

national defense, and now we have a major change in don't ask, don't tell in a way that is contrary.

I spoke to the incoming Commandant of the Marine Corps who will be up for a vote soon. He said he was very concerned about making this change now. We are in two wars. There is a lot going on in the world. This is a major social change. He thinks it would be smart to listen to the marines and other servicemembers before we make the change. If the bill becomes law, we will not have done that. That is a huge mistake.

I thank the Senator from Arizona for his leadership to make sure the men and women in uniform are heard from before Congress acts.

Mr. MCCAIN. One more question: The issue is the proposal to include the so-called DREAM Act. I think every Member of Congress, every American citizen has some sympathy for individuals who were brought to this country without making the decision to do so, not forgetting that the people who brought them to this country were breaking our laws when they did so. Isn't it also true that if we address the DREAM Act or other parts of comprehensive immigration reform before securing the borders, then 1, 2, 5, 10 years from now we will be faced with another generation of young people who were brought here against their will who have a compelling story to tell?

In other words, isn't the moral of this story—to harken back to the 1980s—under our beloved Ronald Reagan we gave amnesty to a couple million people, and they said they would secure the borders, and we ended up with 12 million people who were here illegally? So isn't that the situation we all want to remedy, but we want to make sure we do not have to remedy it again?

Mr. GRAHAM. I say to the Senator, his point is well taken. If the DREAM Act is not considered part of comprehensive immigration reform, it will be a huge mistake. The reason we have 12 million people here illegally in our country is because you can get to America pretty easily illegally, obviously. You can walk across the street in some places. So you have to control the border.

Visa overstays are 40 percent of the illegal immigration problem. If you do not do that, then you are never going to stop the third wave of illegal immigration. You have to deal with why they come: to get jobs. We need better employer verification. We need a temporary worker program so employers can hire people in a win-win situation, where people from other countries can come here and work, make some money, and go back home. It helps us; it helps them. That is what you need to do with immigration, comprehensive reform.

The DREAM Act is about November politics. It is an emotional topic that if you did it in isolation would be undercutting comprehensive reform. Certainly it has nothing to do with defense

authorization. It is trying to check a block.

For the people who came to my office last week who were literally praying that I would vote for the DREAM Act in the Defense authorization bill, you are certainly being used and abused, in my view. This is an emotional topic, and at the end of the day, all I can tell you is, this is not a way to change immigration. This is not comprehensive immigration reform. This is not good defense policy. This is just sheer, raw politics at a time when we could do better and should do better.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2011—MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 3454, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to the bill (S. 3454) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2011 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.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, we have enacted a National Defense Authorization Act every year for the last 48 years, and we need to do the same this year. I hope we can at least make some progress during the next few days and weeks on this bill.

This year's bill would continue the increases in compensation and quality of life that our service men and women and their families deserve as they face the hardships imposed by continuing military operations around the world.

For example, the bill would extend over 30 types of bonuses and special pays aimed at encouraging enlistment, reenlistment, and continued service by Active-Duty and Reserve military personnel.

The bill would authorize continued TRICARE coverage for eligible dependents of servicemembers up to age 26.

The bill would improve care for our wounded warriors by addressing inequities in rules for involuntary administrative separations based on medical conditions and requiring new education and training programs on the use of pharmaceuticals for patients in wounded warrior units.

The bill would authorize and allow the waiver of maximum age limitations to enable certain highly qualified enlisted members who served in Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation En-

during Freedom to enter the military service academies.

The bill also includes important funding and authorities needed to provide our troops the equipment and support they will continue to need as long as they remain on the battlefield in Iraq and Afghanistan.

For example, the bill would enhance the military's ability to rapidly acquire and field new capabilities in response to urgent needs on the battlefield by expanding the authority of the Department of Defense to waive statutory requirements when urgently needed to save lives on the battlefield.

The bill would fully fund the President's request to train and equip the Afghan National Army and Afghan Police—growing the capabilities of these security forces to prepare them to take over increased responsibility for Afghanistan's security.

The bill would extend for another year the authority for the Secretary of Defense to transfer equipment coming out of Iraq as our troops withdraw to the security forces of Iraq and Afghanistan, providing through that transfer an important tool for our commanders looking to accelerate the growth of these security forces.

