

While most Americans were preparing for the long Fourth of July weekend, the House of Representatives finally got around to acting on a long delayed troop funding bill. This bill will pay for our operations in Iraq and Afghanistan—buying gas and food, paying troops salaries, and giving them the best equipment we can. Unfortunately, as is so often the case, the Democrats in the House decided to use the troop funding bill as a vehicle for spending more money on their liberal social agenda. This is simply unacceptable.

When the House Democrats passed their version of the bill, only half of the money appropriated in the bill was for our troops in Afghanistan and Iraq. While some of the extra funds may be legitimate, the House added at least \$14 billion in unnecessary domestic spending. Because House Democrats couldn't restrain themselves, the bill is now stuck in limbo between the House and the Senate, with the White House raising concerns about certain aspects of the bill, and the Secretary of Defense in desperate need of funds.

For the last month, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates has warned that if the Department of Defense did not get the needed funds by July 4, they would have to start doing “stupid things.” Unfortunately, the Democratic majority in Congress missed that deadline. This week, a spokesperson for Secretary Gates said “Absent more drastic action, we project that certain Army and Marine Corps accounts will run dry in August.” In other words, it is getting serious, and Congress needs to act.

The best option is what we should have done originally: pass a clean troop funding bill without excess domestic spending. The Democrats have already increased non-defense discretionary spending 84% since 2008, so it is hard for me to believe that more is truly needed. Even if the Democrats do want to spend more tax dollars on their liberal agenda, they should do it in separate bills, not on the back of a troop funding bill. As the men and women in uniform fight on our behalf in Afghanistan and Iraq, we should be doing all we can to support them. It is time for Congress to pass a clean a troop funding bill. Anything less is unacceptable.

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*This blog post by Congressman Todd Akin originally appeared on [The Missouri Record](#), July*

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