

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. *Pallone*).

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I believe it is critically important that we get our military troops all the resources they need to safely complete their mission as soon as possible in Iraq. However, I do not support rubber-stamping this legislation so the Bush administration gets a free ride from Congress and does not have to account for its strategy in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I oppose outright the \$18 billion in reconstruction funds included in the supplemental and feel the Bush administration has an obligation to explain to Congress why it downplayed our role in reconstruction prior to the war. Last March, Secretary Rumsfeld told the Senate Appropriations Committee, "I don't believe that the United States has the responsibility for reconstruction. Funds can come from those various sources I mentioned, frozen assets, oil revenues and a variety of other things, including the Oil for Food which has a very substantial number of billions of dollars in it." But then the Secretary changed his mind over the last 6 months, stating last month, "Iraq is in no position to pay its current debt service, let alone take on more additional debt."

Was the administration bending the truth 6 months ago, or have events changed in Iraq to warrant these reconstruction funds? Congress deserves an answer to that question, and I do not believe we have received an adequate explanation yet.

Mr. Speaker, I will not support a supplemental that does not create accountability for the funds Congress appropriates for no-bid contracts to companies like Vice President *Cheney's* old employer, Halliburton. I will not support a supplemental that does not turn the reconstruction funds into a loan rather than a grant. And I will not support a supplemental that is not paid for. If these changes were made, then I could support it, but I do not think that is going to happen. I think that this administration has the bill that they want, and so I

cannot support the supplemental that is being put forward today. I think it is a mistake. I think we will regret it. I think, most importantly, we need accountability, and we are not getting it.

What about all the money that could be spent that is being spent on Iraq that could be spent here at home for the needs that we have, whether it is infrastructure, like hospitals or sewage treatment plants, or roads or highways, whatever? Instead, we are spending it on Iraq. We do not need to do it. I think it is a mistake.