The bill contains a number of provisions that will help improve the management of the Department of Defense and other Federal agencies.

For example, the bill would require the Department of Defense to establish a comprehensive process for evaluating and addressing urgent operational needs identified on the battlefield.

The bill would address shortcomings in the management of private security contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan by making contractors expressly responsible for the conduct of their subcontractors and establishing specific contractual remedies for failures to comply with the requirements and directives.

The bill would require the Department of Defense to establish acquisition baselines for the Missile Defense Agency's programs and provide annual reports to Congress on progress toward achieving those baselines.

The bill also includes important legislative provisions that would promote DOD's cybersecurity and energy security efforts—two important initiatives that would help strengthen our national defense and our Nation.

This bill does include a handful of contentious provisions on which there is disagreement in the Senate. These provisions were debated in committee. I expect them to be debated again on the Senate floor, if we can proceed tomorrow, as I hope we can. We are going to have votes on a number of those issues and other contentious issues, and the Senate will work its will if we are allowed to get to the point where we can debate this bill.

One of the issues which has been raised is whether amendments should be offered or are offerable to this bill, such as the DREAM Act, which are not

relevant to the bill. The Senator from Arizona recently said the following, and he has repeated it:

[F]or many, many years, we never put any extraneous items on the [DOD authorization] bill, because it was so important to defense and we just didn't allow it.

He continued:

Starting last year, Carl Levin and Harry Reid put hate crimes on it.

The Senator from Arizona is incorrect. He is incorrect on a number of accounts. First of all, the Senate previously considered hate crimes amendments to the national defense authorization bill. We did it in 2001. We did it in 2005. We did it again in 2008 on the national defense authorization bill. It was not the first time that hate crimes was added to the defense authorization bill, and each time the hate crimes amendment was approved by overwhelming bipartisan votes: 57 to 42, 65 to 33, and 60 to 39. It received anywhere from 8 to 18 Republican votes. The only thing that was new about last year's action relative to hate crimes was that for the first time the provision was not dropped in conference. It was included in the enacted legislation.

Secondly, the Senator from Arizona is incorrect when he says "we never put any extraneous items on the [defense authorization] bill . . . we just didn't allow it" is incorrect for another reason. During our consideration of Defense Authorization Acts over the last dozen years, and before, the Senate has debated other amendments, nonrelevant amendments, on many issues, including on concealed weapons, indecency standards, the extension of pay-go budget procedures, and secret holds on nominations, among other issues.

As a matter of fact, in the year 2000, the Senator from Arizona offered a nonrelevant amendment to the defense authorization bill. His amendment proposed to require campaign finance disclosure by the so-called 527 organizations as an amendment to national defense authorization. Senator WARNER opposed it, as floor manager of the bill. Senator WARNER, as chairman and floor manager, argued it was not relevant to the bill. Indeed, Senator WARNER argued it could endanger the passage of the bill and urged Senator MCCAIN not to offer that nonrelevant amendment. Senator MCCAIN's response:

I yield to no one in this body as to my advocacy for our Nation's defense and the men and women in the military.

He continued:

But if we want to give these men and women in the military confidence in their Government, we should have fully disclosed who it is that contributes to the political campaigns.

When Senator WARNER was asked if he was upset with Senator MCCAIN for tying up the Senate with nonrelevant amendments on the defense authorization bill, Senator WARNER stated:

I don't get upset at anything. The man—

The Senator he is referring to, Senator MCCAIN—

is acting under the rules.

I supported the McCain amendment at that time, and I also supported the right of the Senator from Arizona to offer it, not because it was relevant to the defense authorization bill—it was not—but because it was the only opportunity, apparently, to consider that bill, and it was the right thing to do, in my judgment.

By a vote of 57 to 42, the Senate agreed, and the nonrelevant McCain amendment was adopted to the defense authorization bill. By the way, by comparison, last year's hate crimes amendment was adopted by a vote of 63 to 28.

Particular concern has also been expressed about the committee's decision to cut \$1 billion of the \$2 billion that the President requested for the Iraqi Security Forces Fund. This decision of the committee was consistent with the previously expressed view of the Armed Services Committee and of the Congress that the Government of Iraq should assume a greater responsibility for the financial burden of building Iraqi security forces as U.S. forces draw down.

