

took a sock with a lock in it and caused another young person to leave that school in an ambulance to go to the hospital for some 15 to 20 stitches. We've seen the results of bullying that resulted in the suicide of one college student and the suicide of a 13-year-old. And we've certainly seen the movie "Bully."

I want to thank Lee Hurst for joining me last week in listening to the stories of those who tell real stories. Today, I introduced H.R. 5770, which is a bullying prevention law, including the reauthorization of the Juvenile Block Grant. It is imperative that this Congress make a national statement that bullying is unacceptable, but more importantly, that we give the tools to school districts around the Nation and communities to intervene and prevent bullying.

Our children are precious. I ask my colleagues to join in a bipartisan manner on this legislation.

FISCAL YEAR 2013 NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

THE SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RIGELL). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. ROBY. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is truly an honor tonight to stand with other freshman colleagues to discuss the ever-important number one constitutional responsibility of this Congress, in my opinion, very clearly spelled out: to provide for the common defense. Of course, this week the House will debate H.R. 4310, the Fiscal Year 2013 National Defense Authorization Act.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, we marked this up in committee last week into the wee hours of the morning and it passed the House Armed Services Committee on May 10 with a bipartisan vote of 56-5. This legislation specifically provides for pay, funding, and authorities for America's men and women in uniform; and it's the key mechanism by which we fulfill our constitutional duty to provide for the common defense.

This bill does many things. But I thought what I would do in the beginning of this hour, as I see some of my freshman colleagues joining us tonight, is that I would start by just telling you what happened to me just this morning, as it often does. I, of course, have two very large military installations in Alabama's Second District. So I often-times have military men and women in uniform on my planes as I fly back and forth to and from Washington.

This morning, my husband had come in with me because I had some extra bags and he was helping me. And I could tell that there was a family sitting there, and I suspected that the young man was about to be deployed. The father came over to me and spoke. Now, I'm away from my children, as

are all Members of Congress, but they're usually for very short periods of time, and whereas that sacrifice is difficult in a lot of ways, it pales in comparison to the sacrifice of our men and women in uniform who put themselves in harm's way, not to mention their family members, who are also sacrificing their children and their spouses and their loved ones.

This morning, on this plane ride, not unlike many others, it was a stark reminder to me and to my family as my husband stood by and watched this family as they greeted us, as clearly the mom had a little tear in her eye, and it was just such a huge reminder to us of what individuals who have chosen to enter into our military service do for us to fight for the very freedoms that allow for me, Mr. Speaker, to stand in front of you tonight to discuss this ever-important act.

□ 1940

And so to the young man that I met this morning in Montgomery, Alabama's regional airport, to all of our young men and women serving all over this great Nation and this world, thank you from the bottom of my heart for the privilege to serve them as a member of the House Armed Services Committee and as a Member of this Congress. It is a tremendous honor and a privilege, and one that I certainly do not take lightly.

Overall, this bill that we passed out of committee that we will take up this week restores fiscal sanity to our defense budget and keeps faith with America's men and women, as I have already mentioned. It aligns our military posture in this very, very dangerous world and rebuilds the force after a decade of war.

Now, do not be mistaken. You know, Mr. Speaker, that we are currently working, under the law, \$487 billion in cuts to the Department of Defense. We have sat as members of the House Armed Services Committee in committee hearing after committee hearing where our joint chiefs and our commanders have sat in front of us and told us that, yes, in fact, we will have a smaller force as a result of these current cuts. I think we can all agree in these fiscal times that there is not an area that is funded by hardworking taxpayer dollars of this Federal Government that doesn't deserve harsh scrutiny when it comes to fiscal cuts. And our military is certainly going to sustain those with these \$485 billion in cuts.

But under the Budget Control Act and the joint committee's failure to provide the necessary cuts under that law, the automatic trigger that we here in Congress call sequestration is set to take place at the beginning of January next year. What we have heard in our committee hearings over and over and over again from Secretary Panetta, from General Dempsey, and others, is that our military cannot sustain another half-trillion or more in

cuts. Not only would we have a smaller force, but there is a danger of a less capable force, particularly in this time in our Nation's history as we continue to fight the war on terror both here at home and abroad.

