

Had I been present, I would have voted “nay” on rollcall 259 and rollcall 260. The rule providing for consideration of H.R. 4310 denied the House the opportunity to consider a number of key issues of interest to members of the House and our constituents. In particular, the rule denied a vote on my amendment to restore important health and safety protections for workers and residents who live near nuclear weapons facilities that will be undermined by the underlying bill. The rule also did not allow for a vote on the amendment offered by Mr. MCGOVERN to accelerate the re-deployment of our troops from Afghanistan that was supported by Armed Services Committee Ranking Democrat ADAM SMITH, Democratic Whip STENY HOYER, Republican Representative WALTER JONES, and others.

Had I been present, I would have voted “nay” on rollcall No. 261. I support H. Res. 568’s goal of preventing Iran from achieving a nuclear weapons capacity and am on record on numerous occasions supporting legislation to this effect. Yet I do not believe that this resolution is a sensible way to pursue that goal. President Obama has effectively utilized aggressive sanctions and has united the international community diplomatically, which has substantially increased pressure on Iran to agree to a deal to prevent continued uranium enrichment and allow international inspectors to verify that Iran’s nuclear program is not being used for military purposes. Congress should encourage that progress to continue but I am concerned that H. Res. 568 could disrupt the progress that is being made through negotiations and could bring the U.S. closer to war unnecessarily.

In addition, had I been present, I would have voted “aye” on rollcall No. 262.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. PHIL GINGREY

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2012

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4310) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2013 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2013, and for other purposes:

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong support of amendment #45, offered by Mr. GOHMERT. This amendment clarifies that the Fiscal Year 2012 National Defense Authorization Act and the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) do not deny the writ of habeas corpus—or any Constitutional rights—to those detained in the United States under the AUMF who are entitled to such rights.

Mr. Chair, this amendment is necessary because while the intent in the FY ‘12 NDAA was not to allow for the indefinite detention of U.S. citizens without access to legal representation, some have misconstrued it as such. Simply put, this misunderstanding must end today. I support this amendment because I believe that providing for the safety and security of United States citizens is the paramount responsibility of the federal government. As we

continue to fight the Global War on Terror, we must provide the President, the intelligence community, and our troops with all of the tools necessary to carry out this duty. Clearly, we must do this within the framework of our Constitution, and make certain that the Constitutional rights provided for our citizens are not violated.

Mr. Chair, in order to guarantee our citizens’ Constitutional rights, I am further pleased that the text of H.R. 4388, the Right to Habeas Corpus Act—which was authored by Mr. RIGELL of Virginia and of which I am proud to be an original cosponsor—was included in the FY ‘13 NDAA. Article 1, section 9 of the Constitution states ‘The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public Safety may require it.’ This legislation affirms that and goes on to state that ‘Nothing in the Authorization for Use of Military Force (Public Law 107–40; 50 U.S.C. 1541 note) or the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (Public Law 112–81) shall be construed to deny the availability of the writ of habeas corpus in a court ordained or established by or under Article III of the Constitution for any person who is detained in the United States pursuant to the Authorization for Use of Military Force.’

Mr. Chair, with the adoption of Mr. GOHMERT’s amendment and inclusion of Mr. RIGELL’s legislation, we are taking the steps necessary to ensure the protection of our citizens’ rights, while at the same time denying terrorists the same privileges.

Former Attorneys General Ed Meese and Mike Mukasey—as well as other high ranking national security officials from both the Reagan and Bush Administrations—requested in a May 9 letter to the Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee that “As the House begins consideration of the NDAA for Fiscal Year 2013, we urge you to ensure that attempts to exploit misconceptions about the NDAA are not successful in harming U.S. national security.” Clearly they are referencing the misunderstanding stemming from the FY ‘12 NDAA. They further wrote that “the FY ‘12 NDAA included an affirmation of the detention authority provided by the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF). Given the President’s plan to withdraw U.S. combat forces from Afghanistan and the continuing threat posed by groups like al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, this affirmation was a critical step in reinforcing the military’s legal authorities to combat terror.”