The Iraqis are in a better position to pay for their defense than we are. Last year, we provided only \$1 billion. We should not be increasing that amount as Iraqi resources and finances get stronger and their oil revenues get higher.

The American taxpayers have already paid over \$18 billion to build the capacity of the Iraqi Army and police. By contrast, the Government of Iraq has failed to adequately invest in its own security forces. According to a recent DOD report, the Iraqi Ministry of Defense requested \$7.4 billion in 2010, but the Ministry of Finance approved only \$4.9 billion, choosing to fund little more than personnel costs and to rely almost entirely on the United States to pay for even the most basic equipment needed by the Iraqi Army. Iraq, which according to GAO analysis, has a cumulative budget surplus of \$52 billion through the end of fiscal year 2009 and as much as \$5 billion in unspent security funds, should be well positioned to pay for its own military equipment instead of coming to us for large hand-outs.

The argument has been made that the money the committee cut from the Iraqi Security Forces Fund was used to pay for porkbarrel projects. However, the definition of "porkbarrel projects" used for this purpose appears to be anything other than what the administration requests. I question why spending money on Iraqi troops should be considered good government, but if we spend the same amount of money on our own military instead, it is considered wasteful porkbarrel spending. We could have no higher priority as a committee or as a Congress than supporting our own defense, and I am proud of the fact that our bill would increase the money available for this purpose by cutting back on subsidies for the Iraqis.

Here is the process we use in our committee. This is how we accomplish where we are today. Every year, our committee staff works hard to identify excess or unneeded spending in the Defense budget request. For example, we identify unsuccessful programs where we appear to be sending good money after bad, programs that are getting money before they need it or are getting more money than they can reasonably spend in a year; programs that cannot spend all the money they have because of schedule delays, and programs that are scheduled to receive funding increases, even though the requirement is declining. We would not be doing our job for the Congress and the American people if we fail to undertake a thorough review and to cut excess or unneeded spending from the budget. When we find unneeded spending, we are then able to shift it to support added force structure or force modernization and the quality of life for our troops. This is much the same process that the Secretary of Defense goes through to identify excess overhead, duplicative programs and other wasteful spending and shift the funds to higher priority defense needs.

This year, we reviewed the Department's \$725 billion budget proposal and identified several billion dollars of unneeded spending—just over one-half of 1 percent of the total budget. What did we spend the money on? Mainly modernizing weapons systems, supporting readiness, and supporting the troops. More specifically, this is what the committee proposes to spend the money on that was cut as unneeded from other programs.

This is a relatively long list, but I do wish to give a fairly extensive list of what the additional spending was by the Armed Services Committee when we found that some of the spending in the budget was unneeded for the reasons I just gave.

Here is a list: \$532 million to fully fund high-priority requirements identified by the Chief of Naval Operations for ship depot maintenance, aircraft depot maintenance, and spare parts; \$363 million to improve missile defense capabilities against existing regional missile threats and provide better protection against such missiles for our deployed forces and our allies; \$337 million to fully fund high priority weapons sustainment and depot maintenance requirements identified by the Air Force Chief of Staff; \$325 million to procure additional F-18 aircraft to address a looming shortfall of strike fighter aircraft and take advantage of better prices we will get through a multiyear contract; \$310 million for new facilities, all of which meet the McCain-Glenn screening requirements for military construction and have been determined by the military to be mission essential, to support operations and training, and ensure that our troops are ready for deployment; \$244 million to augment the capability of our communications satellites, continue the