I bring all of this up to say that, again, the light in our military is our military families and the men and women who serve this country so honorably. And we, as members of the House Armed Services Committee and as Members of this United States Congress, have a duty to ensure that we are not only acting fiscally responsibly, but we are doing it in a way that ensures that those men and women have everything that they need to accomplish the task and the mission that we send them into.

There are several suggestions that have been made as it results to the \$487 billion in cuts as we downsize our force. One of them that came out and has been scrutinized particularly is the C-130 decision. I just want to spend a little time, since I, as a member of the committee, had an amendment before the Armed Services Committee last week to deal with the way that our military looked at these potential cuts, and actually provide us with the information that we need to then in turn provide oversight as members of this committee as to whether or not these are decisions that are going to provide us with the fiscal restraint that we need.

The committee passed this amendment during markup. Representative CONAWAY from Texas and Representative PALAZZO from Mississippi also were on this amendment regarding the Air Force's C-130. I look forward, with the other Members of the Alabama delegation, to have a conversation specifically with Secretary Donley and General Schwartz as it relates to decisions regarding the C-130. Mind you, and I want to be very clear when I say this, this could be the C-130, this could be the Abrams tank, this could be MEADS, this could be any other aspect of our military where we need to be asking these same questions. Certainly this is important to us, the Representatives that signed on to this amendment, because the C-130 is located in our districts, but I want to be clear, because this is not about just protecting the mission at home. This is about making sure that across the board we are asking the right questions to protect the missions, as I've already stated, as well as making decisions that are going to find the savings that we need.

So our amendment very clearly just says, how did you determine which C-130 aircraft will be retired and relocated, and the methodologies underlying such determinations, including what assumptions were made to define and shape these specific determinations. And the rationale for selecting various C-130 aircraft from regular and reserve components, and the details of the costs incurred, avoided or saved, with respect to these C-130s.

And here's the most important part—and again, this is why I believe this amendment could be applied throughout our military: the GAO has to audit the Secretary's report to make sure that the true cost and benefit of the planned retirement and relocations are realized. This amendment, like so many others in this National Defense Authorization Act, is straightforward. This is a straightforward provision to make sure that the Congress received the necessary information to make our authorizing decisions in an objective manner that will benefit our men and women in uniform and the American taxpayer.

I have my friend here from New York and hopefully others that will be joining us. I know we have many difficult decisions, but I just urge all of my colleagues this week, as we move through the National Defense Authorization Act and all of the amendments that will be debated and voted upon, that we will do so with this young man whom I spoke to this morning who is now deployed to Kuwait for a year, that we will do so with him and so many thousands of others in mind as we move through, making sure that we always do our best because we are supposed to keep faith with our military families and provide all that our men and women need to accomplish the mission.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from New York (Mr. REED) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to join with my colleague from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY) and applaud her leadership in establishing and taking the lead this evening to discuss a critical issue that we are dealing with here in Washington as we go forward with the debate on the National Defense Authorization Act.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, this is the authorization bill that takes care of our men and women in our military ranks. Mr. Speaker, I tender my comments this evening based on the fact that I am the son of a career military officer who spent 20 years in the Army, saw active duty in World War II and Korea, received the Silver Star, multiple Purple Hearts, multiple Bronze Stars, for his efforts and his sacrifices that he made in those forums defending America and standing up for all of the freedoms and the beliefs that we all hold dear in America coast to coast. So I am honored to be a son of such a distinguished individual in our Armed Services, and though I never did wear the uniform, I carry with me the commitment that he passed on to my 11 older brothers and sisters that you always stand with our military, you always stand with our veterans, Madam Speaker, and that's why I join you tonight to come to the floor and discuss this important issue, because as we

face the national debt crisis that we all know on both sides of the aisle is real, \$15.7 trillion of national debt, it is clearly unsustainable.

We have to have a conversation, an open and honest conversation with all of the hardworking taxpayers of America and say here in Washington, D.C., we are going to try to get our act together, and to make the commonsense decisions when it comes to our fiscal house. And in that conversation, and as we go forward as we did last week with the issue of sequestration and the replacement, the reconciliation that Mr. RYAN from Wisconsin led, as we go forward with the debate on the National Defense Authorization Act this week, we need to go forward recognizing the cuts that have already occurred on the defense side of the ledger.

