNER. That is correct. I wonder if my colleague will yield for the purpose of a unanimous consent request?

Mr. MENENDEZ. I will be happy to yield.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following the remarks of the distinguished Senator from New Jersey, the Senator from Arizona, Mr. KYL, be recognized for a period of 15 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from New Jersey is recognized.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise today to speak out once again against the war in Iraq and in support of our troops. Today, we had an opportunity to do just that—to support the troops, troops such as these who are pictured here who actually have been serving our country and recently became U.S. citizens.

''Support the troops''—how many times have we heard that said on the floor of the Senate? We have heard that refrain time and time again from the very people who earlier today voted against the very essence of what it is to support the troops.

From the beginning of the Iraq war, we have heard its supporters say that somehow supporting the war equals supporting the troops. But from the beginning of this fiasco, it has been clear that the troops have been a secondary consideration for those who were bent on rushing into an ill-conceived war. Going to war without a postwar plan to stabilize Iraq, is that supporting the troops? Refusing to listen to generals about the troop levels needed to win the peace, is that about supporting the troops? Sending our soldiers into a war zone without the appropriate bulletproof vests, without the appropriate vehicles, with inferior equipment, is that supporting the troops? Letting Walter Reed's conditions worsen, is that supporting the troops? Extending tours of duty without regard to the consequences to our soldiers and their families, is that supporting the troops? Giving our soldiers only a brief stop at home before shipping them back in to a civil war in Iraq, is that supporting the troops?

It seems to me that the very least we can do for our brave men and women who carry out their orders with exquisite skill and bravery in an unimaginable situation in Iraq is to give them enough time to catch their breath before they are sent back.

Clearly, never have so few been asked to do so much in these continuing deployments. If one thinks about it, the number of men and women who are presently deployed and have been deployed compared to 300 million people in this country, how is it so few have been asked to do and sacrifice so much.

Today, the Republican leadership wouldn't even let them have the right opportunity for the respite they need in between these continuing deployments, deployments that are taking our troops and virtually grilling them into the ground. A Republican minority stopped a majority of the Senate and overwhelmingly the will of the American people in supporting the troops through a procedural roadblock. This should not have been a partisan effort by Republicans. It should not have been. In essence, those who put those roadblocks up have voted once again to stay the course, no change to the President's failed war policy, no alteration to this dead-end course, not even to give our troops some well-deserved rest.

I applaud my colleague from Virginia, Senator WEBB, as well as my colleague from Nebraska, Senator HAGEL,

both decorated combat veterans who stood up for our troops in their amendment. They know personally—this is not esoteric for them—they know personally of the sacrifice our soldiers make each and every day for the country they love, the country we all love. But they are not pawns. They are the best and bravest, and they deserve better than what the Senate did today.

I hope the American people speak out in support of our troops. I ask those Senators who oppose giving them the appropriate recess between deployment, the appropriate time so that they, even having to go back into the war, could have the appropriate time, as the military itself devises and has as goals as to what it should be, that at least for whatever time they are deployed abroad, that they have that time back here at home, back here with their families, back here to be able to rejuvenate themselves and go back to do the mission which they willfully do, could we not do that much for them? I hope the American people will speak out with an incredibly loud voice to our colleagues who don't believe they deserve that much, who used a procedural roadblock.

Mr. President, I am outraged.

As someone who voted against the war, I am outraged that 4 years after the start of an elective and unnecessary war which we were led into based on false premises and false promises, we have not yet ended it.

I am outraged that every delay in moving toward a transition out of Iraq and ending the war in Iraq means more American lives lost.

I am outraged that we have spent $450 billion on this war and that for each additional month we continue to be engaged in Iraq under the present course, we spend another $10 billion a month.

I am outraged that the President's war has cost us our prestige and influence abroad and has undermined our security around the world.

I am outraged that the war in Iraq has kept our focus away from the war in Afghanistan, the birthplace of the Taliban, home to al-Qaida, the land of Osama bin Laden, and the place where the attacks of September 11 were planned.

I am outraged that we always hear the same story and the same promises from this administration.

As I listen to some of my colleagues, as well as the administration, fear should not be the basis for our policy. But that is what the administration and its supporters in the Senate offer each time—fear. The Bush administration always says that change is just around the corner, that we should wait just a little longer for success. The Bush administration always has a new plan with new benchmarks and new deadlines, but they never meet those benchmarks or those deadlines, so they just change them. The Bush administration always says we are making progress on the ground. Yet the facts contradict them.

The truth is that we still haven't stopped the insurgency, that hundreds of Iraqis are still being killed each day, and that the Iraqi Government still hasn't acted on key benchmarks. The truth is that we are being driven down a dead-end street by an administration without a roadmap for a lasting peace.

So I say, as Senator Robert Kennedy did in March of 1968 in a speech about Vietnam:

> We are entitled to ask—we are required to ask how many more men, how many more lives, how much more destruction will be asked, to provide the military victory that is always just around the corner, to pour into this bottomless pit of our dreams?
>
> But this question the administration does not and cannot answer. It has no answer—none, but the ever-expanding use of military force and the lives of our brave soldiers, in a conflict where military force has failed to solve anything in the past.

Those were his words then. I believe they ring true today. Today, we are living with the consequences of the administration's failed policy. Over 3,600 American troops have been killed in Iraq since the beginning of this war, including 87 servicemembers with ties to my home State of New Jersey. April and May was the deadliest 2-month period of the war for U.S. troops, with 230 servicemembers killed. We have now spent over $400 billion on the war in Iraq. We continue a burn rate of about $10 billion a month. Frankly, as a member of the Senate Budget Committee, I never believed the administration's estimate that the so-called surge would cost only $5.6 billion, and these new numbers prove once again that we have been misled.

This was a terrible weekend, with over 250 people killed in Iraq, including 150 Iraqis who perished in a bombing that the New York Times described as ''one of the deadliest, if not the deadliest'' single bombing since the start of the war. Suicide attacks have more than doubled across Iraq, from 26 in January to 58 in April.

In terms of reconstruction, oil production in Iraq is still lower than it was before the war 4 years ago. Baghdad is getting under 6 hours of electricity a day, significantly less than before the war. And the President's escalation plan, the so-called surge, simply isn't achieving the results we were promised.

Imagine that, another broken promise. Just like when we were told: We know where the weapons of mass destruction are. Just like we were told about the yellow cake uranium from Niger, when the President came before the Congress in his State of the Union speech and used that term to engender support for his war policy. We found out it wasn't true, and that ended up having a CIA agent outed because her husband, a former United States Ambassador, proved that, in fact, that wasn't true. If that had been under any other administration, it would have been called treason. Just like we were told: We will be greeted as liberators. Just as the President landed on the aircraft carrier with a big banner behind him saying ''Mission Accomplished.'' How many lives have been lost since mission accomplished? Just like ''the insurgency is in its last throes.'' We have heard that so many times.

Well, it is about time to add the surge to that infamous list. I think we all knew that the strategy to secure Baghdad would simply lead insurgents to move into other areas, and that is exactly what has happened.

As Anthony Cordesman from the Center for Strategic and International Studies said in recent testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee:

> The U.S. is having to expand its counterinsurgency operations broadly outside Baghdad. Limited tactical successes really don't matter unless such casualties include substantial cadres of leaders and experts that cannot be easily and rapidly replaced. The insurgents can simply disperse, stand down, and regroup.

Now, I know the administration likes to tout victories in individual Iraqi provinces or cities as markers of success, but I believe all we are seeing is what is sometimes called the balloon effect. We clamp down on insurgents in one area, they spring up in another. We never actually solve the problem.

Let's be frank about the status of the Iraqi Government. The New York Times describes the Iraqi Parliament and Cabinet as ''barely able to function.'' Apparently, 12 Cabinet members aren't even attending Cabinet meetings anymore; 74 out of the 275 Members of Parliament are boycotting the Parliament. And numerous others don't attend anyway.

We have heard a lot about benchmarks. They keep changing, of course. It is now clear to anyone and should be to everyone that the Iraqi Government will not meet any of the much-touted benchmarks the Bush administration has outlined. I believe we are engaged in a ceaseless act of repetitive denial by this administration.

In fact, the Bush administration is shortly going to try to present a completely new set of ''accomplishments'' and downplay their previous benchmarks. A recent Washington Post article notes:

> Those achievements are markedly different from the benchmarks Bush set when he announced his decision to send tens of thousands of additional American troops to Iraq.

Let's take a look at the benchmarks the Bush administration told us would be met.

We were told that by the end of 2006 a provincial election law would be approved and new election laws would be put in place. It is the middle of 2007. That benchmark has not been met.

We were told the Iraqis would approve a law for debaathification. But that benchmark has not been met.

We were told the Iraqis would create a law to help restrain sectarian militias. That benchmark has not been met.

We were told the Iraqis would establish a law to regulate the oil industry

and share revenues. That benchmark has not been met.

We were told by March the Iraqi Government was supposed to hold a referendum on constitutional amendments. But, again, that benchmark has not been met.

As I have said time and time again, benchmarks without consequences are just aspirations. And I am sick and tired of hearing about goals that are never met. Yet despite this lack of results, the administration refuses to admit their strategy has failed. Instead, they want to move the goalpost. They just want to alter their perception of reality.

Finally, I cannot close without discussing the cost of the war in Iraq. Our expenditures in Iraq saddle our Nation's finances and our children's future. We spend approximately $10 billion a month in Iraq. We spend $2.5 billion a week in Iraq. We spend more than $328 million every day in Iraq. And we spend more than $13.5 million an hour—an hour—in Iraq.

Let me just put our Iraq spending in perspective. For what we spend in a month and a half in Iraq, we could fully fund No Child Left Behind next year, ensuring that every school district in the United States has the funds promised to them to meet the goals of the law for a quality education for every child. Just for what we spend in 1½ months, we could meet all of that goal next year.

For what we spend in approximately 3 days in Iraq, and with an additional $1 billion, we could substantially improve security at our Nation's ports, including increased scanning of cargo containers. I represent one of the largest ports on the eastern seaboard, clearly one of our huge gaping holes to our domestic security.

For what we spend in just over 2 months in Iraq, we could pay the $21 billion cost of implementing the remaining 9/11 Commission recommendations to secure our homeland, implementations that would truly make our country, its communities, and its families far more secure. Yet we need to look beyond the economic cost of the war at its true cost: 3,609 American lives. That has no price to it. It is invaluable. These are the sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives of fellow Americans, and we now have more than 26,695 sons and daughters of America who are wounded in ways that will affect their lives forever. I hope a grateful nation remembers them now and in the future.

In conclusion, I ask, Mr. President, how many more deadlines will be missed? How many more benchmarks will be set, not met, and then forgotten? How many more times will we be told to wait just a few more months? How many more times will the administration say that change will happen soon, 4 years later? How many more broken promises? And how many lives must be lost in the meantime? How long will this administration wait to come to the inevitable conclusion that we must transition out of this war?

Mr. President, it is over. Your failed strategy, your ill-conceived war must come to an end before more damage is done, before more lives are lost, before more national treasure is squandered. Let's get our troops home so we can start the hard work of meeting our domestic homeland security challenges, of meeting our security challenges elsewhere in the world—for which we have real challenges—of strengthening our foreign policy and mending our international relations.

I know as I visit back in New Jersey, so many of my constituents say to me: Why is it that you all in the Senate cannot just simply put an end and seek the transition to this war? To do that, we truly need profiles in courage in the Senate. We need bipartisan support. Democrats do not have the 60 votes in the Senate to stop a filibuster, the procedural process by which the Republican minority thwarts the will of a majority of the Senate and the American people, nor do we have the 67 votes needed to override a Presidential veto. It will take colleagues from both sides of the aisle to meet that challenge.

I challenge my Republican colleagues, who now say they are dismayed and have a different view than the President—and I applaud them for coming to that conclusion. And I say it is time to back their words with meaningful votes here on the floor of the Senate—now, before we lose more lives and national treasure. Now is the time, not tomorrow. Now is the time, not next month. Now is the time, not next year.

I will end today by reminding all of us of what Senator Robert Kennedy said about the war in Vietnam. He said:

> Past error is no excuse for its own perpetuation. Tragedy is a tool for the living to gain wisdom, not a guide by which to live. Now, as ever, we do ourselves best justice when we measure ourselves against ancient tests, as in the Antigone of Sophocles, where he said, ''All men make mistakes, but a good man yields when he knows his course is wrong, and repairs the evil. The only sin is pride.''

The only sin is pride. The only sin is pride. Let's not allow pride to be the obstacle to changing our course in Iraq, to making sure we save more lives of the men and women who bravely answer the call of the Nation's trumpets. Let's make sure ultimately we strengthen our security by having the resources both at home and abroad to meet our real challenges. Let's change the course. And over the next week, we will have that opportunity.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I have listened carefully to the remarks of my colleague, the junior Senator from New Jersey, and among the things he said are that he is outraged that we haven't ended this war. And he said, speaking to the President of the United States: Your ill-conceived war should come to an end before more lives are lost. He concluded by saying: Now is the time, not next month, not next year.

Mr. President, while my colleague is still on the Senate floor, it seems to me that we should talk a little bit about what the obligations are of someone who has those feelings. It seems to me that anybody outraged that we haven't ended the war now has an obligation to offer an amendment before this body to do so. When he says now, before more lives are lost, that should suggest the only thing the Senate can do and the House can do is to cut off the funding for the war. But that is a way to end the war, it seems to me, instead of arguing about the amount of deployment time, the time of rest between deployments for our soldiers, if that is the state of the situation, that the Senator believes we ought to be getting right to the bottom line before any more lives are lost and cut off the war.

My own view is not as pessimistic, not as defeatist. My own view is that General Petraeus is right; that there is an opportunity for us to succeed in our mission. And when I talk about supporting the troops, and I think about when General Petraeus talks about supporting the troops, the best way to support the troops is to support the troops, meaning to not only provide what they need to succeed in their mission in a material sense but to provide the political and moral support they need to continue their mission.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. KYL. I will in a moment. Since I addressed the Senator's remarks, I will be happy to yield to him.

But that support is critical to the success of their mission. They don't think they have lost this war, contrary to some on the other side of the aisle here. They don't think they have lost, and they believe they can succeed in their mission. The kind of defeatist talk I have heard here, unfortunately, it seems to me, leads to the notion that it is a question of which one of them, which one of these brave soldiers or marines or airmen or sailors are going to be the last one to die in a failed cause.

That is not the message we should be sending from the Senate. It is not the message the political leaders, who should be supporting these troops, should be sending—not just to the troops and to their families but also to our allies and our enemies.

I will be happy to yield.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I appreciate the Senator yielding. I don't know whether he voted for cloture on the amendment offered by Senator WEBB and Senator HAGEL. But when we talk about supporting the troops, here are two Members of this body who are distinguished, decorated combat veterans who know what it is to fight a war, and they both, as well as others, said it is critical for our troops to have a rotational cycle

that gives them some respite equal to the time they are deployed. I don't know why we couldn't have had a straight up-or-down vote. That would be about supporting the troops.

Last, I say to my distinguished friend, we can have differences on the war. I believe that, in fact, having these blinders in which we continue to say ''stay the course regardless of consequences'' is ultimately leading us down a road that is not in the best interests of the United States and its security. So we differ.

I hope you will consider voting for the Levin-Reed amendment. That will give us an opportunity to begin the end of the war and transition out in a way that ultimately will secure the United States.

Mr. KYL. I appreciate the comments of my colleague. Let me reiterate, it seems to me if one is outraged, and if one believes the war should end now, before another life is lost, instead of arguing about how many months there are between troop deployments and making that the attempted argument here, that you ought to get right to the bottom line and decide to cut off the money for the war.

I have a different point of view. Of course, I am not going to vote for that amendment because I believe that General Petraeus, having been unanimously confirmed, has an opportunity and basically the right to expect our support in carrying out the mission which we have sent him to achieve and which we have sent all these soldiers and marines and others to achieve as well.

We undercut that mission by cutting it short, by cutting off our support. It is not a matter of giving it more time. The last brigade of the five brigades that were brought in on the surge just got into theater. This surge has just gotten underway in its full form and General Petraeus has said he is going to come back in September and give us a report on how he thinks it is going. Obviously, it will be an interim report. One couldn't expect necessarily that all the results could be achieved in the short period of time between now and September. But, nonetheless, that will be a time when he can come back and give us a report.

I suggest we ought to at least wait until we receive that report before concluding that all is lost and that we have to bring the troops home and that that is the best way to support them. They don't believe that. I have spoken to the troops in Iraq. They believe they are winning and that they can win. Early reports from this surge suggest they are right.

I am not going to prejudge it, however. All I ask of my colleagues is that they not prejudge it either, that they not come in here with a defeatist attitude and say all is lost, it can't work, we should bring everybody home, and it doesn't matter whether General Petraeus has just gotten started, it doesn't matter that we have confirmed him unanimously and that we have sent him into harm's way to accomplish this mission. None of that matters. Our political judgment is all that matters and we ought to begin a withdrawal.

That is fundamentally wrong, and I am glad my colleagues will defeat these amendments which would have the effect of undercutting our mission and, as I said, the mission and morale of our troops.

