

legislation, the HASC's Panel on Business Challenges in the Defense Industry was holding hearings and roundtables examining many of the same issues. I appreciate the leadership of Mr. SHUSTER and Mr. LARSEN in this effort, and I was pleased to be part of one of these roundtables. The Panel and my Committee share a common understanding of issues facing small business participation in contracting and the health of the industrial base, which is the basis for the package of about thirty-five provisions that were included in the House-passed version of the NDAA.

As HASC's Panel and my Committee found, the federal government marketplace is full of great opportunities for small businesses to succeed, if only we give them the chance. The federal government spends over half a trillion dollars each year on private sector contracts; small businesses deserve a chance to compete for the work, because they bring efficiency and cost-savings to the taxpayer and create jobs while doing it.

This year's NDAA makes substantial reforms to small business contracting which will benefit small contractors throughout the Nation and is supported by nearly 30 trade associations. The small business provisions in the NDAA will help make sure existing small business goals are actually met, empower small business advocates, and crack down on fraud. Most importantly, this legislation ensures that small businesses have greater opportunities to compete. Government contracting offers a unique opportunity to invest in small businesses while also stimulating our economy, considering small businesses create the majority of new jobs. The passage of the conference report is a victory for the 27 million small businesses hard at work throughout America.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4310,
NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION
ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the bipartisan conference agreement for the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2013. The conference report authorizes critical resources for our men and women in uniform and the defense of the American people. While I do not agree with every provision in this bill, I'd like to commend the conference committee for including in its report the Israel King amendment which was passed in the House in May 2012.

This bipartisan amendment would improve the coordination of research, treatment, education, and outreach of mental health, substance use disorders, and traumatic brain injury (TBI) among members of the National Guard, Reserve and their families. All Americans have a moral obligation to provide the best care possible to our veterans when they return home after so bravely serving their country.

Mental health and substance use disorders and TBI affect nearly 20% of all the service members who have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. Even more disturbing is that an

American veteran commits suicide every 80 minutes. This is unacceptable. We must act now to ensure our veterans have the support services and access to care that they deserve.

While many active duty service members return from deployments to military bases and have access to quality mental health services, members of the National Guard and Reserve often return from a tour of duty and transition into civilian life far from military bases and without easy access to the care they need. Members of the National Guard and Reserve who have mental health, substance use disorders, or TBI are more likely to have a difficult time transitioning back into family life and their careers.

And those who do seek care in their community may not always receive the most appropriate and effective treatment options. This amendment would allow the Department of Defense to carry out a pilot program with public-private partnerships based on a competitive, merit-based grant process. We have learned that the government cannot meet the needs of our veterans alone. That is why these innovative partnerships are so critical.

Again, I thank the conference committee for including this important amendment in the final bill. American veterans and their families have already sacrificed so much for our country. I encourage all Members to support this critical care for our veterans which they not only need but deserve. We owe them nothing less.

RECOGNIZING THE HONORABLE
THOMAS T. REMINGTON UPON
HIS RETIREMENT FROM SERVICE
AS OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA
CIRCUIT JUDGE

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 21, 2012

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to congratulate Judge Thomas T. Remington upon his retirement after sixteen years as Okaloosa County Circuit Judge.

Judge Remington's career in public service began in 1966 with his commissioning as a second lieutenant in the United States Army. In 1967, he served in Vietnam as an infantry platoon leader with A Company, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment (Airborne), 173rd Airborne Brigade. His military badges and decorations include the Combat Infantry Badge, the Silver Star, two Bronze Stars with Combat Distinguishing Devices, and two Purple Hearts.

After his honorable discharge from the Army, Judge Remington served as Assistant Public Defender for the First Judicial Circuit of Florida. In 1971, after being admitted to practice in all State and Federal Courts, he served as Assistant Public Defender for the First Judicial Circuit of Florida. His success in that role earned him the position of Assistant State Attorney for the First Judicial Circuit of Florida. In 1973, he became a partner in the law firm Smith, Grimsley & Remington, P.A. in Fort Walton Beach, Florida. In 1976, he was appointed Acting State Attorney to conduct a special grand jury investigation.

From 1977 to 1992, Judge Remington belonged to the Association of Trial Lawyers of America and the Academy of Florida Trial

Lawyers. From 1980 to 1984, he served on the First Judicial Circuit Trial Court Nominating Commission, and from 1988 to 1990, he served as Chairman of the First Judicial Circuit Grievance Committee. Judge Remington's career as a judge began in 1993, when he became a Walton County Circuit Judge in DEFUNIAK Springs, Florida. In 1996 Judge Remington was elected Circuit Judge for Okaloosa County and has held that position since then, even serving as Chairman of the Okaloosa County Judicial Task Force in 1997.