As it relates to the other end of the spectrum—providing terrorists the same rights as would be conferred to U.S. citizens, as would be the case if the amendment authored by Mr. SMITH and Mr. AMASH were to be adopted—their letter states that “. . . rewarding terrorists with greater rights for making it to the United States would actually incentivize them to come to our shores, or to recruit from within the United States, where they pose the greatest risk to the American people. Such a result is perverse.”

Mr. Chair, I am glad that because of our actions today, we are making clear the distinction between the rights provided our citizens and those provided to terrorists, while stating unequivocally that U.S. citizens will not be stripped of their habeas privileges.

I urge my colleagues to support Mr. GOHMERT’s amendment.

KYLE BEDFORD

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 18, 2012

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Kyle Bedford for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Kyle Bedford is a 11th grader at Pomona High and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Kyle Bedford is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Kyle Bedford for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all his future accomplishments.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2012

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong and unyielding opposition to H.R. 4970, “Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2012.” I urge my colleagues to reject this legislation and appeal to the Republican leadership to bring to the floor the Senate version of this bill which passed with a substantial bipartisan majority. Every Democratic Senator and 15 Senate Republicans, including all of the Senate GOP women, voted for the bill.

H.R. 4970 reauthorizes the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) for five years. It provides federal resources authorized by VAWA directly to organizations and programs that help prevent violent crime and protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. It consolidates grant programs and requires more audits and direct grant applicants to disclose their sources of federal funding. It also includes new benchmarks for visa applicants who are the victims of violent crime.

Madam Speaker, VAWA has never been a partisan issue until this Congress. Twice over the last 20 years, Democrats and Republicans have worked together to reauthorize VAWA and make necessary improvements. But just like on the Highway Bill, House Republicans are abandoning the bipartisan consensus that has always existed on VAWA reauthorizations. The bill rolls back important protections for immigrant victims that put them in a more vulnerable position than under current law by eliminating longstanding confidentiality of VAWA petitions for protection by allowing immigration officials to contact a battered woman’s abusive spouse, tipping off the abuser to the victim’s efforts to leave.

H.R. 4970 also makes it more difficult for undocumented witnesses to work with law enforcement officials, and eliminates a pathway

to permanent residency for victims of major crimes who cooperate with police on serious criminal cases. The bill also completely excludes vulnerable populations such as tribal women, and LGBT individuals.

The House Republican bill removes the key provisions from the bipartisan passed Senate bill improving protections for Native American women and ensuring all victims are assisted regardless of religion or sexual orientation.

The House Republican bill is opposed by hundreds of groups within the domestic violence community, as well as law enforcement, civil rights and faith-based groups.

Drafting a VAWA bill without any input from Democrats and without any Democratic support in the Judiciary Committee goes against how these reauthorizations have been crafted for over two decades. And it has produced a bill that weakens, rather than strengthens, protections for women against domestic abuse.

I oppose H.R. 4970 and urge my colleagues to do likewise.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 18, 2012

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, on May 7, 2012, I inadvertently missed rollcall vote 197 on H. Con. Res. 117. Had I been present I would have voted "yea."

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE REGARDING IMPORTANCE OF PREVENTING IRAN FROM ACQUIRING NUCLEAR WEAPONS CAPABILITY

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2012

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, on May 17, 2012, the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed H. Res. 568, a resolution expressing a sense of the House regarding the importance of preventing the Government of Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapons capability. Despite agreeing with the overall intent of the resolution, I was compelled to vote "present" due to concerns about how the resolution was drafted.

I wholeheartedly believe that stopping the proliferation of nuclear weapons is necessary to ensure the peaceful security of our Nation, and the world. Accordingly, I am gravely concerned about the prospect of a nuclear weapon-armed Government of Iran, which has vehemently antagonized its regional neighbors, particularly our ally Israel. H. Res. 568 expresses this concern and supports a permanent agreement with Iran that assures its nuclear program is entirely peaceful. I also agree with the support expressed in H. Res. 568 for the universal rights and democratic aspirations of the Iranian people, many of whom have suffered greatly in pursuit of these noble causes.