I wished to speak briefly to the amendment of Senator LIEBERMAN, who has been a stalwart and steadfast beacon of truth—truth that needs to be spoken to the kind of threats this country faces, especially with respect to the overall terrorist threat, both as it emanates from terrorist groups and also as it is supported by state sponsors of this terrorism. That is what his amendment goes to. It goes to the state sponsorship of terrorism by the state of Iran.

It is an excellent amendment which needs to be adopted by this body, in my view. As he has noted, Iran has a long history of supporting terrorism and it continues to develop a nuclear capability. It is actively undermining our efforts in Iraq. It is responsible for the death of Americans, and it needs to be confronted.

Senator LIEBERMAN's amendment documents many of Iran's dangerous actions in Iraq and it directs, in its conclusion, a regular report to Congress to better inform us and the American people of the destructive and intolerable role of Iran. We need this information to help formulate our policies as well as to mobilize public opinion to support them.

Let me discuss a few of the items that are in his proposal and why it needs to be supported by this body. We know that Iran has become the primary ideological, financial, and logistical supporter of terrorists seeking to attack the West and one of the major financial supporters. We know because the U.S. Department of State has listed Iran as a state sponsor of terrorism. It is one of only five countries in the world to be so designated.

The State Department's most recent report stated: ''Iran remains the most significant state sponsor of terrorism.''

This is not in doubt. It provides significant financial backing to terrorist groups such as Hezbollah, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad in an organized effort to undermine the Israeli-Palestinian peace as well as our efforts throughout the Middle East. It is trying to undermine moderate regimes throughout the Middle East, to establish itself as the dominant regional power—this, by the way, being considered a matter of great concern by other nations in the region. It wants to reshape the region in its own ideological image.

Iranian-sponsored terrorism has caused the death of Americans, for example, in the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia, where 19 U.S. servicemembers were killed. It provided assistance to al-Qaida. According to the 9/11 Commission report, in late 1991 and 1992, discussion in Sudan between al-Qaida and Iranian operatives led to an informal agreement to cooperate and provide support, even if only training for actions carried out primarily against Israel and the United States. Not long afterward, senior al-Qaida operatives and trainers traveled to Iran to receive training in explosives.

Iran has continued its relations with al-Qaida. At least eight of the 9/11 hijackers traveled through Iran between October of 2000 and February of 2001. Its aggressive sponsorship of terrorism is a vital national security threat to the United States.

Let me mention its nuclear capability. It continues to defy the international community by developing its nuclear capability. Nuclear weapons in the hands of the most significant state sponsor of terrorism is a risk to the United States, and we have to do everything we can to prevent that. The most recent evidence includes the apparent construction of a new tunnel complex near one of Iran's major nuclear sites. A former United Nations weapons inspector, David Albright, noted Iran built a tunnel complex near the Isfahan uranium conversion plant in order to protect a range of nuclear-related equipment and that Iran may be construct a similar facility near Natanz, fearing that the underground halls at Natanz are vulnerable to destruction by military attack.

I support the administration's commitment to pursuing a diplomatic solution to this danger, but although the United Nations has imposed sanctions on Iran, nothing has come of this. If Iran continues to develop its nuclear capability, obviously we maintain the right to take appropriate action, and I therefore will continue to support efforts to marginalize this threat that Iran poses to the West and to the United States.

Finally, let me make a comment about the undermining of our efforts in Iraq. This is the most immediate threat from Iran, and it is a significant focus of the amendment of Senator LIEBERMAN. The most recent Country Reports on Terrorism from the State Department states:

> Iran . . . continues to threaten its neighbors and destabilize Iraq by providing weapons, training, advice and funding to select Iraqi Shia militants.

Then-Ambassador to Iraq Khalilzad stated last year:

> We can say with certainty that they support groups that are attacking coalition troops. These groups are using the same ammunition to destroy armored vehicles that the Iranians are supplying to Hezbollah in Lebanon. They provide money to Shiite militias and they train some of the groups. We can't say whether Tehran is supporting al-Qaida but we do know that al-Qaida people come here from Pakistan through Iran. Ansar al-Sunna, a partner organization of Zarqawi's network, has a base in northwest Iran.

General Petraeus recently stated:

The level of financing, the level of training on Iranian soil, the level of equipping some sophisticated technologies with explosives and so forth, even advice in some cases, has been very, very substantial and very harmful.

Iranian interference in Iraq is not the rogue actions of low-level personnel. Here is what General Petraeus recently stated, which I think is critical:

We know that it goes as high as Brigadier General Qassem Suleimani, who is the head of . . . the Qods Force . . . of the Iranian Guards Corps. That is quite high level. We believe he works directly for the supreme leader of the country.

This support is material and is leading directly to the deaths of American servicemembers.

Brigadier General Bergner, spokesman for the Multi-National Force in Iraq, recently stated that the Quds Force operates three camps near Tehran and that:

[The] Qods Force, along with Hezbollah instructors, train approximately 20 to 60 Iraqis at a time, sending them back to Iraq organized into these special groups. They are being taught how to use [Explosively Formed Penetrators], mortars, rockets, as well as intelligence, sniper and kidnapping operations. In addition to training, the Qods Force also supplies the special groups with weapons and funding of $750,000 to $3 million U.S. a month.

In February, the U.S. military reported that at least 170 deaths of coalition troops could be attributed to weapons with ties to Iran.

Iranian actions are killing Americans and undermining our efforts in Iraq. The Congress needs to take this threat seriously and begin to take appropriate actions to deal with it. Senator LIEBERMAN's amendment is an important step in dealing with the threat that Iran is imposing.

I urge my colleagues to support the amendment.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that an op-ed, written by Senator LIEBERMAN and carried in the Wall Street Journal on July 6, 2007, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Wall Street Journal, July 6, 2007]

IRAN'S PROXY WAR

Earlier this week, the U.S. military made public new land disturbing information about the proxy war that Iran is waging against American soldiers and our allies in Iraq.

According to Brig. Gen. Kevin Bergner, the U.S. military spokesman in Baghdad, the Iranian government has been using the Lebanese terrorist group Hezbollah to train and organize Iraqi extremists, who are responsible in turn for the murder of American service members.

Gen. Bergner also revealed that the Quds Force—a special unit of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps whose mission is to finance, arm and equip foreign Islamist terrorist movements—has taken groups of up to 60 Iraqi insurgents at a time and brought them to three camps near Tehran, where they have [received instruction in the use of mortars, rockets, improvised explosive devices and other deadly tools of guerrilla warfare that they use against our troops. Iran has also funded its Iraqi proxies generously, to the tune of $3 million a month.

Based on the interrogation of captured extremist leaders—including a 24–year veteran of Hezbollah, apparently dispatched to Iraq by his patrons in Tehran—Gen. Bergner also reported on Monday that the U.S. military has concluded that ''the senior leadership'' in Iran is aware of these terrorist activities. He said it is ''hard to imagine'' Ayatollah Ali Khamenei—Iran's supreme leader—does not know of them.

These latest revelations should be a painful wakeup call to the American people, and to the U.S. Congress. They also expand on a steady stream of public statements over the past six months by David Petraeus, the commanding general of our coalition in Iraq, as well as other senior American military and civilian officials about Iran's hostile and violent role in Iraq. In February, for instance, the U.S. military stated that forensic evidence has implicated Iran in the death of at least 170 U.S. soldiers.

Iran's actions in Iraq fit a larger pattern of expansionist, extremist behavior across the Middle East today. In addition to sponsoring insurgents in Iraq, Tehran is training, funding and equipping radical Islamist groups in Lebanon, Palestine and Afghanistan—where the Taliban now appear to be receiving Iranian help in their war against the government of President Hamid Karzai and its NATO defenders.

While some will no doubt claim that Iran is only attacking U.S. soldiers in Iraq because they are deployed there—and that the solution, therefore, is to withdraw them—Iran's parallel proxy attacks against moderate Palestinians, Afghans and Lebanese directly rebut such claims.

Iran is acting aggressively and consistently to undermine moderate regimes in the Middle East, establish itself as the dominant regional power and reshape the region in its own ideological image. The involvement of Hezbollah in Iraq, just revealed by Gen. Bergner, illustrates precisely how interconnected are the different threats and challenges we face in the region. The fanatical government of Iran is the common denominator that links them together.

No responsible leader in Washington desires conflict with Iran. But every leader has a responsibility to acknowledge the evidence that the U.S. military has now put before us: The Iranian government, by its actions, has all but declared war on us and our allies in the Middle East.

America now has a solemn responsibility to utilize the instruments of our national power to convince Tehran to change its behavior, including the immediate cessation of its training and equipping extremists who are killing our troops.

Most of this work must be done by our diplomats, military and intelligence operatives in the field. But Iran's increasingly brazen behavior also presents a test of our political leadership here at home. When Congress reconvenes next week, all of us who are privileged to serve there should set aside whatever partisan or ideological differences divide us to send a clear, strong and unified message to Tehran that it must stop everything it is doing to bring about the death of American service members in Iraq.

It is of course everyone's hope that diplomacy alone can achieve this goal. Iran's activities inside Iraq were the central issue raised by the U.S. ambassador to Iraq in his historic meeting with Iranian representatives in Baghdad this May. However, as Gen. Bergner said on Monday, ''There does not seem to be any follow-through on the commitments that Iran has made to work with Iraq in addressing the destabilizing security issues here.'' The fact is, any diplomacy with Iran is more likely to be effective if it is backed by a credible threat of force—credible in the dual sense that we mean it, and the Iranians believe it.

Our objective here is deterrence. The fanatical regime in Tehran has concluded that it can use proxies to strike at us and our friends in Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon and Palestine without fear of retaliation. It is time to restore that fear, and to inject greater doubt into the decision-making of Iranian leaders about the risks they are now running.

I hope the new revelations about Iran's behavior will also temper the enthusiasm of some of those in Congress who are advocating the immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq. Iran's purpose in sponsoring attacks on American soldiers, after all, is clear: It hopes to push the U.S. out of Iraq and Afghanistan, so that its proxies can then dominate these states. Tehran knows that an American retreat under fire would send an unmistakable message throughout the region that Iran is on the rise and America is on the run. That would be a disaster for the region and the U.S.

The threat posed by Iran to our soldiers' lives, our security as a nation and our allies in the Middle East is a truth that cannot be wished or waved away. It must be confronted head-on. The regime in Iran is betting that our political disunity in Washington will constrain us in responding to its attacks. For the sake of our nation's security, we must unite and prove them wrong.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I rise in support of the amendment offered by the Senator from Connecticut. The amendment puts Iran on notice that we in the Congress are aware of actions taken by Tehran that have resulted in the deaths of U.S. service personnel. We are aware of it, and we must do everything we can to stop it as quickly as possible.

While my colleagues and I may have legitimate differences over our policy in Iraq, we stand firmly united against those individuals and regimes that would seek to harm our troops. For some time now, American diplomats and military officers have suspected that key Iranian Government elements are actively engaged in supporting individuals and groups seeking to destabilize the Iraqi Government and who are deliberately targeting American troops for attack. There is a body of evidence, a body of reporting on Iranian material support to Shia militias, reports that suggest that Iranian support for the most lethal of the improvised explosive devices and for armor-piercing explosively formed projectiles. Together, these weapons account for a high percentage of American casualties in Iraq.

But the evidence of Iranian activity in Iraq does not end there. In order to increase its influence in Iraq, bleed the United States and disrupt our efforts in Iraq, Iran has engaged in numerous specific acts. A few of the publicly available reports include:

In February of this year, our military confirmed that at least 170 members of the U.S. Armed Forces have

been killed and at least 620 wounded by weapons tied to Iran.

On May 27, then-MG William Caldwell, spokesperson for the Multi-National Force in Iraq, said:

> What we do know is that the Iranian intelligence services, the Qods Force, is in fact training, equipping, and funding Shia groups . . . both in Iraq and in Iran. . . . We have in detention now, people that we have captured that, in fact, are Sunni extremist-related that have, in fact, received both some funding and training from the Iranian intelligence services, the Qods Force.

On April 26, General Petraeus stated that the Qazali network, a network directly connected to the Iranian Quds Force, was responsible for the sophisticated attack against the Karbala Provincial Joint Coordination Center in Iraq, which resulted in the murder of five American soldiers, four of whom were first abducted.

Last week Brigadier General Bergner, current spokesman for Multi-National Force Iraq, stated the following:

> The Iranian Quds Force is using Lebanese Hezbollah essentially as a proxy, as a surrogate in Iraq.
>
> Coalition forces have captured Ali Musa Daqdaq, whom the U.S. believes to be a 24-year veteran of Lebanese Hezbollah involved in the training of Iraqi extremists in Iraq and Iran.
>
> The Iranian Quds Force operates three camps near Tehran where it trains Iraqi extremists in cooperation with Lebanese Hezbollah. The Quds Force, along with Hezbollah instructors, train approximately 20 to 60 Iraqis at a time, sending them back to Iraq organized into these special groups. They are being taught how to use EFPs, mortars, rockets, as well as intelligence, sniper, and kidnapping operations.
>
> Iraqi extremists receive between $750,000 and $3 million every month from Iranian sources.
>
> . . . our intelligence reveals that senior leadership in Iran is aware of this activity and that it would be hard to imagine that Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of Iran, is unaware of it.

Let me be clear. This amendment is not a call for war. However, it is a clear message that America stands by our troops and our interests in Iraq and that all Americans are united against those who would do them harm.

I ask my colleagues to join us in sending this message. If the Government of Iran wishes to prevent further international isolation and increased tension with the United States, it must take immediate action to end all training, arming, equipping, funding, advising, and any other forms of support for those who are destabilizing Iraq and killing American troops. That is about as simple as it gets. I would hope that however divided we may be on other questions of policy, we can all agree on that.

As my friend from Connecticut says, this amendment is a quite commonsense, common-ground proposal that would send a clear message on behalf of America, our interests, and those who risk everything to protect it.

I remind my colleagues of several quotes made by various Iranian leaders, including the Iranian President Ahmadinejad, who said:

> Israel is a tyrannical regime that will one day be destroyed.

He said on another occasion:

> Israel is a rotten dry tree that will be annihilated in one storm.

Another time he said:

> The skirmishes in the occupied land are part of a war of destiny. Israel must be wiped off the map.

Those are not the words of the Senator from Connecticut, the Senator from Michigan, any one of our enemies, but the elected leader of the State of Iran, who has said on numerous occasions that Israel must be wiped off the map.

So it is not just what the Iranian Government is doing in Iraq, it is the continued threat to the State of Israel. The Iranians, along with the Syrians, continue to arm Hezbollah. They are in the process of replacing the rockets expended in the battle in southern Lebanon as a result of the attack of Hezbollah on Israeli forces, the capture of Israeli servicemen. It is clear that the United Nation's Security Council resolution calling for the disarmament of Hezbollah in southern Lebanon is not in any way, sense, or form being enforced. In fact, Hezbollah is being rearmed rather than disarmed.

There is no doubt that the Iranian Government is attempting to realize an age-old dream of Persian influence and superiority in the Middle East. This is a real and serious threat.

I haven't even talked about the nuclear weapons development. It is well known to most of my colleagues here—all of them, as a matter of fact. As they continue to progress down the path to acquisition of a nuclear weapon, I am not concerned—I am concerned, but I am not as concerned about the fact that Iran develops a nuclear weapon and puts it on a missile aimed at Israel. I am far more concerned about the Iranians acquiring a nuclear weapon and handing it over to one of the terrorist organizations with which they have intimate and close ties.

This is a great threat in the region. Even if we are out of Iraq, let's suppose the worst-case scenario happens. I think one of the greatest threats to stability in the region is the insertion of Iran in a broad variety of ways in Iraq, beginning with southern Iraq, and their support of continued organizations that practice terror in the region.

I also think that obviously you would have some kind of Sunni involvement sponsored by the Saudis and you would have a number of other catastrophic situations, including the Turks not being able to withstand an independent Kurdish state. All of those are subjects for a debate for another day and discussion.

But the threat Iran presents, not just to Iraq, not just to the region, but peace in the world, is real. It is extremely urgent that we address it. If we fail to do so, as we have failed to address threats of terrorism in various shapes and forms in the past, we will pay a very heavy price. That is why I am very pleased to support the amendment of my friend from Connecticut.

Before I yield, could I also say I think that the Senator from Michigan and I and the Senator from Connecticut would be glad to enter into a time for a vote on this amendment at his convenience and that of the leadership's convenience.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SANDERS). The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I thank my friend, the distinguished colleague from Arizona, Senator MCCAIN, for his strong, clear, convincing, compelling statement to me. I am honored he has signed on as a cosponsor of this amendment I have offered, which is specifically related to the Iranian support, training, equipping of terrorists that go back into Iraq, are responsible for the death of Americans and Iraqis.

He stated the evidence very clearly. It is powerful evidence. This is an opportunity, as he said, no matter where you are on whether we ought to have a mandatory deadline or a goal or whatever about our policy in Iraq, to stand together and say, when American soldiers are being killed as the result of a concerted campaign by another government, acting through its agents, and our military—not some distant third party—but our military and our intelligence community are telling us that, clearly we are going to stand together here in the Senate and send a united message to Tehran: We know what you are doing. Stop it.

I thank the Senator from Arizona and Senator KYL, who spoke before.