It is my understanding, looking at some of the numbers, that essentially 50 percent of the deficit reduction efforts to date has come at the expense of defense expenditures. That is approximately 20 percent of our Federal budget dedicated to defense spending.

□ 1950

So that 20 percent of defense spending is already absorbing 50 percent of the deficit reduction efforts that we have led here in Washington, D.C., primarily with the leadership of people like the lady from Alabama and other leaders in the freshman class.

So we have to make sure that when we go forward in this debate, we recognize the sacrifice and the hard decision—and rightfully so—that defense has been part of this conversation of getting our fiscal house in order, and every dollar has to be scrutinized, and that does include the defense budget.

But I think we're at the point, Madam Speaker, where we have to be very sensitive to any additional cuts—or those cuts that are going to be necessary because of the fiscal condition we find ourselves in America—that we do not cross that line in the sand that we must never break. That line in the sand is making sure that our men and women in harm's way are given the resources, the equipment, the tools to not only protect them when they're afield fighting for us and defending freedom of America, but when they come home as veterans and enjoy the benefits that they've earned by engaging in that sacrifice, by being in harm's way for all of us. We must make sure that we never cross that line with our cuts to our military that put those men and women in harm's way or those families that sacrifice so much with them, to have to endure the situation where those benefits that they earned are taken away. So we will stand, I think, united in a strong voice to make sure that doesn't happen. I know I am committed to it, Madam Speaker. And I will always stand—as my father taught me and taught my older brothers and sisters and my mother—you stand with the vets, you stand with the military. And though they have to be

part of this conversation because of the harsh reality that we find ourselves in with \$15.7 trillion worth of national debt, we cannot go that far that we jeopardize their very well-being and their sacrifices that they have recognized on our behalf.

So I was pleased to see in the proposal out of the FY13 National Defense Authorization Act the fact that we were able to beat back the administration's proposal to make significant fee increases in the TRICARE program—TRICARE being the health benefits that our veterans earned and enjoy—and which serve over 9.3 million beneficiaries, including 5.5 million military retirees. I am glad to see that the NDAA, the National Defense Authorization Act, stopped that approach to dealing with the cuts on TRICARE or in fee increases on the TRICARE side. I will always want to stand for those commonsense principles that say: Cuts, yes, we have to do them, but we cannot do them across that line.

There is one area that I would like to also address before I yield to some of my colleagues that have joined us here on the floor, and that's the detainee provisions of the National Defense Authorization Act, which is the language in the bill that deals with making sure that the rights that we enjoy as American citizens are protected when it comes to the detention of individuals in America.

I am pleased to see that language that I cosponsored with gentlemen such as Mr. RIGELL, who has joined us this evening from Virginia, and Mr. LANDRY from Louisiana. When this issue came up in previous debates in last year's National Defense Authorization Act, there was a spirited debate, if you recall, Madam Speaker, in which the issue came up: Do American citizens still retain the rights as guaranteed under the Constitution when it comes to the writ of habeas corpus? There was a spirited debate, and I clearly came down on the side that we need to make sure that we protect those rights for American citizens, and that any issues of detainment are done in respect to the Constitution and all the rights that we enjoy as free citizens in America. I believe the bill did address that last year, but there was a legitimate question raised about it. So I'm pleased to see in this bill language, it is my understanding, that will make sure and be very clear that any American citizen detained in America has the rights as guaranteed under the Constitution. I hope my colleague from Virginia will touch on those issues, and I'm proud to stand with him to make sure that we send a clear message that American citizens continue to enjoy and will always continue to enjoy the rights and freedoms and protections as afforded to us under the Constitution, and that the writ of habeas corpus is secure and will continue to be secure as we move forward.

We can go on and on, but I know I have some colleagues. I notice I've got

a non-freshman Member to join us tonight, Madam Speaker, to address this critical issue, and we are pleased to have our senior Members down with us.

With that, I yield to the gentleman from Kentucky.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I thank the gentleman for the opportunity to share with you tonight, as I remember those days being both a freshman doing Special Orders, and also serving on the Armed Services Committee before moving over to the Ways and Means Committee. I appreciate the chance to share.

