

years. My amendment would have treated these cellular phone contracts the same way that we already treat residential and automobile leases—give the servicemember the right to terminate the contract without being charged an additional fee. Despite the support of the National Guard Association of the United States, the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States, and the Military Officers Association of America, I was not able to get this amendment adopted. While I was disappointed in this result, I will continue to fight to make sure that servicemembers are not financially punished for volunteering to protect this country.

I was also disappointed that another amendment of mine was not accepted that would have extended the Department of Defense's ability to purchase fruits and vegetables from local farms. My amendment would have helped both servicemembers and schools served by the Department of Defense programs and local farms and communities benefit from the programs.

I also introduced amendments to the authorization bill that mirrored a bill I introduced last year; the Veterans Enhanced Transition Services Act, VETS Act. This bill includes provisions that would help ensure that all military personnel have access to the same transition services as they prepare to leave the military to reenter civilian life, or, in the case of members of the National Guard and Reserve, as they prepare to demobilize from active duty assignments and return to their civilian lives and jobs or education while remaining in the military.

The VETS Act is supported by a wide range of groups that are dedicated to serving our men and women in uniform and veterans and their families, and I was pleased to honor this support by introducing the amendments to the Defense authorization bill. We should ensure that our troops receive the benefits to which their service in our Armed Forces has entitled them, and while these amendments were unfortunately not included in the final version of the bill, I will continue to work to see that these provisions become law.

I will also continue to fight for the redeployment of our forces in Iraq so that our country can refocus on fighting the terrorist networks that attacked us on 9/11. I offered an amendment with Senator KERRY that would have required U.S. forces in Iraq to redeploy by July 1, 2007. While the amendment failed, I was pleased to be joined by 12 of my colleagues in addressing the fact that the President's policies in Iraq are damaging our country's national security. I am glad that more and more of my colleagues are recognizing what the American people already know—that we need a plan to redeploy our troops from Iraq.

Mr. President, I must note with disappointment that this bill continues the wasteful trend of spending billions of dollars on Cold War era weapons sys-

tems while at the same time not fully funding the needs of the military personnel fighting our current wars. I also think the Senate missed some opportunities when it rejected amendments that could have made the bill better. However, on balance, this legislation contains many good provisions for our men and women in uniform and their families and that is why I supported it.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, yesterday the Senate approved the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2007. I was pleased to vote in favor of this bill. I wish to express my deepest gratitude and respect to Chairman WARNER and Ranking Member LEVIN for their tireless dedication to making sure this legislation was passed in a spirit of bipartisanship. I am honored to be part of their efforts to build a stronger, safer America.

This legislation is good for our troops, good for Colorado, and good for America.

Our troops—the men and women who selflessly defend the democratic way of life both here and abroad—deserve nothing less than our steadfast support. I was pleased that we were able to show that support in a significant way with the passage of this Defense Authorization Act.

First of all, starting at the beginning of next year, all military personnel will receive a 2.2-percent pay raise. This extra money in the pockets of our servicemembers will go a long way as they continue to simultaneously serve our country and work to provide for their own families.

Second, the Senate has sternly rejected the Pentagon's ill-conceived increase in the medical fees for retirees. This is important to our long-term commitment to provide for those who have served our country with dedication and determination.

As part of this Nation's commitment to taking care of the families of our servicemembers, this legislation also authorizes a pilot program to promote early childhood education for military children affected by the relocation of military units or overseas deployments.

For our wounded soldiers, we are enacting strong requirements to make sure they receive an audit of their pay, and setting up a toll-free call assistance center for military personnel and next of kin who are experiencing pay problems. We need to take care of our wounded veterans, and this is one small step that will go a long way in meeting that goal. Along those same lines, we are also authorizing \$10 million for pilot projects to address the growing problem of post-traumatic stress disorder.

This legislation will also strengthen our troop levels for ground forces, adding 30,000 more troops to the Army's end-strength, 5,000 more troops to the Active-Duty Marines, and 17,000 more

troops to the Army National Guard. I strongly support these provisions.