Mr. President, at this time I ask unanimous consent to add Senator COLLINS of Maine and Senator SESSIONS of Alabama as cosponsors of this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I thank Senator LIEBERMAN for offering this amendment because it is a very detailed list of activities that the Iranian Government is engaging in.

I say the Iranian Government purposefully, because I do believe that parts of their Government are deeply involved in trying to undermine our activity in Iraq. I hope this is something we can rally behind. I hope this is one of the amendments the whole Congress can get behind, the whole Senate can get behind, just as we have with pay raises and other things to help the troops.

I guess I would ask the question a different way: Do you doubt that what Senators LIEBERMAN and MCCAIN have just alleged about Iranian activity is true? Does any Member of the Senate question the accusations that are being

leveled at the Iranian operatives and Government vis-a-vis their involvement in Iraq? Is it something we can all agree on?

I would say that if you disagree, come to the floor and tell us why we are wrong. As you have just heard from Senators MCCAIN, LIEBERMAN, and KYL, the accusations are very serious and they run deep. The accusations basically say that the Iranian Government, through the Quds organization, their military revolutionary, their guard component, is actively involved in undermining the young democracy in Iraq, and actively involved in killing Americans.

If you doubt that, if you disagree with that, come and tell us where we are wrong. If you agree with that concept, this a chance to speak up and say that is wrong. I hope everyone in this body can muster the ability to tell the Iranian Government that what you are doing in Iraq is wrong and must stop.

The question we must ask ourselves as a nation is: Why is Iran doing this? Everyone has a reason for whatever decision they make as a governmental body. Every organization has a reason for whatever decision they make. Iran has a reason. Can we figure that out? Is it a mystery to us? It is not a mystery to me. The reason I think Iran is trying to destabilize Iraq and drive Americans out of Iraq and the region is because Iran's worst nightmare is a functioning democracy on their border.

Iran is a theocracy controlled by some of the most brutal people in the Middle East. The Iranian President is up there in terms of rhetoric with Adolph Hitler. He is saying things in 2005, 2006, and 2007 that you thought were coming out of the 1920s and 1930s. Does he mean it? I think he does.

Senator MCCAIN said the second prize would be a missile with a nuclear weapon aimed at Israel. That is second prize. First prize for a nuclear-armed Iran would be a terrorist organization getting the bomb.

Now, does anybody believe Iran is trying to produce power through a nuclear program for peaceful purposes? Come here and say so. Do you have any doubt that the Iranian regime is trying to go nuclear for all of the wrong reasons? I have no doubt, I have no doubt that they are in Iraq trying to kill Americans so we will leave. I have no doubt they wish the Maliki government and anything like the Maliki government to fail. They are not interested in a democracy in their backyard. Neither is Syria. The biggest threat they can imagine is to have neighbors who can decide their own fate, to have people next door who can vote for their own leaders, where Sunnis, Shiahs, and Kurds come together, form a new economy and a new government. That is a dictator's, a theocracy's worst nightmare.

I completely understood why Iran is doing what they are doing. What I cannot understand is why we are doing what we are about to do. Why would we abandon this infant democracy, even though it is harder than we would like. We have made mistakes that are too numerous to count. But look at our own history. It took us 11 years to write our own Constitution. Four years ago the people in Iraq were living under a brutal dictator. Four years ago the police force had one mission: Take care of the dictator. The Army had one goal: Take care of the dictator.

Now you have people trying to come together and found a new country out of the ashes of a dictatorship. If you look at history, at our own history, you know how hard it is. But let me tell you the payoffs are enormous if we could pull this off. And when I say ''we,'' I mean Americans and the big moderate forces in Iraq. It will transform the region.

Look at what happened to Qadhafi when Saddam Hussein went down. Things matter. If we fail in Iraq, it matters. And all the momentum that would be built by a successful outcome, which I think is very possible, that same—a different type momentum will be created by failure.

Who is the biggest winner and loser in Iraq? If Iraq fails, if the Government collapses and it becomes a chaotic situation, who would win? I would argue that at the top of the list would be al-Qaida, because al-Qaida would have a place to operate. I am not saying al-Qaida dominates all of Iraq. I am saying they will have regions in Iraq where they use fear and intimidation to operate and they will be stronger.

I do believe with all of my heart and soul that if Iraq fails and this new democracy is curbed, the biggest winner will be the Iranian state. They will have influence over parts of Iraq that will make them stronger.

Another big loser would be Turkey, because the Kurdish north will become incredibly unstable. So I do not think it is a mystery as to what Iran is up to. They are trying to destroy a force that presents a great threat to their existence, their existence as a theocracy that suppresses any form of moderation.

We have a magic moment in the Middle East to change it for the better. It is going to be hard, it is going to be tough, and it is going to take sacrifice, but it will work if we stay with a model that has always worked.

What is that model? When people get up and preach the destruction of their neighbor and they preach genocide and they preach hate and division, the model that has always worked is for the good people to say no. Every time someone like the President of Iran has come along with his hateful, destructive message and no one checks it, over time good people die. Eventually, the killing gets to be so great and the carnage is so hard to look at, good people rally to stop it. We have a chance here to head off what I think is a bloodbath in the making. We have a chance to control an Iranian Government that is up to no good. We have a chance to stand with the forces of moderation and affect the outcome in Iraq for the better.

Will they become the United States of Iraq overnight? No. But here is, indeed, good news, that due to the surge, with additional military capability, there is something going on in Iraq that should be encouraging. Al-Qaida flourished under the old strategy. They were able to dominate different regions of Iraq. When they had control of those regions, they did what every thuggish group has done in history. They did what every ideologically driven, hate-filled group has always done. They overplayed their hand. They have done some vicious, terrible things, and the people who have lived under their thumb have said: I have had enough. This new strategy has empowered these people in the Sunni areas of Iraq to turn away from al-Qaida and embrace something new. It has been possible because of General Petraeus and our brave men and women. Indeed, it is good news.

At the end of the day, this war on terror is about choices. Our hopes and dreams are that people in the Mideast, if given a choice, will reject al-Qaida and find a new way. Our hope and dream is that the Iranian regime will not get stronger but weaker. The only way to ensure that it will get weaker is to make sure its neighbors are protected from its vicious behavior. The only way we will ever win this war is not just killing al-Qaida but giving the power to those who say no to al-Qaida to control their own destiny. The only way we will ever control Iran is to stand up to it, just as we had a chance with Hitler and we let many opportunities pass.

Do I believe Iran is going to conquer the world? No. But I do believe Iran unchecked will change the world for the worse. I believe with all my heart and soul that Iranian efforts to get a nuclear weapon are real, and if they are successful, we will have a nightmare on our hands because I think they would use the weapon or at least empower somebody who would use the weapon. That would create chaos in the Mideast. I know that if I am the Prime Minister of Israel, I am not going to sit on the sidelines and watch that happen. I believe if Iran gets more out of control than they are now, you are going to create a nuclear arms race in the Mideast. I believe if Iraq can push through the hard times and we can achieve stability and say no to al-Qaida and contain Iran, momentum will be built for the next generation of those in Iraq and all over the Mideast to embrace a form of living we can tolerate.

There are plenty of people in Iraq—and I have met them, and you have, too—who are dying for their own freedom. What more can we ask? If you want to be a judge in the United States, you go through a confirmation hearing, and it is pretty awful. If you want to be a judge in Iraq, they try to

kill your family. If you want to be a political leader in the United States, it is a pretty tough life, but in Iraq it could end your life.

To those who are willing to raise their hand and say: I am willing to stand up to al-Qaida, I have had enough, God bless you. May God bless you. May the United States have the courage to stand by you. To those who see Iran as a growing threat, God bless you. May the United States have the courage to stand by you. To the young men and women who are going for the third and fourth time, God bless you. You see it better than anybody else. You know why you go back. You go back because you see hope where people here see no hope. You see change where we deny change exists. You see the ability to make the world better through your sacrifice, and you see the ability of passing on a better world to your children. You see the ability to affect things for the better so your kids won't have to do what you are doing. God bless you.

I hope and pray that this Congress, this Senate, and this country can muster the will to do the things that have always worked in the past. When you see evil, don't appease it; confront it. When you see hatred and bigotry, change it. Be willing to do the hard things now so that there will be a better life for those who come behind.

This strategy called the surge has been long overdue. We have paid a heavy price for misunderstanding the nature of what was required after the fall of Baghdad. We have been stubborn, and at times we have been arrogant. But at the end of the day, we are a good people. We stand for the good. The best we have is our men and women in uniform, and they are there in large numbers, volunteering to stay and to keep reenlisting. Whatever mistakes we have made in the past, let's not compound them.

I argue to my colleagues that the biggest mistake is yet to come, a mistake for the ages. That would be to adopt a policy that will make sure Iran wins and this new democracy in Iraq fails, to adopt a policy that will allow al-Qaida to come back stronger than they were before—and they will, as surely as I am standing here speaking—and slaughter those who have chosen to say no to them. If that happens, there will be a whole generation of moderation in the Mideast silenced. That will mean the next generation of Americans will be in the Mideast for a bigger war to fight. It is really literally up to us, as a democratically elected body, as to what course we take.

I do not question anybody's intent, patriotism, or motivation. But don't be blinded by the mistakes of the past. Don't misunderstand our enemy. Our enemy does not want to be misunderstood. Al-Qaida has written out the script for the world. The script says: Get us out of the Mideast, destroy forms of moderation in the Gulf States, and destroy Israel. They have written it down, just as Hitler wrote it down. I believe it can be stopped, just as Hitler was stopped. The Iranian leadership is not hiding where they want to go. They are challenging us to stop them. I hope we will rise to the occasion because we can stop them. The strongest weapon in our arsenal is not just the brave men and women who take up arms but the value system of our country which is so much superior to the hate-filled demagoguery of al-Qaida and to the totalitarian nature of Iran.

These are monumental times which I thought I would never live to see. I never thought in my lifetime I would see the world go backward instead of forward when it comes to standing up to evil. But such is life, such is fate.

To the brave men and women who have reenlisted and gone back for the third and fourth time, here is what I can say about you: History will judge you well because when your country needed you the most, you did not follow the political moment; you followed ideals that will last for a lifetime—truth, justice, and the American way.

God bless you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. I am very appreciative of the remarks of the Senator from South Carolina. His eloquence is both compelling and informative.

I thank my friend from Connecticut for his amendment.

Mr. President, there has been printed in the RECORD an article by Senator LIEBERMAN of Friday July 6, 2007, that appeared in the Wall Street Journal.

I hope many of my colleagues will find the time to read this piece by Senator LIEBERMAN.

My friends from South Carolina and from Connecticut have made the arguments on behalf of the present strategy. One of the aspects of this debate we are in will center to some degree around Iranian influence in Iraq and the need for, or not, face-to-face talks with Iran. Let me make it clear in the beginning that I think America should be ready to talk to anybody at any time under any circumstances as long as somehow it isn't injurious to America's prestige or cause. But I think those who would come to this floor and argue about the need for face-to-face talks with the Iranians and how somehow that is the Rosetta Stone or nirvana—something that all we need to do is sit down and talk face to face with the Iranians—should be aware of the recent experience we have had with the Iranians. There were talks between Washington and Tehran last month in Baghdad, and the subject was security issues. Many of us were aware of those.

I quote the chief military spokesman, BG Kevin Bergner:

> There absolutely is evidence of Iranian operatives holding weapons, training fighters, providing resources, helping plan operations, resourcing secret cells that is destabilizing Iraq.
>
> We would like very much to see some action on their part to reduce the level of effort and help contribute to Iraq's security. We have not seen it yet.

Obviously, we know that tensions between the United States and Iran are very high, especially after the United States seized five Iranians earlier this year in northern Iraq for which there was clear and compelling evidence they were helping the insurgents. We also know Iran has five U.S. Iranian citizens held on ''security-related charges,'' a gross violation of human rights. I am surprised there is not more outrage in the United States over this basic kidnapping of American citizens.

The important part of this discussion is that our Ambassador to Iraq, Mr. Ryan Crocker, met with his Iranian counterpart last month in Baghdad. I know I share the view of most people who have had interface with Ambassador Crocker that he is one of the finest who has ever served in the Foreign Service as a diplomat and representative of the United States in all parts of the Middle East. One of the issues Ambassador Crocker raised was the type of roadside bomb which cuts through armor and is most lethal that is being supplied by the Iranians. Tehran's response last week was that they would study a request from Baghdad for a second meeting but warned the decision may take weeks.

Our No. 2 U.S. diplomat, Daniel Speckhard, said:

> We do not yet have another meeting scheduled for that dialogue with Iraq and Iran.

He said the first meeting produced general assurances that Tehran had a common interest in seeing a stable Iraq on its border, but these words had not been matched by deeds.

In other words, we have had a meeting with the Iranians. We have had various representations and representatives approach the Iranians on this issue. We have tried very hard and we will continue to try very hard to convince the Iranians that chaos in Iraq is not in their interest. I am not talking about U.S. interest but their interest. But it seems, as Daniel Speckhard said, what we have seen during the first meeting is, from our perspective, a sense that their actions were out of line with their stated goals and objectives.

Relations between the two countries obviously are being strained by Iran's nuclear program, which, in the minds of most experts, is by no means peaceful.

As I said at the beginning of my remarks, and this will be part of one of the amendments that is proposed, the United States should engage in face-to-face talks with the Iranians. That is fine. As I say, it is fine with me as long as it doesn't undermine U.S. prestige and enhance the prestige of a nation that continues to say things such as:

> Anybody who recognizes Israel will burn in the fire of the Islamic nation's fury.
>
> Remove Israel before it is too late and save yourself from the fury of regional nations.
>
> Israel is a tyrannical regime that one day will be destroyed.

We are supposed to sit down in face-to-face negotiations with a government

whose President said, concerning the Holocaust:

> They have invented a myth that Jews were massacred and place this above God, religions and the prophets.
>
> The real Holocaust is what is happening in Palestine where the Zionists avail themselves of the fairy tale of Holocaust as blackmail and justification for killing children and women and making innocent people homeless.

That is the rhetoric of the Government of Iran.

I hope we can convince them that an al-Qaida-significant presence in Iraq and increased chaos in the region is not in Iran's long-term interests because we need them. We need them to join with us in trying to bring about some kind of stability in the region. I hope that will happen.

I note the presence of the deputy Democratic leader on the floor. As I have discussed with the Senator from Michigan, the distinguished chairman, we are prepared to vote at whatever the leader's convenience is. It is my understanding—if I could have the attention of the Senator from Michigan—that after that, according to our conversation—

Mr. LEVIN. I apologize, Mr. President.

Mr. MCCAIN. That is quite all right—that there would be a pending Hagel amendment and then a discussion of an amendment by Senators SALAZAR and ALEXANDER, and then there would be made in order probably a Kyl amendment from this side, in keeping with the back and forth of amendments, obviously, depending on the good will and agreement of the leadership.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, we are drafting a unanimous consent request to put in place what the Senator from Arizona has just described. But what it would be is that immediately following the disposition of the Lieberman amendment, as modified—and the modification is almost completed—that then there would be a recognition of Senator HAGEL, with 2 hours, I believe, equally divided, and then there would be—I have not had a chance to talk with the Senator from Arizona, but it may be preferable to have the Kyl amendment just offered and laid down today and then the hour for Senators SALAZAR and ALEXANDER and their cosponsors, with a half an hour, as I understand it, for the Senator from Arizona or his designee, to be recognized after that hour for Senators ALEXANDER and SALAZAR et al. But their hour would be purely for a matter of debate. There is no amendment of theirs that would be pending at this time.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, could I ask the indulgence of the Senator from Michigan? Perhaps an hour for Senators SALAZAR and ALEXANDER and a half hour at the same time, so perhaps we could have a back and forth and use the hour and a half in its entirety, if that would be agreeable.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I think that would be the intention.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, if I could ask the distinguished managers, this amendment by Messrs. SALAZAR and ALEXANDER is of considerable importance, and there are some of us who would like to comment on that.

Mr. MCCAIN. Sure. Could I respond?

Mr. WARNER. Not as a part of that hour. I think they wish to have an hour reserved under the two principals together with their distinguished list of cosponsors. There are some of us who are not cosponsors who may have comments.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I believe that this hour they asked for is in addition to the discussion of the regular amendment when it comes up on the floor sometime in the next—

Mr. LEVIN. Whenever it comes up.

Mr. MCCAIN. Whenever it comes up. They were seeking unanimous consent just to discuss for an hour the merits of their amendment. I had said, well, we should try to also have a half hour and a time limit. Obviously, all of this is in keeping with the wishes of the majority. The Senator from Michigan and I are trying to—

Mr. WARNER. Well, it is simply that I have some concerns about the Salazar-Alexander amendment. I do not wish to encroach on such time as they wish, but it would seem to me those of us who may have some concerns should have the opportunity to speak in the proximity of their discussion so the Members would have the benefit of both views.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, if the Senator will yield on that, Senator MCCAIN, actually, I think, was intending to protect that interest in the half hour which he requested. If that is not sufficient, then we could make that an hour.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I would perhaps seek to have 10 minutes. That is all.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, why don't we do this: have an hour—and I am sure we will not use it—an hour each.

Mr. LEVIN. We will have a unanimous consent request. This is being cleared on our side. I would also ask that Senator SMITH be recognized for 10 minutes between now and the time we will, hopefully, vote on the Lieberman amendment.