One thing that I would emphasize: you know, over the last 18 months we've heard a lot of interesting arguments in the media about the 99 percent and the 1 percent and on and on, and it fueled lots of politics. I think the whole argument got best clarified by a group of Army men and women who put together a little video called "The Real 1 Percent." It was focused on servicemembers and servicemembers' families.

Most recently, a little company called Ranger Up T-shirts—admittedly with a tie to my alumni in the Rangers—more accurately stated it was the 0.45 percent. It just talked about the descending level of public involvement in the military to almost a minimal level. People don't understand right now, at this time, that we are in the midst of two wars, we have threats of a wide spectrum that we've never had before. When I enlisted in the military 36 years ago next month, our Army was twice as big as it is today. We're carrying an operations tempo that's significant.

I'm very concerned about the cuts and have made that clear. I'm grateful for the leadership on the Armed Services Committee of Chairman MCKEON to try to keep moving these numbers in the right direction because it's my West Point classmates—who are commanding divisions today—who are out there facing these challenges of increased operations tempo. And what an operations tempo is is this, Madam Speaker: that's how often the units have to rotate or deploy into some type of a theater of operations, whether it's peaceful or hostile.

With the drawdowns in personnel, if operations in Afghanistan continue through 2014 and beyond, potentially, that means the deployment rate of our marines and our soldiers could actually be greater than it was in recent years and actually exceed the time during the surge in Iraq in 2007. That's unconscionable to me.

The key to successful doctrine and to successful defense policy ultimately begins with investing in people. The second thing we do is address the threat. Then, after we address the threat, we look at doctrines to deal with that, and finally systems.

Are there opportunities to make cuts in defense to save money? Absolutely. But one of the challenges that often gets missed in debates in Washington,

whether it's add money or cut money, is dealing with the root causes that demand that spending. For example, if we look at acquisition spending rather than cutting people, there's tremendous opportunities for cutting of spending. The Federal acquisition regulations, the defense acquisition regulations prescribe a level of overhead that would be considered unacceptable in the private sector.

The gentleman from Virginia, who's about to speak, who is a successful executive in the automotive industry, watched great changes take place over time in terms of what it took to bring a car to marketplace. I'm going to mention this in perspective of a defense example that I personally have been touched by.

Toyota, which is headquartered in my district, redesigns every part on every vehicle and retrains every employee—the entire customer service network and distribution and supply chains are redone every 3 years. The average time to bring an end item, a vehicle, online in the United States military right now is about 15 years.

Now, I keep in my office a little memento. As a former Army aviator who flew here and in the Middle East and had two delightful tours in lower Alabama, which the current Speaker pro tem represents, at Fort Rucker, Alabama, I was very excited about the V-22 Osprey coming online. I got to go to the factory in Fort Worth and was out on the floor, and I managed to pick up a piece of scrap that was cut off from flight test article number 1, the wing spar for flight test article number 1 for the V-22 Osprey. That was 22 June, 1987. Now, here we are almost 25 years later and that aircraft has just come into service. There were starts, there were stops, there were huge additional costs that were put in by requirements that in many cases are entirely unnecessary to get a safe and flight-worthy vehicle.

What this comes down to is, if we can collapse these acquisition timeframes from 15 years to 5, we're going to save all of that cost. We can afford to make the investments that are necessary in our active duty soldiers and in our veterans. It allows us to minimize the institutional impact of these deployment tempos and these wars. I think, furthermore, it's going to allow a more agile defense industrial base that will have predictability and can adapt our technology and our tools to new threats as they emerge, because a lot of the weapon systems that come online now in fact were designed for another era and another timeframe.

□ 2000

To overcome that, we've got to change the process, and that's going to come by a long period of interagency reform and other efforts. But I want to tell you, in this Defense authorization, the keys to beginning that process are addressed.

I think, in a very difficult political environment between the administra-

tion calls for spending cuts without bringing about the regulatory acquisition reform that's necessary to really sustain that, the political impasse with the Senate, it's been tremendously helpful to see the leadership of Chairman MCKEON, members of the Armed Services Committee to make sure that everything that's possible to be done will keep the money flowing before these rules and regulations can be changed.

The other thing that I would say as well is I voted against the Budget Control Act last year precisely because of defense sequestration. There was an unfair toll that was taken because the root causes were not addressed in that and, hopefully, this lays the foundation for that, along with other reforms that are going to be included in the bill.