development of infrared sensors for next-generation satellites, and provide for improved space protection and space situational awareness; \$213 million for advanced technologies, for advanced weapons systems, including basic and applied research and materials, science for lighter and stronger materials, new sensors, lasers, and information technology; \$184 million for unfunded procurement priorities identified by the Army Chief of Staff to meet force protection, mobility, communication, and other needs for deployed forces in Afghanistan, including the Line of Communication Bridge, the Lightweight Counter-Mortar Radar, the Defense Advanced Global Positioning System Receiver, the Tactical Local Area Network, and the Forward Entry Device for the artillery tactical data system; \$170 million for the Department's Energy Conservation Improvement Program to competitively fund meritorious programs that have a savings-to-investment ratio of 1.25 or higher and a simple payback period of 10 years or less; \$113 million for unfunded requirements identified by the Commander of U.S. Special Operations Command for ground mobility vehicles, deployable communications equipment, thermal and night vision goggles, and nonlethal weapons technologies; \$102 million to continue the JSTARS reengining program to ensure that these aircraft have the onstation capability needed to provide real-time intelligence to our ground forces engaged in combat; \$100 million to enhance the safety and reliability of our nuclear weapons by providing funding needed for facility design, maintenance, and upgrades, provide diagnostic equipment, and address operational safety issues; \$100 million for new quality-of-life facilities such as dormitories, emergency service centers, and health clinics, all of which have been determined by the military to be mission essential; \$88 million for research and development to reduce the Department's dependency on fossil fuels through improved energy storage, power systems, renewable energy production, and energy efficiency in Defense programs; \$78 million for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance activities and programs that are delivering critical capabilities for our troops in Afghanistan; \$78 million to meet antiterrorism and force protection requirements at military bases; \$76 million to improve the combat capability of Navy submarines; \$72 million for improved medical care for our troops and their families, including \$22 million for continuity of medical care and to prevent increases in fees and \$50 million for critical medical research on trauma care, blast injuries, visual impairment, and other battlefield-related injuries; \$71 million to improve the Navy's ability to operate with unmanned systems, improve countermeasures and improve the ability of DOD air and sea systems to handle threats from enemy missiles and should-

der-fired weapons and make operational system improvements on Navy ships; \$70 million to modernize Navy facilities and improve their capability to support current operations and new technology developments; \$59 million for upgrades for Army weapons systems to enhance operational capabilities and modernize the force; \$58 million for cyber-security technology development and demonstrations to enhance protections available for critical DOD infrastructure and information; \$57 million for advanced manufacturing technologies to reduce the time required to produce high-demand items such as body and vehicle armor, IED jammers and MRAP vehicles and to modernize the Department of Defense test capabilities facilities to ensure that new weapons systems meet warfighter requirements; \$56 million for communications facilities and special operations facilities, all of which have been determined by the military to be mission essential; \$46 million for nonproliferation programs, including the screening of cargo containers coming into the United States, plutonium disposition, and related research and development; \$45 million for Impact Aid to ensure a quality education for military dependents by compensating local school districts that lose property tax revenue due to the presence of tax-exempt military installations; \$35 million for the National Guard to assist State and local law enforcement with counternarcotics operations; \$34 million for the Department of Defense inspector general to continue growth designed to provide more effective oversight and help identify waste, fraud, and abuse in Department of Defense programs; \$30 million to reduce technical risk and increase program performance in the Army's Paladin self-propelled howitzer integrated management program; \$26 million for simulators and trainers for the Army to reduce training costs and increase the preparedness of our troops for the battlefield in Iraq and Afghanistan; and \$25 million to fund a competitive program to protect critical mission training sites by preventing or reducing encroachment through the creation of compatible-use buffer zones.

These are real military needs. These are not "bridges to nowhere"—quite the opposite. This year, we took \$75 million that the Department of Defense planned to spend on military museums and spent it instead on more immediate military needs consistent with our committee policy that military museums should be funded through private donations rather than taxpayer funds.

I am not going to tell the Presiding Officer or anybody else that every judgment the committee made was correct. There is no way I could agree to that. In fact, some of the decisions we made I didn't agree with, but I can say the money that was added was added for what we saw as needed measures to modernize our forces and provide for

our troops. Others may disagree. Some may honestly believe that any spending not included in the administration budget, no matter how important it may be to the military, is wasteful. However, we will not be able to have that debate and vote on any amendments to the funding proposed by the committee unless we vote tomorrow to proceed to consideration of this bill.

We currently have 50,000 U.S. soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines on the ground in Iraq and roughly twice as many in Afghanistan. While there are some issues on which we may disagree, I think we all know we must provide our troops the support they need as long as they remain in harm's way. Senate action on the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011 will improve the quality of life of our men and women in uniform. It will give them the tools they need to remain the most effective fighting force in the world. Most important of all, it will send an important message that we as a nation stand behind them and appreciate their service.