Without question, Judge Remington's positive contributions to Northwest Florida and to our nation have been immense, and his mark on the judicial landscape will remain for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it gives me great pride to congratulate Judge Thomas T. Remington on his retirement and thank him for his service. My wife Vicki joins me in wishing Judge Remington; his wife, Dinah Smith; their children, Scott A. Remington, Mary Remington Williams, and Sara (Betsy) E. Hart; as well as their nine grandchildren, all the best.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4310,
NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION
ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great regret that I rise to reluctantly oppose the Fiscal Year 2013 National Defense Authorization Conference Report.

While the final version of the Defense Authorization bill makes many key improvements from the House-passed bill earlier this year, it unfortunately continues to fail the test of balance and funds billions of dollars of unnecessary programs within the Defense Department, while disregarding the caps set forth by the Budget Control Act. As Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Mr. ROGERS, said last year when we passed the BCA, "Tough choices will have to be made, particularly when it comes to defense and national security priorities, but shared sacrifice will bring shared results." Unfortunately, the bill that is before us violates that bipartisan agreement.

In developing its plan for FY2013, the Defense Department conducted a comprehensive review of force needs, capabilities and obligations. Difficult choices were made about which programs to keep and which to cut in order to maintain a fiscally responsible mission ready capability. However, the Conference Report authorizes funding levels above those requested by the president and above the BCA. The measure authorizes \$552 billion in base national defense spending for the current year and \$88.5 billion for the war in Afghanistan—\$1.7 billion above the funding levels requested by the President in his February budget submission and \$6.3 billion above the cap the BCA set last year.

There are many programs contained in this bill that were not requested by the Defense Department. For example, the measure authorizes the establishment of a missile defense site on the East Coast that the DoD says threatens funding for the maintenance

and construction of other more urgent elements of the country's missile defense. The administration has not identified a requirement for a third U.S.-based missile defense site, and has yet to assess its feasibility or cost.

The bill also includes provisions that block the administration's ability to retire aging and unnecessary military aircraft, including eighteen RQ-4 Global Hawk Block 30 drones. As a result, the Defense Department would be forced to operate, sustain, and maintain aircraft that are in excess of national requirements and are not affordable in this budget environment. At the same time, I was disappointed that the Conference Report ended funding for the Medium Extended Air Defense System, or MEADS, a \$3.4 billion missile defense system. The President asked Congress to restore funding for the system, which is being developed in a partnership with Germany and Italy and is viewed as a symbol of transatlantic cooperation.

I remain concerned about potential arbitrary cuts to the civilian workforce at DoD. In particular, there is a provision in the bill that requires a percentage reduction in the civilian and service contractor employee workforces that is proportional to the reduction in military end strength over a five-year period. While I am encouraged that the Conference Report made some changes that will give the Department of Defense more flexibility than existed in the original bill, the final version could continue to compromise the Department's ability to appropriately size its workforce to meet the mission workload requirements and its readiness and management needs. As the Defense Department stated, "... even during these periods of constrained defense budgets, we must ensure that we have the sufficient number of federal civilian personnel to meet the support needs of our military forces.

I am also disappointed that an amendment was stripped from the Conference Report which would have banned the indefinite military detention without charge or trial of Americans and lawful U.S. residents on domestic soil. Americans and permanent residents of the U.S. who are detained in the United States should be granted the right to be tried in the civilian justice system. We can and must protect our national security without jeopardizing our fundamental rights and freedoms.

I do, however, support several measures included in the final version of the NDA. I was pleased that nearly \$480 million was allocated for U.S.-Israel missile defense cooperation, including \$211 million for Iron Dome, reaffirming the U.S.-Israel ties on missile defense. I also support the inclusion of an amendment offered by Senator SHAHEEN, which allows Department of Defense funds to be used to allow female service members to choose to terminate a pregnancy in cases of rape.

In addition, I was encouraged that the Conference Report proposed to enhance protections for contractor-employee whistleblowers who blow the whistle on waste, fraud, and abuse on DOD contracts and the contracts of civilian agencies. Furthermore, I support the bill's critical human rights provisions, including new requirements to monitor overseas subcontractors for human trafficking.

Despite the inclusion of these important measures, the fact remains that the FY2013 Defense Authorization Bill departs significantly from the spending levels set forth in the BCA last year. It is in violation of a bipartisan

agreement and understanding that in order to get our fiscal house in order we have to make tough decisions on defense and non-defense spending alike. For those reasons, I cannot support this legislation.

CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING AFGHANISTAN/PAKISTAN STUDY GROUPS

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 21, 2012

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I submitted for the RECORD extensive correspondence I have had with the Obama Administration regarding the importance of creating the bipartisan Afghanistan/Pakistan Study Group (APSG). Today I submit for the RECORD the remaining correspondence I have had from October 3, 2011 to December 13, 2012. The very fact that President Obama and Secretary Panetta will not create the APSG is a disgrace.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, October 3, 2011.

Hon. LEON PANETTA,
Secretary of Defense,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY PANETTA, I am disappointed that your staff was unable to meet with Ambassador Peter Tomsen to discuss his book on Afghanistan and Pakistan. While I understand that both you and Mr. Tomsen have busy schedules, I fear you and your staff may be missing pertinent information and insight that could help devise a successful strategy in South Asia.

You only need to read the headlines to see the erosion in our relationship with the Pakistani military and intelligence services. Recent comments from retiring chairman of the Joint Chiefs Admiral Mullen have described how the Pakistani military and Inter Service Intelligence agency actively cooperate with two of the most deadly terror networks sowing the seeds of destruction and chaos in Afghanistan. Ambassador Tomsen's book, *The Wars of Afghanistan* provides detailed information on the tribal structures and the realities of Pakistani involvement with terrorist groups. I sincerely hope that you and your staff will read his book.

I have also enclosed a column Mr. Tomsen wrote for the most recent edition of *World Policy Journal*. I hope you and your staff will find the piece informative.

The situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan grows more dire nearly every day. I again ask that you use your authority to create the Af/Pak Study Group. We owe nothing less to the men and women making the ultimate sacrifice to ensure that we have a long-term strategy for success in the region.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 17, 2012.

Hon. LEON PANETTA,
Secretary of Defense, *Washington DC.*

DEAR SECRETARY PANETTA, As I am sure you are aware, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2012 contains language providing your office with \$1 million to assemble the Afghanistan/Pakistan (Af/Pak) Study Group. I request that you do so immediately.

The Los Angeles Times reported last week (article enclosed) that the most recent National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) paints a very bleak picture of the war in Afghanistan and the future of U.S. operations in that region. It reflects concerns that I have expressed in numerous letters to you over time, especially the importance of understanding Afghan tribal and political structures and the Pakistani military and intelligence services actively cooperating with two of the most deadly terror networks in the region.

Given this stark assessment from our own intelligence community, the need to create the Af/Pak Study Group is clear. The Af/Pak Study Group's analysis and recommendations could bring needed clarity to current and future U.S. military and diplomatic operations. You supported the Iraq Study Group and lent your considerable expertise to that effort, so I am perplexed as to why you do not similarly support the Af/Pak Study Group.

Your November 3, 2011, letter to me stated that coalition troops are making progress against the Taliban and other militants and that progress is being made on our relationship with the Pakistani government and military. I have enormous respect for the men and women serving our country in South Asia and acknowledge that our troops are performing their mission with bravery and resolve; however, the NIE appears to contradict your assessment.

Also enclosed is an article by the Hudson Institute's Nina Shea discussing how Hussain Haqqani, the former Pakistani Ambassador to the United States is facing possible charges of treason for his alleged involvement in "Memogate." Shea asserts, "There is every reason to believe that the real reason Haqqani is being targeted is that he is a prominent moderate Muslim, one of the few remaining in Pakistan's government." Shea goes on to point out that Haqqani was personal friends with two men, Punjab governor Salman Taseer and Pakistan's Federal Minister of Minority Affairs Shabbaz Bhatti, whose lives were cut tragically short last year as a result of their outspoken critique of Pakistan's draconian blasphemy laws.

Increasingly we see a trend in Pakistan of moderating voices being marginalized and altogether silenced. While I appreciate that you are "working hard with Pakistan to improve the level of cooperation" so that terrorist and militant groups no longer find safe haven in the country—I am afraid the complexity of the evolving situation in Pakistan necessitates more.

The NIE's assessment could lead to support for the war in Afghanistan eroding among the American people and I feel the same sentiment will soon permeate the halls of Congress. If the president has simply decided that U.S. involvement will end in 2014 and that no further U.S. strategy is needed, he should clearly state that this is his policy and be forthcoming with the American people. If President Obama has not made a final determination on U.S. strategy going forward, I ask again, what harm can come from a group of independent experts using their experience to offer solutions for long-term success?

Following 9/11, I have supported U.S. military actions in the War on Terror. I want to see our soldiers, diplomats and Foreign Service personnel return home with their heads held high, knowing they all played a crucial role in establishing stability in South Asia where countries no longer pose a threat to our national security. I firmly believe that you can help ensure this happens by using the money made available to you to create the Af/Pak Study Group. Establishing this