Is the modification at the desk? Is that ready?

Mr. LIEBERMAN. I say to the Senator, through you, Mr. President, the modification is ready.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I think the Senator from Illinois is going to be recognized at this point. After he has his colloquy with Senator LIEBERMAN, I would again seek the floor to put in place that unanimous consent agreement which we have just broadly outlined.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to ask unanimous consent, through the Chair, to have a brief colloquy with Senator LIEBERMAN about his pending amendment, as modified, so there is clarification here.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Thank you, Mr. President.

First, we all acknowledge that Iran is involved in sending deadly weapons into Iraq which are threatening the lives of American soldiers as well as those who are trying to seek a peaceful and stable Iraq. That is a fact. It is one that the Senator from Connecticut has condemned, and I join him in that condemnation. I think that is a large part of his effort with this amendment.

Secondly, I might add that Senator SMITH of Oregon and I have introduced a resolution relative to the proliferation issue in Iran, and we have quite a few cosponsors on both sides of the aisle. We are not calling it on this bill, but we may soon, and to find diplomatic ways to discourage Iran from developing nuclear weapons, which would be destabilizing and dangerous to the Middle East and the world.

But I have a specific question I want to ask of the Senator from Connecticut in light of the modification of his amendment. Does this amendment, now, that the Senator has presented, as modified, authorize the use of military force by the United States against Iran?

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, through you, responding to my friend from Illinois, the direct and short answer is no, it does not. In fact, in the modification I will soon send to the desk, we have added a section that says explicitly what was intended implicitly, which is, ''Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize or otherwise speak to the use of Armed Forces against Iran.''

I say to my friend from Illinois, my hope here—in the midst of a contentious debate in which there is division in the Senate—is that no matter where one stands on the issues we are debating, on the facts that the U.S. military has presented about the complicity of Iran and its agents in training and equipping terrorists who are then coming in and killing Americans and Iraqis, there is agreement. And there is agreement also on the ''therefores'' or the ''resolved,'' which is, these are intolerable and unacceptable acts, and we call on the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to take immediate action to stop them.

Significantly—to me, anyway—we set up an operational procedure where, in the first 30 days and then every 60 days thereafter, General Petraeus or his successor, the Ambassador to Iraq and successor, will report to us on any new evidence about the activities of Iran in Iraq.

But because I want very much for this to be a statement that as many of the Members here—hopefully, all—could support, I do want to make it clear because I understand this is not

meant as an authorization of the use of force or in any other way to speak to the use of force against Iran.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Connecticut for this clarification.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, if I might, at this time I would like to send to the desk a series of modifications to this amendment that are the result of negotiations, particularly with my friend from Michigan, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, Senator LEVIN.

I have been told we are still working on it. I thought we had agreement. OK. So I will say we continue to work on these modifications, which the ones I have seen we have approved together.

Does the Senator from Michigan have late-breaking news?

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, if the Senator will yield, the only issue is it is not in the proper form. I would urge the Senator to describe that modification. By the time he describes it, and I have had a comment or two, it will be in a form we could send to the desk.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Excellent. Essentially, these are corrections to clarify what the intention of myself and the sponsors, such as Senator MCCAIN, were in submitting this. There were some helpful suggestions made, for instance, from the Intelligence Committee that wanted the reports done by the commander of the Multi-National Force and our Ambassador to Iraq to be done in cooperation with the Director of National Intelligence.

We have added a specific recitation of the fact that on May 28 of this year, Ambassador Crocker met in Baghdad with representatives of the Government of Iran to express concern about Iranian anticoalition activity in Iraq.

We call on the Director of National Intelligence to issue the National Intelligence Estimate on Iran that has been promised for some time now without further delay.

We indicate that we support diplomacy with the representatives of the Government of Iran in order to stop any actions by the Iranian Government or its agents against U.S. servicemembers in Iraq.

Again, we hope they will respond to these diplomatic initiatives.

And then, finally, the section I referred to in my colloquy with Senator DURBIN, that this is not intended to authorize or otherwise speak to the use of Armed Forces against Iran.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, let me again thank the Senator from Connecticut for these modifications. There are a number of other smaller modifications in the body of the amendment. The only one which I will read, make note of here—although there are a number of other very small ones—however, the one I do want to particularly point out, for those who are following this debate, is that the words ''of hostility'' are eliminated on line 14, page 7 in order to avoid any suggestion that this—I will give my interpretation, which I think fits exactly with what the Senator from Connecticut said—to avoid any implication in the body of the amendment that there is an authorization here for the use of force. And the words ''of hostility,'' in the context of that line, might have given an impression contrary to what is now explicit, that ''Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize or otherwise speak to the use of Armed Forces against Iran.''

Again, I thank our friend from Connecticut for these modifications. I support the amendment. In fact, I ask unanimous consent that I be added as a cosponsor to the amendment, and that Senator SALAZAR be added as a cosponsor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEVIN. With that, Mr. President, we wait for the form, and also the unanimous consent request which—

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, maybe we could let Senator SMITH proceed and then——

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, as soon as the modification is in proper form, it is the stated intention of the Senator from Connecticut to send that to the desk. In the meantime, if the Senator from Oregon could be recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, could I just ask, is it the intention of the Senator from Michigan to call for a vote immediately after Senator SMITH's 10 minutes, to alert all Members?

Mr. LEVIN. To alert all Members, I think we will be ready for a vote at 5 minutes to 4 o'clock on the Lieberman amendment.

Should we get the yeas and nays on that amendment now? We have to wait until after it is modified to get the yeas and nays.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I wish to say to the senior Senator from Arizona how much I admire him. In recent days, because of my difference with Senator MCCAIN on the way forward in Iraq, many members of the press, particularly in my home State, have asked me how can I continue to support Senator MCCAIN. I would like to answer that publicly for the Senate RECORD.

I support Senator MCCAIN for more than just the fact that he is a colleague, for more than just the fact that he is a genuine American hero, for more than the fact that he is a man of unbreakable principle. I support him still because he is my friend. When friends have differences, you don't walk away from a friend. I don't. You weather the bumps in the road, and you do what Senator MCCAIN has done with me; and that is to talk civilly and to counsel, and when there is a disagreement, that it is discussed as gentlemen, that it is discussed as friends.

But I come to the floor to speak for the Levin-Reed amendment. I am the original Republican cosponsor of this proposal. I am proud to cosponsor this amendment because it calls for what I have been stating for 7 months. It sets up a timetable to draw down our troops.

The amendment instructs the Secretary of Defense to transition U.S. forces starting approximately 4 months from the enactment of this legislation through the spring of 2008. Further, this amendment explicitly outlines the role of the U.S. military in Iraq as threefold. An appropriate amount of troops will remain to protect our diplomats, our military installations, and infrastructure. We will continue to train, equip, and provide logistical and intelligence support to the Iraqi security forces, sharing intelligence with them. Then, the third and most important point: We will be there to turn over every rock, every crevice, and seek out every al-Qaida killer who wishes to harm Americans.

Al-Qaida is our mortal foe. This is the war on terror, for want of a better term. It is a war from which we cannot retreat.

Over the past 7 months, when I spoke out pleading for a new course in Iraq, there has been a great cacophony of noise about how to go forward. Some of my colleagues have said to just cut off the funding. I have believed that to be dangerous and dishonorable. President Bush has said stay the course, and I find that troubling. What ''stay the course'' means is, we will continue to spend $12 billion a month. We will lose roughly three American soldiers a day. In addition to that, there will be countless wounded and maimed for life, for which I don't have a number.

Underpinning the current course and the argument of many of my colleagues on this side of the aisle is the hope, the predicate, that at the end of the road there will be an Iraqi government that will govern effectively and democratically. I believe President Bush's formulation, that we will stand down when they can stand up, is backwards. I come to that conclusion, based on numerous trips to Iraq, that they will not stand up until we begin standing down.

Like Senator MCCAIN and many of my colleagues, I recently was in Iraq. To be with our troops is to be inspired, to be humbled in their presence because of the remarkable work they are doing and the cause for which they are fighting. As inspiring as that is, it is equally depressing, then, to meet with Iraqi political leaders, democratically elected, whom we think ought to be focused on reconciliation. What I have found is they are focused on revenge. What I have learned firsthand is that Americans have no comprehension of the complexity, the factionalism, and the intensity of hatred that exists in some parts of the Middle East. On top of the factionalism, there are ancient sectarian strifes which produced a low-grade civil war that we cannot win, and

which is not ours to win. It is theirs to win.

As I said 7 months ago, there is no good option for how we come home, but it does seem to me that Senator LEVIN and Senator REED best express my own conclusions. That is why I cosponsored their amendment, and that is to recognize al-Qaida is our mortal foe. We must take them on where we can. But, ultimately, we have to get capable and effective Iraqi political leaders, too, so that they are pressured to do the most basic kinds of governing: establishing an oil revenue-sharing law, debaathification, setting up local elections, allowing the processes of democracy to work, establishing a rule of law that gives people confidence, spending their oil revenue money for the restructuring and rebuilding of their own country. All of the money from the oil we are helping them pump sits in bank accounts, stuck by their Parliament.

My fear is that what our presence and current posture are doing is simply keeping a civil war at a low-grade level. Civil wars end in one of two ways: one side wins and the other loses, or they fight it out until they figure it out. My fear is that we delay the day for them figuring it out with our current posture. I would love to be proven wrong. I pray that President Bush is right. But I believe it is our obligation to have this debate to help change the course and the policy of the U.S. Government and to help change the course and policy of the Iraqi Government. We cannot want democracy more for them than they want it for themselves, and what they seem bent on is an ethnic cleansing of their neighborhoods, a religious division. Ultimately, those are their decisions, not ours. But as long as we say we will take the bullet first, they will let us.

I believe the Levin amendment provides a way forward with a responsible division of labor. Let the Iraqi forces that we have trained and equipped handle their security in Baghdad and in other communities. Let us help them by taking on al-Qaida. The amendment envisions a much smaller American footprint. Our forces are trained and equipped in a way to handle that kind of mission, but as we speak, we are straining our military capacities and our personnel to a breaking point. I don't believe we should just abandon it, irrespective of consequences. That is why I urge my colleagues to look seriously at the Levin amendment, to consider it as the way forward that is both responsible as it relates to the Middle East and effective as it relates to the defense of the American people.

So as a Republican, I am for the Levin amendment. I urge its adoption.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan is recognized.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, let me first thank my good friend from Oregon for his extraordinarily prescient and moving statement. His support of this amendment has been a matter of great importance to the Nation, as well as to him personally and to the troops and their families. I want to personally tell him how moved I am by his words, and I wish everybody in this country could have heard his words. Hopefully, as many as possible will take a moment to read the words of Senator SMITH.

Mr. President, I believe we will be ready to move to a vote very shortly. I think there will be a UC which will set the time for 10 minutes after 4, but we will wait for the staff. Can we announce that it will be 4:10 for the vote? If I could get the attention of the Senator from Arizona, because I am asking for unanimous consent that the vote now be scheduled for 10 minutes after 4.

Mr. MCCAIN. Whatever the Senator says.

Mr. LEVIN. I thank the Senator. Between now and then, the modification will, hopefully, be ready. It is at the desk. Does this require a motion or a unanimous consent or just a request to modify? I think the Senator from Connecticut needs——

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The sponsor has the right to modify the amendment at this time.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent—actually, I don't have to ask unanimous consent; it is automatically modified.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment will be so modified with the changes that are at the desk.

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

At the end of title XV, add the following:

SEC. 1535. REPORT ON SUPPORT FROM IRAN FOR ATTACKS AGAINST COALITION FORCES IN IRAQ.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Since January 19, 1984, the Secretary of State has designated the Islamic Republic of Iran as a ''state sponsor of terrorism,'' one of only five countries in the world at present so designated.

(2) The Department of State, in its most recent ''Country Reports on Terrorism,'' stated that ''Iran remained the most active state sponsor of terrorism'' in 2006.

(3) The most recent Country Reports on Terrorism report further stated, ''Iran continued [in 2006] to play a destabilizing role in Iraq... Iran provided guidance and training to select Iraqi Shia political groups, and weapons and training to Shia militant groups to enable anti-Coalition attacks. Iranian government forces have been responsible for at least some of the increasing lethality of anti-Coalition attacks by providing Shia militants with the capability to build IEDs with explosively formed projectiles similar to those developed by Iran and Lebanese Hezbollah. The Iranian Revolutionary Guard was linked to armor-piercing explosives that resulted in the deaths of Coalition Forces.''

(4) In an interview published on June 7, 2006, Zalmay Khalilzad, then-United States ambassador to Iraq, said of Iranian support for extremist activity in Iraq, ''We can say with certainty that they support groups that are attacking coalition troops. These groups are using the same ammunition to destroy armored vehicles that the Iranians are supplying to Hezbollah in Lebanon. They pay money to Shiite militias and they train some of the groups. We can't say whether Teheran is supporting Al Qaeda, but we do know that Al Qaeda people come here from Pakistan through Iran. And Ansar al Sunna, a partner organization of Zarqawi's network, has a base in northwest Iran.''

(5) On April 26, 2007, General David Petraeus, commander of Multi-National Force-Iraq, said of Iranian support for extremist activity in Iraq, ''The level of financing, the level of training on Iranian soil, the level of equipping some sophisticated technologies . . . even advice in some cases, has been very, very substantial and very harmful.''

(6) On April 26, 2007, General Petraeus also said of Iranian support for extremist activity in Iraq, ''We know that it goes as high as [Brig. Gen. Qassem] Suleimani, who is the head of the Qods Force . . . We believe that he works directly for the supreme leader of the country.''

(7) On May 27, 2007, then-Major General William Caldwell, spokesperson for Multi-National Force-Iraq, said, ''What we do know is that the Iranian intelligence services, the Qods Force, is in fact both training, equipping, and funding Shia extremist groups... both in Iraq and also in Iran.... We have in detention now people that we have captured that, in fact, are Sunni extremist-related that have, in fact, received both some funding and training from the Iranian intelligence services, the Qods Force.''

(8) On February 27, 2007, in testimony before the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate, Lieutenant General Michael Maples, director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, said of Iranian support for extremist activity in Iraq, ''We believe Hezbollah is involved in the training as well.''

(9) On July 2, 2007, Brigadier General Kevin Bergner, spokesperson for Multi-National Force-Iraq, stated, ''The Iranian Qods Force is using Lebanese Hezbollah essentially as a proxy, as a surrogate in Iraq.''

(10) On July 2, 2007, Brigadier General Bergner detailed the capture in southern Iraq by coalition forces of Ali Musa Daqdaq, whom the United States military believes to be a 24-year veteran of Lebanese Hezbollah involved in the training of Iraqi extremists in Iraq and Iran.

(11) The Department of State designates Hezbollah a foreign terrorist organization.

(12) On July 2, 2007, Brigadier General Bergner stated that the Iranian Qods Force operates three camps near Teheran where it trains Iraqi extremists in cooperation with Lebanese Hezbollah, stating, ''The Qods Force, along with Hezbollah instructors, train approximately 20 to 60 Iraqis at a time, sending them back to Iraq organized into these special groups. They are being taught how to use EPFs [explosively formed penetrators], mortars, rockets, as well as intelligence, sniper, and kidnapping operations.''

(13) On July 2, 2007, Brigadier General Bergner stated that Iraqi extremists receive between $750,000 and $3,000,000 every month from Iranian sources.

(14) On July 2, 2007, Brigadier General Bergner stated that ''[o]ur intelligence reveals that senior leadership in Iran is aware of this activity'' and that it would be ''hard to imagine'' that Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of Iran, is unaware of it.

(15) On July 2, 2007, Brigadier General Bergner stated, ''There does not seem to be any follow-through on the commitments that Iran has made to work with Iraq in addressing the destabilizing security issues here in Iraq.''

(16) On February 11, 2007, the United States military held a briefing in Baghdad at which its representatives stated that at least 170 members of the United States Armed Forces have been killed, and at least 620 wounded, by weapons tied to Iran.

(17) On January 20, 2007, a sophisticated attack was launched by insurgents at the Karbala Provincial Joint Coordination Center in Iraq, resulting in the murder of five American soldiers, four of whom were first abducted.

(18) On April 26, 2007, General Petraeus stated that the so-called Qazali network was responsible for the attack on the Karbala Provincial Joint Coordination Center and that ''there's no question that the Qazali network is directly connected to the Iranian Qods force [and has] received money, training, arms, ammunition, and at some points in time even advice and assistance and direction''.

(19) On July 2, 2007, Brigadier General Bergner stated that the United States Armed Forces possesses documentary evidence that the Qods Force had developed detailed information on the United States position at the Karbala Provincial Joint Coordination Center ''regarding our soldiers' activities, shift changes, and defenses, and this information was shared with the attackers''.

(20) On July 2, 2007, Brigadier General Bergner stated of the January 20 Karbala attackers, ''[They] could not have conducted this complex operation without the support and direction of the Qods Force.''