Unfortunately, H. Res. 568 employs dangerously ambiguous language when reframing U.S. policy to prevent this potential nuclear weapon threat. The resolution references nu-

clear weapons "capability" as a new basis for U.S. policy. A loose interpretation of the undefined "capability" term, combined with the resolution's strong rejection of any policy—U.S. or otherwise—that does not prevent a nuclear weapons-capable Iran, can easily accelerate the rhetoric for military action against Iran. Furthermore, the resolution's policy restrictions can only hinder the upcoming P5+1 negotiations with Iran. For these reasons, I voted "present" on H. Res. 568.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2012

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4310) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2013 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2013, and for other purposes:

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chair, I am in opposition to this bill.

Let me begin by praising our ranking member, the gentleman from Washington, Representative ADAM SMITH. Ranking Member SMITH brought forward a number of excellent proposals that would have significantly improved this bill, especially his effort to eliminate the indefinite detention provisions that were included in last year's bill. He also supported efforts to rein in excess Pentagon spending by supporting Representative BARBARA LEE's amendment to trim \$8 billion from the bill. Had the amendment passed, it would have restored the funding level in the bill to what Democrats and Republicans had agreed to in this year's Federal budget bill.

Unfortunately, the majority chose to vote down both of those amendments and thus continue a misguided, counterproductive detainee policy and still more reckless spending. Moreover, the majority is attempting to interfere with the President's ability to negotiate arms control agreements with Russia, a potentially unconstitutional action. Additionally, this bill continues to fund Cold War legacy weapon systems like the F-35 and V-22 which we neither need nor can afford. Indeed, it's worth remembering that if we proceed with the procurement of the F-35, that program will cost taxpayers in excess of \$400 billion—\$50 billion more than the entire defense budget was a decade ago. We need to think anew about how best to defend our country, not continue to buy weapons to deter a Soviet Union that ceased to exist over 20 years ago.

Finally, this bill continues the deadly folly that is the war in Afghanistan, now the longest war in our country's history. There is no good reason for us still to be involved in combat operations in Afghanistan. We invaded Afghanistan to get Osama bin Laden and his key lieutenants—the men who were responsible for the 9/11 attacks on our Nation. Last year, President Obama authorized the operation that eliminated bin Laden. The chief planner of the 9/11 attacks, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, has been in our custody for years. The Al Qaeda we went to war with in 2001 effectively

no longer exists, and thus the reason we sent our troops to Afghanistan no longer exists, which is why they should come home now but won't, thanks to this misguided bill. It is for all these reasons that I will vote against this bill.

KRISTEN DUNN

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 18, 2012

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Kristen Dunn for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Kristen Dunn is an 8th grader at Wheat Ridge 5-8 and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Kristen Dunn is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Kristen Dunn for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all her future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING SHERRIE SLICK OF KETCHIKAN, ALASKA

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 18, 2012

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of an incredible person. I do so, on behalf of myself, former Senators Ted Stevens and Frank Murkowski, the Community of Ketchikan, and the State of Alaska. It is my privilege to recognize Sherrie Slick of Ketchikan, Alaska, for her 25 years of dedicated service as staff to the Alaska Congressional Delegation.

Sherrie is a true community leader and has worked hard to represent the Alaska Congressional Delegation in our Ketchikan office. While we are sad to see her go, we wish her the best during her retirement and future endeavors.

The first thing that comes to mind when I think of Sherrie is her unfailing energy. She has been tireless in her dedication to constituents and her service to the Delegation. She is deeply tied to Ketchikan, and residents value her civic leadership. I am impressed at how Sherrie manages to take on so many projects—from charitable events to Delegation visits, and I always say that Sherrie is so involved that she seems to be in several places at once.

The Alaskans who visited Sherrie over the years, in need of assistance or to voice their opinion on legislation, found her to be both knowledgeable and welcoming. In fact, Sherrie was a staunch advocate for her fellow citizens.

Sherrie is also a great story-teller. I always looked forward to hearing from her about local