Additionally, the Defense Authorization Act supports several programs that our troops rely on to successfully complete their missions. There is money for new helicopters to replace those lost in Operation Iraqi Freedom: \$71.0 million to purchase UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters, and \$333.1 million to purchase CH-47 Chinook helicopters.

There is over \$950 million for protective equipment for our fighting men and women, including over \$550 million for up-armored HMMWVs.

This legislation also provides over \$2 billion in funding for new technologies to help keep our troops protected from improvised explosive devices, IEDs. Every American knows that IEDs pose one of the most terrible threats to the safety of our servicemembers currently in Iraq. It is our responsibility to protect our fighting men and women from that evolving threat to the best of our ability.

All told, the Defense Authorization Act of fiscal year 2007 is very strong on providing for our troops, and I wholeheartedly support that effort.

In addition, Mr. President, I am proud of the significant, Colorado-specific funding in this bill that will solidify Colorado as America's crown jewel for national defense and homeland security.

Specifically, the bill designates \$130.7 million for military construction projects in Colorado. This includes \$26 million for Fort Carson to build a combat services support complex for special operating forces and another \$24 million for the next phase of construction of the airfield arrival/depart complex.

At Buckley Air Force Base, \$10.7 million is authorized for construction of the consolidated fuels facility, and another \$7 million is authorized for a new Air National Guard Squadron operations facility.

At Schriever Air Force Base, \$21 million is set aside for construction of the Space test and evaluation facility.

And finally, there is \$42 million authorized for chemical weapons demilitarization construction for Pueblo Chemical Depot.

Funds for the Base Realignment and Closure, BRAC, authorized in this legislation will bring another \$202 million to Fort Carson. There is \$118 million for the construction of a brigade combat team complex and \$84 million for the construction of a division headquarters for the 4th Infantry Division relocating from Fort Hood, TX.

I am also pleased to note that this legislation authorizes \$10 million to purchase interoperable communications equipment for NORTHCOM. Earlier in the year I added an amendment to the budget resolution to provide that \$10 million for NORTHCOM. Interoperable communications are absolutely necessary for NORTHCOM to be able to respond as quickly and effectively as possible to a homeland security emergency.

I am also extremely pleased that several amendments I offered were passed by the Senate.

My Chemical Weapons Convention amendment sends an extremely strong message to the Department of Defense that the Senate will no longer stand for schedule or funding delays regarding the destruction of chemical weapons. Pueblo Chemical Depot needs to be rid of its chemical weapons stockpiles. The Department of Defense needs to commit the resources to ensure it happens as quickly as possible. With my amendment, the entire Senate spoke with one voice in agreement.

Another amendment I offered and had included in the Senate bill will change the name of the death gratuity to fallen hero compensation. I have stated this before, but I believe the term "death gratuity" to be a poor description of the compensation this Nation provides to the families of fallen servicemembers. To my way of thinking, anyone who has worn the uniform of the Armed Forces is an American hero, and this small name change will be extremely meaningful to the bereaved families of those servicemembers who die while on active duty.

I am also pleased that Chairman WARNER and Senator LEVIN have worked with me to accept an amendment that requires the Secretary of the Army to complete a study on the High Altitude Aviation Training Site, HAATS, in Eagle County, CO. HAATS is operated by the Colorado National Guard, and I could not be prouder of the school and its mission. Helicopter pilots trained at HAATS are safer in mountainous and environmentally challenging terrain. This study I have proposed will strengthen the school and will help raise its level of visibility in the Army.

I also cosponsored a number of important amendments that have been included in the Senate's bill. One amendment will ensure the Pentagon provides the citizens of southeastern Colorado with the information they have been asking for regarding the Pinon Canyon Maneuvering Site. Another helps provide contractors at Pueblo Chemical Depot with incentives to finish by the deadline. On a national level, I was proud to cosponsor a fiscally responsible amendment authored by Senator MCCAIN that requires future money for ongoing military operations to be properly budgeted and paid for, instead of continuing to use emergency funding in a way that avoids oversight. And I was pleased to cosponsor a successful amendment to strengthen the mandate of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction.