(21) On May 28, 2007, the United States Ambassador to Iraq, Ryan Crocker, met in Baghdad with representatives of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to express U.S. concern about Iranian anti-coalition activity in Iraq;

(22) Section 1213(a) of the FY 2007 John Warner National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 109–364) required that the intelligence community produce an updated National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on Iran.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the murder of members of the United States Armed Forces by a foreign government or its agents is an intolerable and unacceptable act against the United States by the foreign government in question; and

(2) the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran must take immediate action to end any training, arming, equipping, funding, advising, and any other forms of support that it or its agents are providing, and have provided, to Iraqi militias and insurgents, who are contributing to the destabilization of Iraq and are responsible for the murder of members of the United States Armed Forces.

(3) It is imperative for the executive and legislative branches of the federal government to have accurate intelligence on Iran and therefore the intelligence community should produce the NIE on Iran without further delay;

(4) Congress supports U.S. diplomacy with the representatives of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in order to stop any actions by the Iranian government or its agents against U.S. service members in Iraq;

(c) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 60 days thereafter, the Commander, Multi-National Forces Iraq and the United States Ambassador to Iraq in coordination with the Director of National Intelligence shall jointly submit to Congress a report describing and assessing in detail—

(A) any external support or direction provided to anti-coalition forces by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran or its agents;

(B) the strategy and ambitions in Iraq of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran; and

(C) any counter-strategy or efforts by the United States Government to counter the activities of agents of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Iraq.

(2) FORM.—Each report required under paragraph (1) shall be in unclassified form to the extent practical consistent with the need to protect national security, but may contain a classified annex.

(d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize or otherwise speak to the use of Armed Forces against Iran.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I thank my friend from Michigan. I appreciate the fact we will vote in 10 minutes. I think we have an opportunity to do something both very important and together, both of which are important. It is Senators collectively blowing the whistle on the Iranians and telling them we know what they are doing and that we know it is resulting in the death of American soldiers in Iraq, and they better stop it. It is as simple as that. They can read into that whatever else they want. But so far as they may believe in Tehran that they can take advantage of what they view as political differences in the United States or partisan differences, I think this does give us the opportunity, across party lines and every other potential divider, including our position on the war in Iraq, to say: When we have evidence a foreign nation is contributing to the death of American soldiers, we are going to stand together against that.

So I appreciate very much the work we have done. I am honored that Senator MCCAIN is a cosponsor. I am honored again that Senator LEVIN has become a cosponsor. I think we have the opportunity now to do something very united and important.

I thank the Chair, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays are ordered.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, again, I thank my good friend from Connecticut for his cooperation and for his modification of his amendment. I think it now will command and should command the overwhelming vote of the Senate. There is no division when it comes to threats to the troops of the United States. Those troops are threatened in many ways in Iraq, and one of the ways they are threatened is by the activities of Iranians.

We want to make it very clear to the Government of Iran that we speak as one when it comes to protecting those troops from those kinds of threats. I hope that message gets through to the leaders of Iran loudly and clearly as a result of the adoption—or the expected adoption—of the Lieberman amendment.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time until 4:10 today be for debate with respect to the Lieberman amendment No. 2073, as modified, with the time equally divided and controlled between Senator LIEBERMAN and Senator LEVIN or their designees; that no amendments be in order to the Lieberman amendment prior to the vote; and that at 4:10, without further intervening action or debate, the Senate proceed to vote in relation to the Lieberman amendment, as modified.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. MCCASKILL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the previous order, the yeas and nays have been ordered on the Lieberman amendment No. 2073, as modified, and the question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) is necessarily absent.

Mr. LOTT. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 97, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 242 Leg.]

YEAS—97

Akaka	Domenici	McConnell
Alexander	Dorgan	Menendez
Allard	Durbin	Mikulski
Barrasso	Ensign	Murkowski
Baucus	Enzi	Murray
Bayh	Feingold	Nelson (FL)
Bennett	Feinstein	Nelson (NE)
Biden	Graham	Obama
Bingaman	Grassley	Pryor
Bond	Gregg	Reed
Boxer	Hagel	Reid
Brown	Harkin	Roberts
Bunning	Hatch	Rockefeller
Burr	Hutchison	Salazar
Byrd	Inhofe	Sanders
Cantwell	Inouye	Schumer
Cardin	Isakson	Sessions
Carper	Kennedy	Shelby
Casey	Kerry	Smith
Chambliss	Klobuchar	Snowe
Clinton	Kohl	Specter
Coburn	Kyl	Stabenow
Cochran	Landrieu	Stevens
Coleman	Lautenberg	Sununu
Collins	Leahy	Tester
Conrad	Levin	Thune
Corker	Lieberman	Voinovich
Cornyn	Lincoln	Warner
Craig	Lott	Webb
Crapo	Lugar	Whitehouse
DeMint	Martinez	Wyden
Dodd	McCain	
Dole	McCaskill	

NOT VOTING—3

Brownback	Johnson	Vitter

The amendment (No. 2073), as modified, was agreed to.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HAGEL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Nebraska is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 2032

Mr. HAGEL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to call up the Hagel-Levin amendment, No. 2032, on troop deployment length, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nebraska [Mr. HAGEL], for himself and Mr. LEVIN, proposes an amendment numbered 2032.

Mr. HAGEL. I ask unanimous consent the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To limit the length of deployment of members of the Armed Forces for Operation Iraqi Freedom)

At the end of subtitle C of title XVI, add the following:

SEC. 1535. LIMITATION ON LENGTH OF DEPLOYMENTS FOR OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM.

(a) LIMITATION.—Commencing 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the deployment of a unit or individual of the Armed Forces for Operation Iraqi Freedom shall be limited as follows:

(1) In the case of a unit or individual of the Army (including a unit or individual of the Army National Guard or the Army Reserve), the unit or individual may not be deployed, or continued or extended on deployment, for more than 12 consecutive months.

(2) In the case of a unit or individual of the Marine Corps (including a unit or individual of the Marine Corps Reserve), the unit or individual may not be deployed, or continued or extended on deployment, for more than 7 consecutive months.

(b) EXCEPTION.—The limitation in subsection (a) shall not apply to designated key command headquarters personnel or other members of the Armed Forces who are required to maintain continuity of mission and situational awareness between rotating forces.

(c) WAIVER AUTHORITY.—The President may waive the applicability of the limitation in subsection (a) in the event of a requirement for the use of military force in time of national emergency following consultation with the congressional defense committees.

(d) DEPLOYMENT DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''deployment'' has the meaning given that term in subsection 991(b) of title 10, United States Code.

Mr. HAGEL. Madam President, this amendment that Senator LEVIN and I offer this afternoon, joined by my distinguished colleagues, Senators WEBB, SNOWE, and HARRY REID, says the following: A unit of the Army, including the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve, may not be deployed or continued or extended on deployment for more than 12 consecutive months, and a unit of the Marine Corps, including the Marine Corps Reserve, may not be deployed or continued or extended on deployment for more than 7 consecutive months.

We recognize that some flexibility is required, therefore this amendment includes an exemption for forces needed to maintain continuity of mission and situational awareness between rotations.

We all recognize we are in a war, and we understand that extraordinary circumstances will arise which may require an extended deployment. To that end, this amendment also provides the President of the United States with the authority to waive the provision in times of national emergency.

To be clear, this amendment complements but is different from the Webb-Hagel amendment that we voted on this morning which sought to ensure that our troops have a minimum time at home between deployments. The war in Iraq has pushed the U.S. Army to the breaking point. When we deploy our military, we have an obligation to ensure that our troops are rested, ready, prepared, fully trained, and fully equipped. Today's Armed Forces are being deployed repeatedly for increasing periods of time. This is quickly wearing down the troops and their families, impacting the mental and physical health of our troops.

Further, these deployments are affecting the recruiting and retention rates of the military. For example, the Army reached only a little over 80 percent of its recruiting goal for June. This is the second month in a row that the Army has failed to recruit the number of new soldiers needed to fill the ranks. And this is with large cash bonus incentives. Over $1 billion in cash bonus incentives were offered and given last year.

Earlier this year, Secretary of Defense Gates declared the intent of the Department of Defense to deploy soldiers for not more than 12 months, and marines for not more than 7 months at a time. But in April, Secretary Gates announced that all Army units would deploy for 15 months because there were not enough rested forces available for redeployment.

He said:

Without this action, we would have had to deploy 5 Army active duty brigades sooner than the 12-month-at-home goal. I believe it is fair to all soldiers that all share the burden equally.

Let me give an example of an extended, out-of-control deployment that recently hit my home State of Nebraska. Last month, 250 members of the Nebraska Army National Guard from the First Squadron, 167th Cavalry, and First Squadron, 134th Long Range Surveillance Detachment, returned to Nebraska from an 18-month deployment to Iraq. Yes, not 12 months, not 15 months—18 months, 18 months in Iraq, away from their families, their children, and their jobs.

Let me remind you again, this is a National Guard unit. That doesn't even include the 4 months of pre- and postmobilization training stateside.

Yesterday's Miami Herald reported the story of an Army reservist—not a member, again, of the regular Army. This reservist had been ordered to report to Iraq for his fifth deployment since we had been there.

During a House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing on June 27, retired GEN John Batiste, who commanded the Army's 1st Infantry Division in Iraq, testified that, in his words:

Active-duty companies preparing for deployment to Iraq within the next 6 months at less than 50 percent strength, are commanded by young, inexperienced lieutenants [—young NCOs—] and these units are lacking the equipment they need for training.

General Batiste's testimony before the House 2 weeks ago is not the first testimony to direct our attention to this reality, this fact. A June 24 article in the New York Times cited the concern of anonymous administration officials, Bush administration officials, who were quoted. ''The reality, the [Bush administration] officials said, ''is that starting around April [of next year] the military will simply run out of troops to maintain the current effort.''

The Bush administration officials continue in this New York Times story by saying, ''By then,'' April of next year, the President ''would either have to withdraw roughly one brigade a month or extend the tours of troops now in Iraq and shorten their time back home before redeployment.''

This is on top of the already established policy of 15 months for the Army, in some cases, as we know from my example of the Nebraska National Guard unit, 18 months.

On June 23, the Washington Post quoted former Army Chief of Staff General Gordon Sullivan when he said:

There isn't much more land power available for use in Iraq or Afghanistan. We are now ''all in.''

Another U.S. military strategist was quoted in the same article as saying:

I do not believe we've ever had enough troops to do all the tasks we should be doing in Iraq.

In February, General Peter Pace, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, reported to Congress that there is now, in his words—this is a quote—''significant risk that our military will not be able to respond to an emerging crisis in another part of the world.''

The Army continues to increase its reliance on men and women from the Navy and Air Force to fill Army vacancies in theater because we do not have enough soldiers. In April, at a hearing, the Department of Defense Task Force on Mental Health found that the military is putting already strained troops at greater risk of mental health problems because of repeated deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Mental Health Advisory Team-IV assessment replaced in May found that soldiers who deployed longer than 6 months or had deployed multiple times were far more likely to screen positive for mental health issues and that deployment length was directly linked to morale problems in the Army.

I wish to also note two other recent statements about what is going on

within our force structure. This comes from an April edition of the Army Times.

The military is so short of equipment that it will take years after the war in Iraq ends to bring it up to authorized levels.

That was what the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Peter Pace, told a House subcommittee.

Of course, I think if we review the front page of most newspapers in America this morning, we are once again reminded what is going on in Iraq. I have heard in some of the debate on this issue the arguments against these amendments, the amendment that Senator WEBB and I and others offered this morning, as a number of my colleagues are offering this afternoon that shows this is unconscionable, that somehow we have never done this before.

Well, I think we have laid to rest, or I hope we have, the issue of the constitutionality of the Congress of the United States being part of setting war policy. I would remind those who have some confliction about this or misunderstanding, that they read article I of the Constitution. It is rather clear what the constitutional powers of the Congress of the United States are.

If it is not our responsibility to deal with these great issues of our time—and I might remind all of us once again it is the Congress of the United States the Founders of this Nation entrusted with the sacred responsibility of declaring war. The administration or a President does not have that constitutional authority. It goes beyond that.

But I would also say we have never had a war fought in this country by American troops that has been an all-volunteer Army, an all-volunteer Army and force structure. So in Vietnam, where some of us served, we did not have a manpower problem. We did not have a manpower problem because we had a draft.

Now, we can go back to a draft. But we have to face the reality of what we are doing to the finest military the world has ever known—the best led, best educated, best equipped, most disciplined, and most focused, most selfless force structure the world has ever known—professional.

So when I hear: Well, we have never done this before, obviously Congress did get involved in Korea and all wars. But we have never fought two wars with an all-voluntary Army. So obviously we have limitations on force structure.

The answer is not to continue to push and force the force structure to the breaking point—which we are doing now. And every general will tell you the same thing and every senior NCO will tell you the same thing, that is what we are doing. We are destroying the finest force structure the world has ever known, which took us, incidentally, 30 years to build because of what we did to it after Vietnam.

In addition to that, we have been asking a very few individuals to bear all the burden and make all the sacrifices to sustain a war in Iraq that is now in its fifth year, longer than the entire duration of World War II. We have a mismatch with capability and manpower and mission. We have forces in 140 nations all over the world, but yet we have the smallest standing force since World War II.

Something is wrong here. What do we do? Well, we keep going back to the soldiers and the marines: Well, you can do another 3 months, can't you, or 4 months or 5 months? You can do two or three deployments, can't you? You are a volunteer. You are a professional.

It will not work. I think we are seeing very clear evidence of that.

Who does look out for the rifleman? Who cares about the man and the woman at the bottom who are always the ones who have to do the fighting and dying? This is not an abstraction. This not an abstraction to them. We need to address this. We need to address it clearly.

Well, for these reasons and others, I am hopeful that our colleagues will take a serious look at this serious amendment because I think it does address some of our issues, not all of our issues. It is not intended to address all of our issues.

But we are in a situation where things are not getting better, things are getting worse. If we expect these men and women whom we ask to make all the sacrifices for all of us, then we owe them at least some responsible policy, policy worthy of them and policy worthy of their sacrifice. That is what this amendment addresses.

I am grateful for my distinguished colleague and the dear friend, old friend, the junior Senator from Virginia's leadership; certainly the chairman of the Armed Services Committee and others who are cosponsors. I might note this is a bipartisan amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WEBB. Madam President, I would like to add my support to the Senator's amendment. I would state again my appreciation for his service to our country and for all the tough stands he has been willing to take here over the past few years on these vital issues.

Before I speak on this amendment, I would like to state briefly it is my understanding that in a press conference after the vote of this morning, when my earlier amendment failed to receive 60 votes, received 56 votes, there were some comments made by Members of the other party about my mentioning that in my amendment all of the ground combat veterans in the Senate were cosponsors of my amendment.

In the emotion of the time, apparently it was turned around into an assertion that I was trying to make a distinction about quality of service, or that people of one type of military background were being pitted against another. I say I regret anyone would think that speaking affirmatively about service, about service of individuals, was somehow speaking negatively about the service of anyone else or about people who have not served. I think that it is interesting to point out that in the amendment I offered, every ground combat veteran who is in the Senate cosponsored it. I am grateful for that. I think that does say something about the experiences that people have had in that environment, nothing more, nothing less.

With respect to the amendment from the Senator from Nebraska, this again is an issue that goes directly to the quality of the environment in which people who have stepped forward and served are being offered in the U.S. military today. People who step forward to serve do so because they love their country. They do so because they have family traditions. They do so in many cases because they like to soldier. But they do so looking to us, the national leadership, to place their service in this right context and to address that service with a period of stewardship.

I was stunned earlier this year when the policy was announced that those in the Army were going to go to 15-month deployments with only a 12-month dwell time back here after these deployments. This is the Active-Duty people. The normal rotation is 2 for 1 historically. If you are gone for a year, you are supposed to have 2 years back. Now we are down to less than 1 to 1.

I called the Chief of the Staff of the Army. I asked him about it. I said: How do you do this? He just came back from Iraq. How do you do this to your own people?

His comment to me: We have to feed the strategy. We don't articulate the strategy.

I had to empathize with the situation he was in. That is one of the reasons I developed the motivation to try and help the situation by addressing it in the Congress. Senator HAGEL has very clearly laid out the facts, the situation we face; that our troops, in many ways, have reached the tipping point, and the final tipping point came when we went below this 1-to-1 ratio, which is an absolute minimal floor.

The optimal ratio, as I said on the active side, is 2 to 1. We have a failed manpower policy which has placed the well-being and the availability of our troops in jeopardy. It is time for us to get to the place, after 4 years as an occupying force in Iraq, where the condition and the availability of our troops should drive our operational policies and not the other way around.

We are seeing the canary in the coal mine with respect to our military people. They have been giving more and more as these policies, those experimental policies, have gone forward. We are seeing a failing retention of experienced middle-grade officers and noncommissioned officers. We are seeing an increasing attrition rate against Army company-grade officers, the most

graphic example of that being the West Point classes of 2000 and 2001. These are the two most recent classes that have finished their 5-year obligation.

As of the end of last year, 54 percent of the class of 2000 had left the Army. As of the end of last year, 46 percent of the class of 2001 had already left the Army. This is well above, well above by multiples, attrition rates in the previous Iraq environment. The Marines have also seen an upward trend from the loss of critical midgrade noncommissioned officers.

As Senator HAGEL pointed out, we are seeing difficulties in recruitment. With respect to the National Guard in Virginia, we have seen, since 2001, nearly 6,000 soldiers of the Virginia National Guard, and more than 2,000 members of the Air Guard, entering Federal service in support of these different operations.