I hope our colleagues will allow us to proceed to consideration of this bill. There obviously will be many amendments offered, some to change or strike the language which is in the bill. That is understandable. There will be some amendments aimed at adding provisions to the bill, and that is not unusual either. As I said, both relevant and nonrelevant amendments have been debated to this bill in the past. It is not unusual. It complicates, obviously, the life of the manager, but that is what we are here for, to consider amendments—both relevant and nonrelevant amendments—to the bill and to try to get a Defense bill passed.

I hope we can make progress on this bill this week. As somebody who may be overly optimistic, I would love to see this bill passed prior to our next recess. But our goal should be to make progress on this bill, and in order to do that, we will need to adopt cloture tomorrow. I hope the Senate does that.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I will be brief because I know there will be a lot more debate tomorrow.

The distinguished chairman just mentioned a number of authorized programs that sound pretty good. They were put in without debate, discussion or amendments. He also left out several that might be of interest to taxpayers, which may be the reason why we see such anger about the kind of spending—out-of-control spending and unnecessary spending.

Here is \$1 million for foreign language correlation and translation; \$3 million for plant-based vaccine development; \$4.5 million for decision and energy reduction tool. The list goes on and on. Here is \$5 million for operator driving simulator; \$1 million for Permafrost Tunnel; \$2.5 million for body temperature conditioner.

All of these, in the eyes of the chairman, are more important than taking care of our allies and cementing success in our operations in Iraq, which was a result of the surge which the chairman, of course, adamantly opposed.

Here is \$7.6 million for a Quiet Propulsion Load House; \$3 million for tribology research. The list goes on and on: \$8 million for a physical fitness center.

By the way, none of these were requested by the Department of Defense.

So we will be going into this some more tomorrow, and we will request an earmark for where they went—one of the key elements of it. None of it is completed. All of those earmarks are designated for certain places and certain manufacturers. It is something the people of this country, again, steadfastly are in opposition to.

I was interested to hear the chairman talk about amendments being allowed and that there will be debate and discussion. That is not the message we got through the media, which the majority leader didn't share with us. My understanding is that we are going to take up three issues. He is going to fill up the tree, which means no other amendments will be allowed. The issues will be the secret holds, the DREAM Act, and, of course, don't ask, don't tell. I hope the chairman is accurate here because there are many issues that many Americans would feel are very important: treatment of terrorists, Guantanamo Bay, and so many other issues that affect the readiness of the men and women and their training and ability, as opposed to the DREAM Act and a repeal of don't ask, don't tell.

Let me point out again that this issue is not on don't ask, don't tell, not an assessment of the effect on the readiness and morale of the men and women in the military. This language is a repeal, then signed onto by the President of the United States, the Secretary of Defense, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. One wonders, what about the Chief of Staff of the Army? What about the Chief of Naval Operations, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, all of whom have objected to this provision because it is being railroaded through without a proper assessment on the morale and effectiveness of our military?

I read from the bill itself that this Secretary's memorandum says:

... determine any impacts to military readiness, military effectiveness, unit cohesion [et cetera] that may result from repeal of the law.

That may result from the repeal of the law. Every provision says that the law will be repealed if the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff sign off on a report that doesn't assess the effect on morale and readiness of the men and women in the military. It would only assess impacts of repeal.

That is not right. We are in two wars. Should we not assess the impact on the readiness, the morale, and effectiveness of the men and women who are in harm's way, who would be affected by the repeal of don't ask, don't tell? Should we not have that assessment?

What the chairman has done and what the majority of the Democrats have done is in blatant disregard for the morale, effectiveness, recruitment, and retention of the men and women serving in the military today. Why couldn't we have done what our service chiefs want and what our senior enlisted people want, and that is an assessment of battle effectiveness and morale regarding a repeal of it, and then decide whether to repeal don't ask, don't tell?

This is really a remarkable act on the part of the Democrats because this is a political issue, just as the DREAM Act is a political issue. It is a political issue. I understand the season. I understand it is not that far between now and the elections. But to use the Defense bill, which has to do with defending our national security interests when we are in two wars, to pursue a social agenda and legislative agenda to galvanize voting blocks I think is reprehensible.