During consideration of this bill, the Senate engaged in many hours of debate regarding the course of U.S. policy in Iraq. I was proud to be a cosponsor of the Levin-Reed amendment that built upon last year's Senate consensus that 2006 should be a year of transition in Iraq. While this amendment was not

successful, I believe that the debate was important, and that Congress must continue to search for constructive and responsible ways to help ensure success in Iraq by insisting on more direction and clarity in U.S. policy. Our brave men and women in uniform are doing such a remarkable job in Iraq. We need to work hard here in Washington to ensure that our policy is worthy of their efforts.

Our troops need every opportunity for success. This funding bill, and the amendments and projects it contains, send a powerful message to our troops and the enemies they bravely face: this country supports our men and women in uniform. Our brave service men and women are the best in the world, and this bill will ensure they have the training, supplies, and materials they need to continue to produce such positive results.

U.S. POLICY IN IRAQ

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, the policy in Iraq is not working and must change. The current plan does not have incentives that encourage the Iraqis to take full responsibility for their own security or to make the difficult compromises necessary for a unity government to work.

We have been in Iraq fighting this war for more than 3 years. The United States has sent hundreds of thousands of our finest troops to liberate Iraq from a brutal dictator. More than 2,500 have died for Iraq's freedom and close to 20,000 have been wounded, many very seriously. America has also spent more than \$300 billion fighting the war in Iraq.

Those sacrifices continue. We have about 130,000 troops in Iraq today and, regrettably, we will have more deaths and injuries before this war is over. We will also continue to spend tens, if not hundreds, of billions of dollars more in fighting this war.

I believe that we need a change and we need a change now. That change is the Levin-Reed amendment currently before us.

This amendment says that we will begin a phased redeployment of our troops by the end of 2006.

This will force the Iraqis to take responsibility for their own security and to do so soon. They will have to replace our redeployed troops with Iraqi troops. This will create incentives to build their own police and military because some time soon they will not be able to count on Americans doing those jobs. This will also encourage them to put aside their political differences and agree on a government that works.

This action will not come as a surprise to the Iraqis or anyone else. Last year, by a vote of 79 to 19, the United States Senate said 2006 "should be a period of significant transition to full Iraqi sovereignty, with Iraqi security forces taking the lead for the security of a free and sovereign Iraq, thereby creating the conditions for the phased

redeployment of United States forces from Iraq." What we are now saying is it's time for the phased redeployment to happen.

The Levin-Reed amendment that I voted for says that "the current open ended commitment of United States forces in Iraq is unsustainable and is a deterrent to the Iraqis making the political compromises and personnel and resource commitments that are needed for the stability and security of Iraq."

Reducing the U.S. role in Iraq also reduces the arguments made by the insurgents and terrorists that they are fighting an occupying army. When Iraqis are in charge of security, they will be forced to decide if they are going to continue to fight their own government and their own military or work together to rebuild their own country.

We are not pulling out or abandoning the Iraqi people. We are moving to a support role while the Iraqis take the lead. That is what phased redeployment means.

It is time for the Iraqis to work together and build their future. We cannot do that for them. This amendment sets in place a plan to provide the conditions for them to do it themselves. We have done our part. They must do their part and they must do it soon.

THIRTY-FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF TITLE IX

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, today marks the 34th anniversary of title IX. Since 1972, title IX has opened doors to athletics, education and success for millions of young women across our Nation. For 34 years, the program has increased participation under Republican and Democratic administrations, because title IX is not about politics it is about helping young women realize their dreams.

The statistics are amazing—millions of young women breaking down barriers. But behind these numbers, the lives of these women have been improved because of the changes brought about through title IX.

I have seen how title IX has changed the experience of women in my own family. When I went to school 30 years ago, the atmosphere was much different. Back then at Washington State University, I could only participate in a few sports, and women receiving athletic scholarships was unheard of.

The difference between my daughter's generation and my own could not be more stark. Women of my generation never had the chance to go to college on a sports scholarship, even though many deserved them. Some of my daughter's friends have done just that.

I am so proud of my home State of Washington, which is the first State in the Nation to boast two women Senators and a woman Governor. It is also home to WNBA champions the Seattle Storm.

There is no doubt that title IX has opened doors for women over the past