We can be justly proud that all of these people have stepped forward to serve. At the same time we need to put a balance into how they are being used. As I mentioned a minute ago, that balance will be found in shaping our operational policies toward the availability of our troops. There is no strategy that should be driving the use of our troops in the way they are being used. For that reason, I support the amendment and urge my colleagues to do so.

I yield the floor.

Mr. SALAZAR. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OBAMA). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCAIN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCAIN. It is my understanding that time is being equally taken from both sides during the quorum call; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are not under controlled time at the moment.

Mr. MCCAIN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate considers the Hagel amendment No. 2032 and the Graham sense-of-the-Congress amendment relating to readiness during today's session, that there be a total of 90 minutes, equally divided, between Senators HAGEL and GRAHAM or their designees, with the amendments being debated concurrently; that no amendments be in order to either amendment prior to the vote; that each amendment must receive 60 affirmative votes in order for the amendment to be agreed to; that if either or both of the amendments receive 60 affirmative votes, then the motion to reconsider be considered made and tabled; that if neither amendment receives 60 affirmative votes, then the amendment be withdrawn; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote in relation to the Hagel amendment; that upon disposition of the Hagel amendment, the Senate proceed to vote in relation to the Graham amendment; that there be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote in relation to the Graham amendment; following disposition of the Graham amendment, Senator MCCAIN or his designee be recognized to offer the next first-degree relevant amendment, to be followed by Senator LEVIN offering a relevant second-degree amendment; further, that the time for debating the Hagel and Graham amendments be considered to have begun at 4:50 p.m. and charged according to usage to this point.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. So the two votes would occur, I ask the chair, at what time?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. At 6:20.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I did not hear the Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I was just inquiring when we expect the two votes, and the chair said 6:20.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. At 6:20.

Mr. LEVIN. I thank the leader.

Senator MCCAIN and I have had discussions on this, that it was our hope we could have majority votes on these matters, but there would have been objection to that.

Is that a fair statement?

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, that is correct.

Reserving the right to object, did the distinguished chairman mean to also announce that we intend to bring up the wounded warriors amendment tomorrow?

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I thank my friend from Arizona. It is my intention that I bring up the wounded warriors amendment tomorrow as the amendment referred to here. It is a Levin-McCain et al. amendment. It is a bipartisan amendment. But it is the amendment that I intend, as of this moment, to bring up as the amendment referred to in this UC.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the unanimous consent request?

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, just reserving the right to object to clarify one more time, we intend to debate and vote on Graham and Hagel side by side. Then I would offer an amendment that would be considered. Following that, I think, is when the Senator from Michigan, along with I think 99 others, would be offering the wounded warriors amendment on behalf of our veterans.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I thank my friend for that clarification.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I would like a clarification. Does this mean every amendment now to the Defense authorization bill will require 60 votes?

Mr. MCCAIN. That is my understanding.

Mr. LEVIN. I would hope that would not be the case and that be decided on a case-by-case basis.

Mr. MCCAIN. Yes. I think it would be decided case by case and probably not by me.

Mr. LEVIN. I hope that will not be the case.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection to the unanimous consent request?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, let me clarify something I said. Senator MCCAIN is correct, and I misspoke. The reference to my bringing up the wounded warriors legislation is not governed by this UC. It is my intention. After the matters that are governed by this UC, that is what I would do. I can be recognized by the Chair under the rights of recognition in this body, and that is my intention.

I thank my friend from Arizona for that clarification.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

If no one yields time, time will be charged equally to both sides.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum and ask unanimous consent that the time be charged equally to both sides.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I just want to make a couple comments about the pending amendment and the amendment Senator GRAHAM and I have filed in response to it.

Our amendment makes clear that the goal of our Armed Forces is to have the kind of time in theater and dwell times that our military has sought to achieve and that are sought to be achieved by the amendment but that it is a goal rather than an absolute fixed requirement that becomes the policy of the U.S. military determined by congressional action.

The reason for that is twofold. By mandating a certain policy for deployment time or dwell time, the Congress is engaged in the most explicit micromanaging of what is obviously a function for the Commander in Chief and military commanders to perform. The

deployments of troops are clearly Commander in Chief obligations and responsibilities. This is not something Members of Congress are knowledgeable about or would have the ability to dictate in any responsible fashion. As a result, for us to adopt a mandatory policy here would be the height of micromanagement.

It also, of course, would be unconstitutional. We do have some obligation in this body to recognize that there is a difference between our legislative responsibilities and the executive responsibilities of the President, which include his responsibilities as Commander in Chief. Clearly, the dwell times of troops or units or the amount of time in theater for a unit is clearly an obligation of the Commander in Chief, not something for the Congress to determine. Therefore, secondly, this would represent an unconstitutional action by the U.S. Congress.

Why would there be a need for us to take that kind of step, literally throwing the gauntlet down in front of the President, when we could, instead, adopt an amendment such as Senator GRAHAM and I have filed, which recognizes the validity of the goal of the Senator from Nebraska; that is, to have this kind of general dwell time versus Active-Duty time—but does not purport to act, by Congress, in a way that is antithetical to the President's responsibilities as Commander in Chief. There is no reason for us to adopt as a Senate policy something which the military already has as its own goal and which the Congress can express is also, therefore, a goal of the U.S. Congress.

This certainly helps to give guidance to the President as Commander in Chief. It expresses our views as to what we deem to be desirable, but it does not hamper the President's operation of the war or infringe on his constitutional authority.

So I urge my colleagues to simply reflect for just a moment on the two reasons why I do not believe adopting the Hagel amendment is a wise idea and why we can achieve just as much by adopting the side-by-side amendment Senator GRAHAM and I have filed, which states this policy as a goal, as indeed it is, and it is perfectly appropriate as a goal but does not seek to intrude on the Commander in Chief's authority in this regard.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, if the Senator from Arizona will yield, I see that Senator SALAZAR is on the floor of the Senate as well. It is our intention—Senator MCCAIN and I have spoken—that after these two votes, we then go into morning business. It is our understanding that Senator SALAZAR, Senator ALEXANDER, and a number of other Senators during that period are going to want to speak relevant to the amendment which they have filed. The amendment will not be before us. It will just be that they will be talking about their amendment.

We tried to find a place for that to happen earlier today. It didn't happen. The time that it can happen very readily would be during that period of morning business that would come after the two votes which are presently scheduled. So I just want to put the Senate and, more importantly, Senators SALAZAR, ALEXANDER, and others on notice about that possibility. For those who also want to comment on that amendment perhaps from a different direction, a different degree, opposition, or whatever, they obviously would be free to do so at that time, or at any other time, because this is not the time when that amendment is going to be offered.

Senator MCCAIN is back on the Senate floor. I indicated, I would say to the Senator, that during the period of morning business, that group of Senators and any other Senator who wants to comment on that amendment would be more than free to do so. It would not be pending before the Senate. It would be just for their discussion. But I wanted to put them on notice because they tried earlier in the day to have that opportunity.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, if I could just add to that, the Senator from Virginia, Mr. WARNER, was particularly interested in engaging in that discussion.

Mr. LEVIN. He was, indeed, and there are others, I know.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, if there is no one else to speak to the amendments that are pending, let me just read one other thing that is relevant to these amendments.

We had before us earlier an amendment by the junior Senator from Virginia that, in effect, is the flip side of the amendment of the Senator from Nebraska. The first amendment dealt with the dwell time which necessarily had an effect on deployment time. The Senator from Nebraska focuses on deployment time, which of course would also have an effect on so-called dwell time. So they both generally deal with the same subject but go at it from a different perspective.

With regard to the first amendment, and this would also be relevant to the pending amendment, I wanted to quote three things from the Statement of Administration Policy concerning that language. First of all, the Statement of Administration Policy on March 19 reads as follows:

> It is unwise to codify in law specific deployment and dwell times since this would artificially limit the flexibility of our commanders to conduct operations in the field and infringe on the President's constitutional authority as Commander in Chief to manage the readiness and availability of the Armed Forces.

Mr. President, on May 10, the Statement of Administration Policy read as follows:

> These provisions could unreasonably burden the President's exercise of his constitutional authorities, including his authority as Commander in Chief and his ability to conduct diplomatic, military, and intelligence activities or supervise the executive branch.

Then, just by way of example, the Department states that it has managed deployments by using the dwell ratio of individuals as the criteria for deployment.

> The Department routinely deploys units at less than a 1:1 deployment to dwell ratio if the individuals within a unit meet minimum dwell requirements. The proposed language stipulates minimum periods between deployments for both units and individuals. The requirement to meet both criteria for unit and individuals before deployment could severely limit the options for sourcing rotations.

Mr. President, this is another way of saying what I said before, which is that there are reasons at any given time the Commander in Chief, acting through his military commanders, might deploy a certain unit for a certain purpose, and the individuals within that unit may or may not meet the optimal goals. Nevertheless, it is the goal of the military and therefore the Commander in Chief to try to meet these goals as much as possible.

What we are saying in the Graham-Kyl amendment is that these should remain the goals of the Commander in Chief and the military, and the Congress is specifically expressing our support for these goals. But for us to actually legislate a specific requirement would not only tie the President's hands and severely restrict his options as this statement verifies, but would also impermissibly intrude on his constitutional authorities.

So it is another way of saying what I said before, which is that it is a mistake to adopt the amendment as drafted, but we can achieve the same purpose in expressing our intent by the adoption of the Graham-Kyl amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina is recognized.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, has amendment No. 2078 been called up, as modified?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It has not.

AMENDMENT NO. 2078, AS MODIFIED, TO AMENDMENT NO. 2011

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I would like to call up amendment No. 2078, as modified.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

> The Senator from South Carolina [Mr. GRAHAM], for himself, Mr. KYL and Mr. MCCAIN, proposes an amendment numbered 2078.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To express the sense of Congress on length of time between deployments for members of the Armed Forces)

At the end of subtitle C of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1031. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON DWELL TIME BETWEEN DEPLOYMENTS FOR MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the wartime demands placed on the men and women of the Armed Forces, both in the

regular and reserve components, and upon their families and loved ones, since the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, have required the utmost in honor, courage, commitment, and dedication to duty, and the sacrifices they have made and continue to make in the defense of our nation will forever be remembered and revered;

(2) members of the Armed Forces who have completed combat deployments require as much certainty as possible about the amount of time they will be at their home stations before commencing a subsequent extended operational deployment; and

(3) the goal, consistent with wartime requirements, for dwell time between extended operational deployments of members of the Armed Forces should be—

(A) for members of the regular components of the Armed Forces, no less 12 months between deployments; and

(B) for members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces, no less than 5 years between deployments.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, consistent with the unanimous consent agreement, I will take some time to talk about the Graham-Kyl alternative to Senators HAGEL and WEBB: No. 1, an observation about this whole debate based on what we did this morning. The author of this amendment, Senator HAGEL, has my deepest respect and admiration. He is a friend, and I hope he continues in public service for a very long time because he brings a lot of knowledge and wisdom to this body. Senator HAGEL and Senator WEBB have served in uniform. They have served in combat. They have my utmost respect. We just disagree. Quite frankly, you could bring Audie Murphy back from the dead, and he couldn't convince me this is a good idea.

I am a military lawyer. The only people who ever wanted to do harm to me were my own clients. But I have enjoyed being in the military. I have had occasion to serve as a military lawyer for quite a while now.

To those in the body, you have gotten here the same way as the rest of us. You convinced the citizens of your State that you had good judgment and were qualified for the job. I respect everybody in this body, including those who have served in the military in different capacities. But this is really—to be honest, every Senator's judgment is just as good as the next when it comes to things like this. I firmly believe we are making a mistake to try to get the Congress involved in dwell time or time on the ground in the way that is being proposed.

Do we all find it uncomfortable and disheartening that the Guard and Reserve and Active-Duty Forces have been stressed? Yes. That is why we are trying to increase the military, the Army and the Marine Corps, by 90,000. We have paid a heavy price for the mistakes of the past—not having enough people in Iraq, putting too much stress on our military—and we are beginning to correct that problem. We have a surge going on that is music to my ears in terms of changing the battle space.

What we have done in the past has not worked. The reason it failed in the past is we didn't have enough troops to secure the country, and we finally have gotten around to doing something different. The ''something different'' has increased combat capability twofold. For every combat soldier we had in Iraq before the surge, we have an additional soldier or marine and combat support person, which has made a dramatic difference.

The idea for Congress to step in at this point in time and say that soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, members of the military—that by congressional mandate they are going to be locked into X amount of time in theater, is not only an unwise use of the moment, it is a constitutional problem for the ages.

The problem of this war is it is unpopular. I understand. No war is popular. I wish mankind could get away from trying to kill each other, but we haven't quite gotten there yet.

One thing you can say about this Congress—I think the last couple of Congresses I have been involved in—is you can accuse us of a lot, but you can't accuse us of being visionary. I don't think there is much visionary politics going on in the Congress. One of the things I would like to get the body to focus on is what would this amendment mean in terms of a constitutional restructuring? If this actually became law, what would be the effect on military commanders and the ability of those commanders to deploy troops based on military necessity? What would be the change in relationship between the Congress and the executive branch? It would be fundamental. The last thing we need in any war is to have the ability of 535 people who are worried about the next election to be able to micromanage how you fight the war. This is not only micromanagement, this is a constitutional shift of power. This is a degrading of military flexibility in a way that will haunt this country.

Now, this will not be the last war. The only thing I can tell you is there will be other wars, and that is sad to say, but it is true. Let's not turn the Constitution upside down and play a role that will impede the ability to win this war and the next war because we are upset with President Bush or because we made mistakes. The Congress has never done this before.

The reason the Congress has never done this before is because it would be a horribly bad idea. When you are at war, the last thing you want to interject in troop movements, how long they stay and where they go, is the political polling of the moment. The effect of this amendment is not only would it change a constitutional balance that has served us well over time, in regard to the surge it would disrupt rotation schedules that have been set.

My amendment, along with Senator KYL, expresses a goal that has been expressed by Secretary Gates. We are trying to make sure that Active-Duty Forces are not overutilized, and that their stays in theater are no longer than 15 months. We are trying to make sure that our Reserve Forces are not deployed in theater and activated for more than 1 year out of 6. These are goals that will make our military stronger. But we find ourselves at a time when we are adjusting strategy, and the strategy we are moving to is more labor intensive. It would be a mistake to use the idea of helping the troops as the reason to change the constitutional balance that will make every other war difficult to prosecute.

After having been to Iraq numerous times, what most troops want is for us to win. I spent the Fourth of July in Baghdad with Senator MCCAIN. I have had a lot of wonderful experiences as a Member of Congress, but I would have to put this up at the top in many ways.

Here is the setting: It is the Fourth of July, our Independence Day. We are in Baghdad. General Petraeus is having a ceremony for people who decided to reenlist in theater. It is at a Saddam Hussein palace. It is no longer used by Saddam Hussein; it is being used by coalition forces to help free the Iraqi people from their brutal oppression. We had over 600 American military members reenlisting, to do it yet again in Baghdad in the middle of a war. It was the largest reenlistment, they tell me, in the history of the country in a war zone.

Right after that ceremony, there were about 130 green card holders—noncitizens who are members of the military—who became naturalized citizens on that day. To be in their company, to just be around them buoyed my morale. It made be very proud of our military, and it humbled me.

To my colleagues here, I don't question your motives. We all understand the stress on the military, and we should support these goals. But we should not at this crucial time in this war make a decision that will fundamentally change the constitutional balance that has kept us free and make a decision that will allow politicians to take away from commanders the ability to deploy troops. The last thing we need is deployment and tour length based on polling. That is exactly what you would get.

Now, in terms of the waiver, I understand you can say: Well, wait a minute. The President can waive it. No President would ever accept this. There are people running for President in this body, and I would ask them: If you were Commander in Chief, would you sit on the sidelines and let the Congress take this authority away from you and your military commanders? Would Ronald Reagan? Would any President—you fill in the name—sit on the sidelines in any other war and let the Congress do what we are about to do? The answer would be no. They wouldn't look at the waiver as being a way for them to manage. What they would do is they would say: Wait a minute. I will have to veto this because this is an unconstitutional incursion

upon my authority as Commander in Chief.

I am going to yield and let Senator INHOFE speak, but I would mention one thing about the troops. We are meeting our recruiting and retention goals. Three of the four services met or exceeded their goals. People who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan are reenlisting at the highest rates of anybody in the military. From the troops' perspective, I wish for one moment we could see the need to win this war in Congress as much as they see the need to win it in theater.

With that, if I am controlling the time, I yield to my good friend from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I thank the Senator for yielding. It is my understanding—although I came down here thinking I had a little more time—that we are down to 2½ minutes or something.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I thought we had 40 minutes. What time is left?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Two minutes remain for the Senator from South Carolina. Some of the time was allocated previously.

Mr. GRAHAM. To continue to use our time, I yield what time is left to Senator INHOFE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma is recognized.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, let me, since we don't have the time I thought, explain why this is unique. We already voted on the Webb amendment. I don't see that there is any difference here. There is something that hasn't been talked about since I mentioned this last Monday and that is that this President inherited a situation that was a personnel crisis. We are dealing with that now—a personnel crisis. I remember back during the 1990s, we were cutting down—I am not criticizing anybody, but we had this euphoric attitude that the Cold War was over, and we didn't need a military anymore. They cut back our modernization program and our personnel and defense spending.