We will be talking a lot about this in the next day or so. I appeal to the American people, who understand what we are about here.

I wish to return to the DREAM Act for another minute. If we enact any legislation that provides people with citizenship in this country without securing our borders, then we have placed ourselves in a situation where we will have more people in this country illegally and we will have to address that issue again. It is no longer a border issue; it is a national security issue. The drug cartels and the human smugglers have now posed a threat to our Nation's security. That is why our Secretary of State, just a couple weeks ago, said the situation in Mexico was comparable to that of Colombia in the 1980s, when they had an active insurgency called the FARC.

To use the Defense authorization bill as a vehicle to enact legislation, which there would be numerous amendments to, there would be hours and hours of debate—by the way, the amendment I proposed about 10 years ago was a rifle shot on a specific issue. This is, of course, a major piece of legislation that affects at least, I am told, 800,000 people who are living in this country illegally.

I hope that we will return to the days I remember in the past when we had unlimited amendments, unlimited debate, and that we move forward in a bipartisan fashion on this issue. Unfortunately, the politicization of this very important legislation that affects our ability to fight and win wars is being compromised for short-term political purposes.

I yield the floor.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant 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 (Mr. KAUFMAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I am going to briefly comment on a number of points the Senator from Arizona made. First, he read a list of items that he thought were wasteful items that we added to the bill. I went through a long list of the items we added to the bill, probably three pages of types of items that we added in the Armed Services Committee that support the troops, their readiness, their capabilities, their benefits.

He suggested—in fact, stated that these spending items were put in the bill without debate, discussion, or amendment. I first want to comment on that because, as the Presiding Officer knows as a very valued and esteemed member of our committee, we spent days on markup. I think we have at least 60 amendments—at least that is my recollection.

Every proposed funding item in this bill and every item of the bill and report language was shared with the minority staff at least a full week before the beginning of the markup. This is, by the way, about twice as much time as was provided by any other committee chairman I can remember in the 30-plus years I have been here in order to give the minority staff an opportunity to look at what the proposed markup documents were.

We then provided the minority staff with several days to suggest changes to the proposed language. A number of significant changes, as a matter of fact, were made on the basis of those discussions and recommendations from the minority staff.

After the changes were made, then the full package was provided to all the members of the committee and their staffs. Again, several days earlier than this had been done in any previous year. So every item the Senator from Arizona mentioned, like every other spending item in the bill, was subject to amendment in committee. I believe it was 2 days of committee deliberations. Again, dozens and dozens of amendments were adopted, some defeated. But a large number of amendments were dealt with.

The opportunity was more than I think has historically been the case for the minority staff, and obviously the majority staff as well, to make recommendations for changes prior to the markup document being presented to members for amendment, and many of those changes were made.

Now, just a couple of examples that the Senator from Arizona used as being evidence of wasteful spending that we added. One was \$3 million for plant-based vaccine development. The background for that \$3 million we added is

the Department of Defense has been working to develop rapid processes for manufacturing vaccines for a variety of biological threat agents in order to safeguard our troops in the battlefield.

The most promising path so far to a speedy response for new vaccines is the use of plants to produce millions of vaccine doses in a matter of weeks at a very low cost, as compared to the 6-plus months for standard production processes that cost many times as much.

So that funding is very valuable funding. I do not think most objective observers would consider that to be pork. It will help meet military needs by continuing the progress toward rapid, tailored vaccine production for new diseases for biological threats.

Another one which was mentioned by my friend from Arizona was the money we added for a physical fitness center at the Malmstrom Air Force Base. Now, fitness is a military requirement. According to the Air Force, the existing fitness center at Malmstrom Air Force Base, which was built in 1957, so that is now over 50 years ago, "does not adequately satisfy personnel or infrastructure demands." The Air Force said in the absence of a new fitness center, "there will continue to be very few options to maintain physical fitness during the winter months." The project meets the criteria established for military construction projects more than a decade ago by Senators Glenn and McCain.

Those are just a couple of the items Senator McCain mentioned. Another point the Senator from Arizona made is that the language relative to don't ask, don't tell does not give the Department of Defense the opportunity to consider the impact of the change on morale and readiness, recruiting and retention of our troops. Here is what the language of our bill does. We were very careful in order to be sure there would be a certification that there would be no negative impact in terms of military readiness, military effectiveness, unit cohesion, and recruiting and retention.