Let's look at this chart. If you look at this and put it into perspective as to why we should not try to micromanage this thing and let the military do it, this is where we were. During the early 1990s—the Clinton administration—this black line represents the baseline from 1993 and where we would be in 2001, or at the end of that 8-year period, had we spent the amount of money we were spending from the baseline that was established in fiscal year 1993. If you take that and take what the President requested—the red line down here—fortunately, we were able to get some above that, but it still meant we were $313 billion less than we should have been.

That is what put us into the position we are in today. It was a personnel crisis. So now we are going to have to get the maximum use. We are not going to be able to have mandated deployments and returns and be able to prosecute this or any other war. If we were not in this position, I would still oppose the idea of Congress micromanaging a war. That is what the military chiefs in the field are supposed to do and what they are trained to do.

This shows you why we have the crisis today, and we are trying at the same time to rebuild a military that was torn down during the 1990s, and we should not have found ourselves in this position.

This President has done a lot. We increased the number of Active Duty in the Army and Marine Corps, reducing the stress on the deployable Active-Duty personnel. Help is on the way. The increase would shorten deployment length and give soldiers and marines more dwell time at home, but it is not mandated from us. It is going to come from the resources we are expecting and anticipating we will have.

While many units are close to a 1-to-1 deployment dwell-time schedule, certain units have been extended to 15-month tours. Look, all of us have Reserve units at home and Guard units, and we have our regular services going. We know the deployments are strained. This is why they are strained. We are trying to make up for the losses we sustained back during the 1990s. If we continue to do what we are doing now, the move we are making will allow the Army to ensure that Active-Duty units have at least 12 months at home. We are prepared to do that now. All of the services are rebalancing force structure and cross components to ensure they have the right types of units with the right skills in the greatest demand.

These are some of the actions that have been taken now. If we leave this alone and in the hands of the chiefs, we have right now the great General Petraeus in a position where he is trying to get this thing done. I have to tell you that my 14th trip to the AOR showed me that things are working very well. If you remember what the President said back on January 10, he said we are going to have to win this war from the bottom up, not from the top down. That is what is happening now. These efforts have gotten the clerics in Iraq into a position where they are no longer having anti-American messages, and we are winning this thing from the bottom up. It is brand new.

In all my trips there, I have never seen such a dramatic change as I did prior to this last trip. We actually have people going out now and doing what we do in neighborhood watch programs throughout America. We are now getting the Iraqis to do this. We have Iraqi civilians with spray paint cans painting circles around the undetonated IEDs. We have them doing these things. We have our troops going out, and instead of going back to the green zone, they are living with the Iraqi security forces in their homes. This is what we call the bottom up. It is working. We have monitored the clerics and what they were doing in their mosques in their weekly presentations. Prior to January, 85 percent of the presentations were anti-American. Since April, we have not had anti-American presentations. What is happening right now is the clerics realize we could cut and run on them and then the terrorists could come back in and they will be in control. They don't want that. This is a bottom-up type of support that we have at the present time.

We have to continue this. The President said back on January 10 that we had to do this from the bottom up. That is what we intend to do. How much more time do I have?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Thirty seconds.

Mr. INHOFE. I wish we were not in the position we are in. I can remember coming down here, I bet, every other week during the 1990s and talking about what was happening to the military, saying we cannot make these cuts. There it is on the chart, $313 billion below the baseline, just holding what we had together at that time. So now we are paying the price for it. Now we have to get the very most out of the personnel we have. We do have plans to expand that to 92,000 in the next 5 years. We know we are going to do that. Help is on the way.

We cannot all of a sudden pull the rug out from under our troops, which is what we would do now in starting to micromanage this war from the Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CANTWELL). The Senator's time has expired.

The Senator from Virginia is recognized.

Mr. WEBB. Madam President, I wish to take 5 minutes and address some of the issues raised on the other side and speak briefly about the Graham setaside.

First, Senator KYL from Arizona read a communication from the administration expressing its disagreement with the approach Senator HAGEL's amendment is taking. I would like to say, quite obviously, that one would expect the administration to object to rational acts that might be placing restraints—even proper restraints—on Executive authority.

A number of constitutional issues have been raised. There are no constitutional issues in this amendment—any more than they were in the amendment I offered earlier. This is a proper exercise of authority under article I, section 8 of the Constitution. In fact, to respond to what Senator GRAHAM said, there have been Presidents who have allowed this congressional authority to take place. The most graphic example was President Truman during the Korean war, when American troops were being sent overseas without proper training, and the Congress passed a requirement that no troops could be sent overseas unless they had been trained for 120 days. That was the Congress taking measures to protect the well-being of troops being sent into

harm's way. We are doing essentially the same thing.

There was a comment about the difficulty that might be had in the military with respect to individual troop rotations versus unit-group rotations. This is simply not an issue. It has never been an issue. Every troop returning from a combat zone or in the military has in their record book the date they came back. There are a lot of individuals who have returned from deployments overseas who were being put in the units that were getting ready to deploy. That concept is called backfill. So you can have an individual who has only been back for a few months being put into a unit that arguably has been back for a year. That is not taking care of the individual.

There was a comment by Senator GRAHAM about the Hagel amendment creating down-range constitutional issues—issues that might affect us in other wars. This is simply not true. If you read the amendment, it is limited to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Finally, there have been comments about the attitude of the U.S. military. I think that poll after poll demonstrates that the attitudes of our people in military uniform are very directly a mirror of the attitudes of the people in the country at large. There is not that much of a distinction at all.

With respect to this amendment that has been offered, this side by side, clearly, it is being offered as cover for people who are going to vote against the Hagel amendment and who voted against the amendment I proposed. I urge my colleagues not to vote for it.

First of all, it is a sense of the Senate. It has no legal authority whatsoever. Second, the goals that are in this amendment are no different than current policy. So there is no sense in anyone who wants to attempt to help the people who are being sent into harm's way again and again with some reasonable timelines to vote for this. It is simply a statement of existing policy. If you agree with existing policy and you want to vote for a sense of the Senate, you may want to vote for this. I urge my colleagues not to.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska is recognized.

Mr. HAGEL. How much time do we have?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 8 minutes 15 seconds.

Mr. HAGEL. And the other side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. No time remains.

Mr. HAGEL. Madam President, I wish to follow along with what my distinguished colleague from Virginia was addressing and that is the difference between the two amendments that are before the Senate. I will address the Graham resolution first. I think therein lies the most significant difference between the Graham amendment and the Hagel amendment.

The Graham amendment is a sense-of-the-Senate resolution. The Hagel amendment is a piece of legislation that, if enacted, would have the force of law.

I wish to also address an issue that has developed some credibility in this debate in the last 2 days and that is that Congress has no role in this. I have heard some of my colleagues talk about micromanaging the war and micromanaging the Defense Department. We do have a Constitution. If you look at article I of the Constitution, section 8, I will read a sentence or two from that regarding the issue of what the role of the Congress is. Certainly, I think most everybody knows that only the Congress can declare war and raise money for our Armed Forces.

More to the point, it says Congress has the responsibility ''to make Rules for the Government and Regulations of the land and naval Forces.'' That would certainly include the Army and Marines. ''To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union . . . ; to provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the Militia. . . .'' And it goes on.

I hope we can lay to rest this issue of somehow the Congress is mucking around in someone else's business. I don't believe so. I suppose we could dispense with congressional action and abolish the Congress, and some people would find that more effective and efficient. Until we change the Constitution, I doubt that is going to happen.

We do have a responsibility for our Armed Forces. As I said earlier, who does look out for the rifleman, for the men and women whom we ask to bear all the burden, make all the sacrifices, do the fighting, and do the dying? They tell me this is an abstraction, that we don't have any role here. Come on. A colleague said recently in this debate that the war is unpopular. Of course, it is. Why is it unpopular? Because Congress is mucking around in this? No, I think just the opposite. The war is unpopular because our policy is not working in Iraq. We are ruining our military over Iraq. Just as General Petraeus has said before our committee, there will be no military solution in Iraq.

I think most of us understand that only a political accommodation, only a political reconciliation is going to work Iraq toward some sense of stability, some sense of security. But yet we keep pushing the military out there, pushing the military out there, let them do it, let them do it, as we ruin our military.

Of course, the Congress has a very important and significant responsibility and role in this debate. I remind everyone what has happened to our military because of what we are doing.

One other point. What is more important in a free society? Is an abstract policy more important than our people, more important than our marines and our soldiers? They are our most precious and important resource.

Our amendment, this bipartisan amendment, gives the President waiver authority if the President believes it is in the national interest, it is a national emergency to change this policy. He has that authority. We don't micromanage. We don't tie his hands. If we listen to some of this debate, a 12-month deployment in Iraq is outrageously simple and easy and that somehow we are incurring on the President's power and the power of the Secretary of Defense to do that. That actually used to be the policy. I know it is outrageous to ask these people to only spend 12 months, that 15 months, 18 months is better, plus two, three, four tours is good. Yes, Congress has a role in this effort and this is what our amendment does. We include the Army National Guard. We include the Army Reserve. We include the Marines.

In the end, as we look at the full and complete dynamic picture of Iraq and what we are asking out of these men and women in uniform, then some semblance of common sense, some semblance of decency in how we treat our people is required.

Today our force capability does not match our mission. We are destroying our military. We are overburdening our military. We are burning out the circuits of our military, not because they are not good and professional and doing everything we tell them and ask of them. Of course, they are. But they can't do this alone. As General Petraeus has said, there will be no military solution to Iraq. Of course.

We need a policy worthy of these men and women whom we ask to fight and die for this country. Today this policy is not there. This is beginning to change that policy. I hope our colleagues will look seriously at this amendment and understand the very significant differences between the Hagel-Levin amendment versus the Graham-Kyl amendment. There are differences.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, is there any time remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 1 minute 20 seconds remaining.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, I wish to ask the sponsor of this amendment, my recollection is that when the 12-month deployment was extended by 3 months, the Secretary of Defense announced it was his goal to bring it back to 12 months; is that correct?

Mr. HAGEL. Madam President, the distinguished chairman is correct. He said that in open hearings before the Congress—I believe, in fact, before the Senator's committee.

Mr. LEVIN. I believe he said it somewhere publicly; I can't remember. One of the reasons to oppose the Graham amendment, it seems to me, is stated here: that the goal should be 15 months, which is worse than the current goal. The current deployment fact is 15 months, but the goal is to bring it back to 12 months. We want to do more than state a goal, we want to put this in law that it is a goal with a waiver.

What intrigues me about the Graham amendment is it is worse than the current goal. The goal is to bring that back to 12 months, and the Graham amendment is listed as being 15 months as the goal. I think it ought to be opposed on a number of reasons, reasons that have been stated, but also because it states as a goal a longer deployment length than what is the current DOD goal, which is 12 months.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. HAGEL. Madam President, that is another reason the amendments are clearly different and the Hagel-Levin amendment is far better.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2032.

Mr. HAGEL. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) is necessarily absent.

Mr. LOTT. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 243 Leg.]

YEAS—52

Akaka	Feinstein	Nelson (NE)
Baucus	Hagel	Obama
Bayh	Harkin	Pryor
Biden	Inouye	Reed
Bingaman	Kennedy	Reid
Boxer	Kerry	Rockefeller
Brown	Klobuchar	Salazar
Byrd	Kohl	Sanders
Cantwell	Landrieu	Schumer
Cardin	Lautenberg	Smith
Carper	Leahy	Snowe
Casey	Levin	Stabenow
Clinton	Lincoln	Tester
Conrad	McCaskill	Webb
Dodd	Menendez	Whitehouse
Dorgan	Mikulski	Wyden
Durbin	Murray	
Feingold	Nelson (FL)	

NAYS—45

Alexander	Crapo	Lott
Allard	DeMint	Lugar
Barrasso	Dole	Martinez
Bennett	Domenici	McCain
Bond	Ensign	McConnell
Bunning	Enzi	Murkowski
Burr	Graham	Roberts
Chambliss	Grassley	Sessions
Coburn	Gregg	Shelby
Cochran	Hatch	Specter
Coleman	Hutchison	Stevens
Collins	Inhofe	Sununu
Corker	Isakson	Thune
Cornyn	Kyl	Voinovich
Craig	Lieberman	Warner

NOT VOTING—3

Brownback	Johnson	Vitter

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, not having garnered 60 votes, the amendment is not agreed to and is withdrawn.

AMENDMENT NO. 2078

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 2 minutes evenly divided on the Graham amendment.

Who yields time? The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. KYL. Madam President, the goal here was to try as much as possible to achieve a balance between the time individuals and units are deployed and the time they have for duty or rest back in the States. That goal is the goal of the military today. It did not have to be mandated by the U.S. Congress, which would not only represent micromanagement of the Commander in Chief's responsibilities but could arguably even infringe on his constitutional authorities as Commander in Chief. We can, however, express that as our general sense, that should be the goal of our military, and I believe the amendment Senator GRAHAM and I have, which basically mirrors the language of the Hagel amendment but expresses it as a goal rather than a mandate, will achieve that purpose of expression by this body. Therefore, I urge my colleagues, if they wish to express that sense, to support the amendment.

Mr. LEVIN. I wonder if the Senator, after he is done, will yield 20 seconds to me?

Mr. WEBB. Madam President, I urge my colleagues to vote against this measure. It is a cover measure. It is a sense of Congress. It has no legal impact. This is a cover amendment because of earlier votes. It states as a goal, a goal that members of the regular components should be deployed for no more than 15 months. The stated goal of the Department of Defense is 12 months. This is not something people should be voting for.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, is there any time remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 30 seconds.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, the stated goal of the Department of Defense remains 1 year, so this amendment, which says the goal should be 15 months for deployed forces, is harder on the troops than the current goal. I am going to read the current goal from Secretary Gates' January 12 Armed Services Committee statement:

> The goal for the active force rotation cycle remains 1 year deployed for every 2 years at home station.

So the Graham amendment goal of 15 months is harder.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There is a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) are necessarily absent.

Mr. LOTT. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. MCCASKILL). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 41, nays 55, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 244 Leg.]

YEAS—41

Alexander	Crapo	Lieberman
Allard	DeMint	Lott
Barrasso	Dole	Lugar
Bennett	Domenici	Martinez
Bond	Ensign	McCain
Bunning	Enzi	McConnell
Burr	Graham	Murkowski
Chambliss	Grassley	Roberts
Coburn	Gregg	Shelby
Cochran	Hatch	Specter
Coleman	Hutchison	Stevens
Corker	Inhofe	Thune
Cornyn	Isakson	Warner
Craig	Kyl	

NAYS—55

Akaka	Hagel	Pryor
Baucus	Harkin	Reed
Bayh	Inouye	Reid
Biden	Kennedy	Rockefeller
Bingaman	Kerry	Salazar
Boxer	Klobuchar	Sanders
Brown	Kohl	Schumer
Byrd	Landrieu	Sessions
Cantwell	Lautenberg	Smith
Carper	Leahy	Snowe
Casey	Levin	Stabenow
Clinton	Lincoln	Sununu
Collins	McCaskill	Tester
Conrad	Menendez	Voinovich
Dodd	Mikulski	Webb
Dorgan	Murray	Whitehouse
Durbin	Nelson (FL)	Wyden
Feingold	Nelson (NE)	
Feinstein	Obama	

NOT VOTING—4

Brownback	Johnson
Cardin	Vitter

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, not having garnered 60 votes, the amendment is not agreed to and is withdrawn.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mrs. BOXER. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, I now ask unanimous consent that the Republican leader be recognized in order to speak regarding an amendment to be offered at a later time; further, that following those remarks, Senator ALLARD and then Senator SALAZAR be recognized to speak for up to 10 minutes each on the same subject; and then, that following those remarks, the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each; and then Senator SALAZAR be recognized to control 60 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2061

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, there is an old saying that goes: If you want something done right, you have to do it yourself. For years I have led the fight in Congress to push the Department of Defense to safely and efficiently dispose of the deadly chemical

weapons stored at the Blue Grass Army Depot in Madison County, KY, and in other facilities across the country. For years, forces burrowed deep within the middle layers of the DOD bureaucracy have dragged their feet on this issue and refused to comply with Congress's directions. As a result, for years the people of Madison County have had to live with 523 tons—523 tons—of chemical weapons right in their midst, including VX nerve agent, one of the deadliest nerve agents ever created. Just 10 milligrams of VX is enough to kill a human being, and they have over 100 tons of it stored just down the road from a schoolhouse.

My colleagues and I have had enough, and we have concluded that if you want to do something right, you have to do it yourself. Therefore, I rise today to speak about an amendment I filed on Tuesday, amendment No. 2061, that will set a deadline into law for DOD to complete work on the disposal of the chemical weapons at the Blue Grass Army Depot and other facilities.

The deadline in this amendment will hold DOD to complete work on the disposal within 10 years; that is, no later than 2017. Thanks to years of delay and mismanagement, last year the Defense Department formally notified Congress it could not make the deadline set in the Chemical Weapons Convention, or CWC, and that deadline, of course, is 2012.

The United States has committed itself to that document and therefore will be in violation of its treaty obligations. But now DOD's latest projections would put off the completion of the disposal process at the Blue Grass Army Depot until 2023. That is 11 full years past the original deadline, and that is simply unacceptable.