We changed the language in the bill so it was not a direct repeal of don't ask, don't tell, but rather that that policy is going to stay in effect explicitly. This is in subsection C, that don't ask, don't tell shall remain in effect until such time that all of the requirements and certifications by subsection B are met. If these requirements and certifications are not met, section 654 of title 10—that is the don't ask, don't tell policy—shall remain in effect.

One of the certifications that is required before there is a change in policy says:

The implementation of necessary policies and regulations pursuant to the discretion provided by the amendments made by subsection F—

Here is the key language—

is consistent with the standards of military readiness, military effectiveness, unit cohesion, and recruiting and retention of the Armed Forces.

This policy will stay in effect unless and until there is, No. 1, a report—which is underway now—which the Secretary of Defense is going to provide to the Congress relative to the impact of the change in policy. But, secondly, the policy will stay in effect until the President transmits—that is unless and until—the President transmits to the congressional defense committees a written certification signed by the President, Secretary of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stating, again, the standards of military readiness, military effectiveness, unit cohesion, and recruiting and retention of the Armed Forces are being met and would be met with a change in policy.

Those are just two points the Senator from Arizona made that I wish to commend at this time. I believe there is going to be opportunity for further debate tomorrow something like an hour and a half in the morning, although that is being worked on at this time.

But further debate on this bill can be had by anybody who wishes to proceed to it. But I hope we can proceed to the consideration of this bill. This is a motion to proceed to consideration of the bill. All the rights of filibustering and extended debate will be preserved on the bill itself if we can only get to debate the bill. Amendments will be available. Either amendments adding or amendments striking will be available.

But we have to get to the bill. I mean, people are making arguments about the bill which belong at the time of the debate on the bill. But unless we can get to the point where we can debate the bill, it is kind of a theoretical debate we are having—whether it is don't ask, don't tell, whether it is the DREAM Act, whether it is other things which people would either like to change that are in the bill or would like to add to the bill.

As my good friend from Delaware who is presiding at the moment knows, there are provisions in this bill that I opposed in committee that I would like to see stricken from the bill. But to oppose debate on a bill because there are provisions in the bill that we do not like or we would like to see added, it seems to me, engages in an exercise which is not what the intent of the Senate ever was. We should debate bills. We should amend bills. We should offer amendments to strike provisions, to add provisions. But to deny the Senate the opportunity to get to the point where we are debating on the Defense authorization bill is something which seems to me totally unacceptable.

We need to support our troops. This bill is a bill to support the men and women wearing the uniform of this country and their families. One can argue there are provisions in this bill which should not be in the bill. Fine. Debate them. Vote on them. But to say we should not get to the bill which contains provisions so critical for the well

being and success of our men and women in the Armed Forces, it seems to me, is totally inconsistent with what the Armed Services Committee and this Senate need to be about, which is providing for the defense and security of the country and the well being of the men and women who put on the uniform of this country.

So I hope we will get cloture tomorrow and proceed to the debate, which is totally appropriate, on a whole bunch of issues.

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. 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.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO ALICE AND EDWARD PALMER

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today I recognize Alice and Edward "Buzz" Palmer for their service and dedication to Chicago's African-American community.

The Palmers have worked for many years in a variety of capacities to build a strong, involved, and educated African-American community in the city of Chicago.

Alice graduated from high school at the age of 16, and with the help of four jobs and a scholarship, she was able to attend Indiana University. When she graduated in 1965, she used her degree to help others. She became an educator. While she taught at Malcolm X College, Northwestern University, and the University of Illinois at Chicago, she also managed to continue her own education, earning a master's degree from Roosevelt University and a Ph.D. from Northwestern.

Alice realized that education extended outside of the classroom, and so did her work. She helped create voter education programs and founded the Metropolitan Chicago chapter of the YMCA's youth and government program. The YMCA program aims to inspire young people to civic engagement and create opportunities to interact with the political system through service learning and model government.

As a teacher, and later as a legislator, Alice firmly believed that all students could learn. She made it her job to see that each student had that opportunity. She began a drop-out intervention program in the Chicago