I have documents from DOD that confirm that with sufficient funds, the entire U.S. chemical weapons stockpile could be eliminated by 2017, the deadline set by this amendment about which I am speaking, or maybe even sooner. If that goal can be met, then it certainly should be met.

Compounding the longstanding mismanagement within DOD on this issue is that the Department has consistently failed to request sufficient funds for disposal efforts. For years Congress has had to do the heavy lifting by increasing funds and making clear our commitment that these weapons be disposed of safely and with dispatch. A formal deadline in law, along with a regular reporting requirement, should finally push DOD to request sufficient funds in the future. That seems to be the only way to get DOD to ask for the funds it needs to get the job done.

Authorizers and appropriators of both parties, and in both Houses, have repeatedly expressed frustration at DOD's sluggish response to Congress's will. For years, the Department has flouted Congress and continued business as usual. That simply has got to stop. Passing this amendment will send a strong signal to the Department of Defense that Congress has had enough of their pigheaded stubbornness on this issue, and we are not going to take it anymore.

To prove we mean business, this amendment will also provide an additional $49.3 million for chemical demilitarization activities at Blue Grass Army Depot and a comparable facility at Pueblo Depot in Colorado. My colleagues from Colorado will be speaking to that momentarily. Those funds are fully offset in the bill. The money will be targeted to the two depots that have the farthest to go to dispose of their stockpiles, so this extra funding will help speed up the elimination of chemical weapons.

Delaying the disposal of chemical weapons in Kentucky and Colorado until the 2020s would cost the taxpayers an additional $3.3 billion. Appropriating $49.3 million and setting a firm deadline in law now will save us that $3.3 billion later.

The Department has over 16,000 tons of lethal chemical agents stored in military depots across our country. VX nerve gas stolen by a terrorist from the Blue Grass Army Depot in Kentucky could have grave consequences for Americans living as far as away as Los Angeles, Houston, Miami, or even here in Washington, DC.

The risk from these weapons is particularly acute for those who live near these storage facilities. Every risk assessment ever done has concluded that the longer these deadly weapons lie fallow, the more unstable and the more dangerous they become.

The threat of terrorism posed by our failure to dispose of these weapons is not limited to the storage of such materials in the United States. With America soon to be in breach of its treaty obligations under CWC, it will be all the more difficult for us to prod Russia to dispose of its outstanding chemical weapons. Storage of Russia's chemical weapons is much less secure than our own. The longer these weapons continue to sit in storage throughout Russia, the greater the opportunity for them to fall into terrorist hands. So at its core, continued foot-dragging poses a national security and homeland security risk to our country.

Finally, I note, as I said earlier, this is a bipartisan amendment. My good friend from Colorado, Senator SALAZAR, joins me, obviously, as a cosponsor, as well as Senator ALLARD. This is something that Senator BUNNING, my colleague from Kentucky, also joins as a cosponsor and feels strongly about as well.

A vote for this amendment will tell DOD that Congress is fed up, fed up, with its intransigence on this issue. A vote for this amendment is a vote to save the taxpayers $3.3 billion. A vote for this amendment is a vote to dispose of deadly nerve agents that are just down the street from our homes, our churches, and our schools.

Most importantly, a vote for this amendment is a vote to make the American people safer and more secure. When this Congress directs DOD to safely and efficiently dispose of these deadly weapons, and when we authorize and appropriate a sufficient amount of money so they can get the job done, that is exactly what we expect them to do. It is a shame we have to place a legally binding deadline on the Department to get them to do this. But if we want this job to be done right, we are going to have to step in and set a deadline ourselves.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment when it is subsequently offered.

I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I know there is an order that recognizes the Senator from Colorado for 10 minutes, both Senators from Colorado for 10 minutes each, and following that the Senator from Colorado will be recognized for up to 60 minutes.

I ask unanimous consent that my two friends allow me to speak after they have done their first 10 minutes; that is, 20 minutes, that I be allowed to speak for a few minutes before Senator SALAZAR begins his 60 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. ALLARD. Madam President, I thank my good friend from Kentucky for introducing this resolution, and his superb leadership on this particular issue. It is always a pleasure to be able to join my colleague from Colorado, Senator SALAZAR, in these efforts to help make Colorado a better place to live.

This is an important issue not only to Kentucky but extremely important as far as the State of Colorado. I rise today to support the McConnell amendment; that is, amendment No. 2061, and urge my colleagues to join with me as it is debated here on the Defense authorization bill.

The amendment itself is very straightforward. It requires the Department of Defense to complete destruction of our chemical weapons stockpile no later than the year 2017. To that end, additional military construction funding in fiscal year 2008 is also authorized at the Pueblo Chemical Depot in Colorado, and the Blue Grass Army Depot in Kentucky. These additional military construction funds were identified by the program manager as necessary to help meet any accelerated schedule changes at the two sites.

Before I get into the details of why acceleration at these sites is necessary, let me first give a little background about the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The United States, by ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention, was to have disposed of our chemical weapons by 2007; that is, this year. In April of 2006, the United States requested a 5-year extension allowed by the treaty, which was granted in December last, 2006.

The extension gives the United States until April 29, 2012 to destroy its stockpile. However, in its extension request the United States explicitly noted that. We do not forecast 100 percent destruction by the new deadline, but remains committed to completing its stockpile destruction under international observation as quickly as possible.

I voted against the Chemical Weapons Convention when it was before us for ratification. Nevertheless, the United States has signed the convention, and this body voted to ratify it. Therefore, I believe our Nation has an obligation to comply with the convention. Yet clearly the Department's budget requests have been insufficient to meet the escalating costs of the program for the destruction of our Nation's chemical weapons stockpile. I believe the Department should have added money to its budget request to pay for these new costs. Unfortunately, they have not.

This body knows this is not the first time I have joined my good friend and colleague, Senator MCCONNELL, on the Senate floor to discuss these activities. At our urging, the Senate Appropriations Committee passed several provisions in the 2005 supplemental appropriations bill that forced the Department of Defense to move forward with the destruction of chemical weapons at the depot in Blue Grass and Pueblo.

One provision in particular required the Department to spend $100 million within 120 days at the destruction sites. I point out this provision because some might be concerned the sites cannot spend more than they already have. This, in fact, is not true. The program managers at the Pueblo and Blue Grass sites are only limited in their schedules by the amount of dollars they receive. The Department of Defense has consistently failed to provide sufficient funding for this program, forcing those who run it to make programmatic decisions that pit demilitarization sites against each other. The Department of Defense has in the past failed to provide adequate program management.

Finally, it has repeatedly stopped and restarted design work and operations, adding huge startup costs and considerable schedule delays.

I also think it is important that my colleagues understand how many weapons are stored at these facilities. At Pueblo there are 780,078 rounds of chemical warheads being stored. Each one of these rounds is filled with liquid mustard agent. These weapons have been stored at Pueblo since the 1950s and represent 8.5 percent of the original U.S. chemical stockpile. At Blue Grass there are 523 tons of chemical agents representing 1.7 percent of the total U.S. stockpile. The complicating factor for Blue Grass is that the stockpile consists of blister and nerve agent in projectiles and rockets.

Following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the Department of Defense recognized that these sites posed a significant risk to the local communities. With this view in mind, in a memorandum, E.C. Aldridge, then-Under Secretary of Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, directed that the ACWA program be accelerated for this reason. For the surrounding communities, these stockpiles are a continual reminder of the threat they face. We must accelerate the destruction of these weapons.

There is no doubt in Senator MCCONNELL's mind, nor in mine, that the Department has been inconsistent and unreliable regarding this program. Only by passing this amendment and inserting a legally binding date will the Department make chemical demilitarization a priority. We both strongly believe that it is past time for Congress to intervene.

I urge my colleagues to support the amendment.

I thank Senator MCCONNELL for his hard work, as well as Senator SALAZAR for his dedication and effort in helping clean up the depot at Pueblo.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. SALAZAR. Madam President, I rise with my colleagues from Kentucky, Senators BUNNING and MCCONNELL, and especially with my good friend and colleague from Colorado, Senator ALLARD, to speak in support of amendment No. 2061, which will help us get back on track with the obligation of the United States to destroy chemical weapons stockpiles both in Kentucky and in Colorado and to do it in a timely and safe way.

The Pueblo chemical depot in Colorado and the Blue Grass Army depot in Kentucky are home to vast scores of chemical weapons munitions that are supposed to be destroyed by 2012. That deadline was mandated by the congressionally ratified Chemical Weapons Convention. Unfortunately, the United States has been woefully behind in fulfilling these responsibilities because of consistent underfunding of a program that is essential to our national security and to the safety of nearby communities.

At the Pueblo site, we have 780,000 munitions filled with over 2,600 tons of liquid mustard agent, around 8.5 percent of the original U.S. chemical stockpile. These are chemical weapons. These munitions sit in 96 huts in high security as they await disassembly and destruction. But they pose a threat not only to the communities of Pueblo and Colorado Springs in my State but to our Nation if, in fact, these chemical weapons were to somehow end up in the wrong hands.

So the matter we speak about today with this amendment has everything to do with creating a strong defense for our Nation and dealing with the threats that we face in homeland security.

Every year we have to come into this Chamber and fight to put money back into the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives Program. That is the authority that is overseeing the destruction operation both at Pueblo and Blue Grass. We had been successful in getting the administration to put $55 million back into the budget earlier this year. This, along with our joint efforts last year to keep $131 million in this program, has allowed us to actually get moving on construction of the facilities where they will destroy this agent.

If you visit the Pueblo chemical depot today, you will see the contractors in Pueblo have now begun to lay the utilities and foundations for the processing facility that will treat the agent. It is a welcome sight to see the Earth finally moving. Unfortunately, though, continued underfunding is preventing construction from moving as quickly as it could and should. Because the funding stream is so weak, contractors have to inch along with the construction of the buildings. Even the DOD admits there is a need for an additional $32 million in fiscal year 2008.

With that additional money, they could actually put up the walls and close the building where they will disassemble these very dangerous munitions. They will be able to build a structure where they will process the mustard agent. They will be able to move ahead with the control and support building and finalize the utility building. The amendment we offer today would fulfill this stated need of the program. It would put $49.3 million back into the program for military construction, $32 million of which will be used at the Pueblo chemical Army depot.

The amendment also holds the Department of Defense's feet to the fire on destroying these weapons. It is no secret that DOD is going to miss the 2012 treaty deadline for weapons destruction at the Pueblo chemical Army depot. That is what happens when you drag your feet and fail to put adequate resources behind a program that is essential to our national security.

Our amendment says if we fail to meet the treaty deadline, the Department of Defense should complete work on the destruction of the entire stockpile of lethal chemical agents and munitions absolutely no later than 2017. That is 10 years from where we are today. Every 6 months the Department, under our legislation, will have to report to Congress on the progress they are making, what resources are needed, and how much funding is programmed to fulfill this requirement.

For those of us who have been fighting this fight for the Pueblo site, as well as Kentucky Blue Grass, the hard deadline for Pueblo is a dramatic improvement. At the current pace and with the current administration's funding projections, destruction activities there are expected to be completed sometime in 2021. That is almost 10 years past the deadline under the treaty that the United States approved for the destruction of these kinds of chemical weapons. This is absurd, especially

with the DOD's own admission that with higher funding levels they could complete destruction of Pueblo a full 5 years earlier than that. There is not a single advantage to drawing the process out to 2022 or later. Construction costs only rise, and the security risks do not fade.

We are obliged not only by treaty but by our responsibility to communities that neighbor these installations to do a better job.

I thank Senator ALLARD for his leadership on this issue. I thank my colleagues from Kentucky for their hard work and leadership. The citizens of Kentucky and Colorado are watching closely. I am certain all Americans would like us to fulfill our treaty obligations by destroying these chemical weapons as quickly and safely as possible.

When amendment No. 2061 comes before the Senate for a vote, I respectfully urge my colleagues to join us in support of that amendment.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO LADY BIRD JOHNSON

Mr. REID. Madam President, inside this desk is the name Johnson of Texas, majority leader. That, of course, is the signature of Lyndon Johnson, who was majority leader, Vice President of the United States, President of the United States. I have the honor of being able to work from this desk.

Lyndon Johnson is a legend from the great State of Texas, the Lone Star State. He was a Member of Congress, U.S. Senator, majority leader, Vice President, and the 36th President of the United States. But just as importantly, for those who know anything about Lyndon Johnson, were not these honors that were bestowed upon him by others but the fact that he married a wonderful woman, Lady Bird Johnson,

What a name, Lady Bird Johnson. Anytime you read about Lyndon Johnson, you have to understand the power of his wife.

Caro's book, ''Master of the Senate,'' has a lot in it about Lady Bird Johnson.

My wife understands, I am sure, a little bit what she went through. In the book, it describes how he would bring people home with little notice for dinner, and it was always available. Mr. Rayburn, the Speaker, came to their home at least once a week for dinner, many times unannounced except by the President calling at the last minute.

Today, America has lost this great woman. The greatest asset Lyndon Johnson had was his wife. I join my colleagues and all Americans in tribute to this great American woman.

I did not have the good fortune to know Lady Bird Johnson. She died today at age 94. But those who did know her said if you were to look up in the dictionary the term ''lady,'' you would find Lady Bird Johnson's picture. She truly stereotyped a lady.

I believe it is fair to say that you did not have to know Lady Bird Johnson—I did not—to admire her for the causes she championed.

As I said briefly, I have my own special appreciation for Mrs. Johnson because I have some idea of what Landra, my wife, puts up with being married to the majority leader.

He was a domineering personality, her husband. She was, during all of the domination he had—with his poking Senators in the chest and the things he is now legendary to have done—she was always the same graceful woman no matter the situation she found herself in. She was the same person no matter what the situation. She served during challenging, extraordinary times. President Johnson went through some very difficult times. She was always at his side.

She did not ask for the role of First Lady, but she embraced that role with grace and dignity.

As First Lady, she was instrumental in the Highway Beautification Act, which came to be known as ''Lady Bird's bill.'' She had many other initiatives that enhanced our natural world. She was a champion for children with programs such as Head Start. Later in life, her passion continued, most notably in her work opening the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center outside Austin, TX, where she will lie before reaching her final resting place at the Johnson family ranch in Stonewall, TX.

I can think of no better tribute to Lady Bird Johnson than to close with her own words. She said once:

> Some may wonder why I chose wildflowers when there is hunger and unemployment and the big bomb in the world.
>
> Well, I, for one, think we will survive, and I hope that along the way we can keep alive our experience with the flowering earth. For the bounty of nature is also one of the deep needs of man.

My thoughts and warm feelings are with her two daughters, Lynda, whom I know quite well, and Luci, whom I know of, and, of course, Lynda's husband, our former colleague, Chuck Robb—who served with such dignity in the Senate; I had the good fortune of being able to serve with this wonderful Senator, great Governor of the State of Virginia, an extraordinary, gallant marine—and Ian, Luci's husband, and Lady Bird's many grandchildren and great-grandchildren, all of whom she loved as only a mother and grandmother could love.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I would like to say a word about Lady Bird Johnson.

We have had many graceful First Ladies in the United States, but Lady Bird Johnson can truly be said to have been the First Lady of America the Beautiful. Her husband used to joke that he would hear rustling in the hall at the White House. It would be, as he would say, Lady Bird and Lawrence Rockefeller meeting to work on conservation projects. Her legacy was the Highway Beautification Act of 1965. She understood that we have a great many important issues in our country but that one of our great characteristics is the beauty of our country. Italy has its art, Egypt has its pyramids, and we have the great American outdoors. Lady Bird Johnson knew that for everybody—not just the wealthy with big homes and big lawns—the beauty of our country was something to preserve. She did that, and she changed our entire national attitude about its importance. She brought out the best in us in terms of appreciating the beauty of America.

I visited the Wild Flower Garden in Austin, TX, before. I have seen the blue bonnets there in the spring, and I have seen how she influenced the flowers to grow in the rights-of-way on Texas highways. They even adopted the motto in Texas ''Don't mess with Texas.'' I am sure that is a legacy of Lady Bird Johnson as well. But not only did flowers begin to grow along the rights-of-way in Texas, they did in Tennessee and in a lot of other places—in States such as Colorado. Lady Bird Johnson has made her mark in our country.

Our family had the privilege of knowing the Johnsons and especially Linda and Luci—Linda married to Chuck Robb, a former Senator. We were good friends. We spent many times together at Governors' conferences, and our children know one another. We express to Linda and Luci and that family our sympathies. We know they have great pride in their mother as well as their father. But we think of their mother tonight as we think of her as the First Lady of America the Beautiful and remember her contributions.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Madam President, more time has passed, and more American troops have lost their lives overseas. I feel very strongly that we should take a few moments in the U.S. Senate to honor them.

Outside my office here in Washington, we have a tribute called ''Faces of the Fallen.'' Visitors to the Senate from across the country have stopped by the memorial. I encourage my colleagues to come see this tribute on the third floor of the Hart Building.

I last came to the Senate floor to honor our fallen troops at the end of May. And between that time and the end of June, the Pentagon announced the deaths of 165 troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. I want them to be remembered. So today, I will insert their names into the RECORD:

SPC James L. Adair, of Carthage, TX; SSG Robb L. Rolfing, of Milton,