At the end of the day, we have the ability to debate tonight freely. American citizens who are watching this can share whatever views they want to. They can go to bed and not be in fear because of men and women who volunteer to stand in harm's way to answer that call when it comes in the middle of the night, and I'm grateful for that, and they're the last people that we need to let down. And that's why I'm a strong supporter of this Defense authorization.

I thank you for the time to share tonight.

Mr. REED. I thank the gentleman from Kentucky for his comments and for coming this evening and spending some time with us. And your comments, before I yield to the gentleman from Virginia, have spurred some thoughts that I would like to add to the conversation.

One of the things you touched upon is the fact that, as we make cuts and we downsize government, defense has to be part of that conversation, and the gentleman from Kentucky recognized that in his comments, and I recognize that.

But I recall a conversation, as a freshman Member I came here and we've met some individuals over the time, and one conversation that really sticks out in my mind when it comes to this issue is a conversation that we had, a handful of us, with Secretary of Defense, then-Secretary of Defense Bob Gates. And what Mr. Gates expressed to us is he says, Lookit, we can go through this process, and we need to go through this process and downsizing our military and downsizing and tightening our belt where we can because of the national debt crisis that we now found ourselves in.

As former Joint Chief of Staff Admiral Mullen advised the President, the biggest threat to America was not a military threat; it was the national debt. And that type of sentiment is shocking to me, and it should scare all of us in that we have to get this fiscal threat under control.

But the conversation with Bob Gates was we're going to do this. But as we were engaging in that conversation, Madam Speaker, he pleaded with us

and said, as we do this, as we make these cuts, please do not take these cuts or these dollars and apply them to other government spending or expand government in other areas because, what he was essentially saying was, if you take the money from defense and you put it in another area and further expand government, every year we are going to have this problem. We are going to compound the problem so that you take money from defense, grow government on other sides of the ledger, or other areas, and you're going to continuously take meat and bone eventually out of the military spending, and you're going to downsize the military to a point where it will not be able to do fundamentally what we need it to do, and that's to protect American citizens.

And the other thing I wanted to comment on, as the gentleman from Kentucky has rightfully pointed out, is that the threat that we face as we downsize and pull back from Iraq and Afghanistan, and I'm glad we're coming to an end in those engagements, and I see the finish line, obviously, in Afghanistan and the Iraqi situation where we have downsized ourselves and pulled ourselves back, and that's good.

But what we cannot do is we cannot get into a situation where we downsize our military, where we put them into a position where they no longer can be effective to annihilate the threats that are out there, because the threats are still there. The threats are still real, and we need the platform across the world to make sure that we have the ability to use the brightest and strongest people we have in America, the men and women of our armed services, so that they have the platforms to go, strike, annihilate that threat, and then come back home.

And that is what we need to make sure we do not cross and we go too far in these cuts, that the men and women, when we ask of them to go and defend America and annihilate those threats so that we can fight them over there, rather than here on American soil, because we never want to have that experience of 9/11 again.

We have to make sure they have the resources and we stand with them so that they have those platforms in which to deploy and protect us, as they have been doing for generations.

With that, I would like to yield to my colleague from Virginia, and I'm so happy he has joined us this evening.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RIGELL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. ROBY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. RIGELL. I thank the gentleman for yielding. And I rise tonight, Madam Speaker, in strong support of the

NDAA that we'll vote on this week. And I also rise to really sound the alarm, Madam Speaker, about a budgetary cut to our Defense Department that is looming. It's right around the corner. And early January of next year, if not averted, it would have a most serious and detrimental impact on our ability to defend our great country. And I want to talk about that and share this with the American people. It's a matter of serious and grave importance, and it really should be understood by every American.

Now, Madam Speaker, I have the great privilege of serving and representing the Second District of Virginia, southeast corner, all the Eastern Shore, all of Virginia Beach, a good part of Norfolk and a bit of Hampton. Includes the Norfolk Naval Air Station, Norfolk Naval Station, Norfolk Naval Air Station Oceania, with the Dam Neck Annex, the Joint Expeditionary Base, Little Creek, Fort Story, Joint Base Langley, Eustis, Wallace Island Surface Combat Systems.

The 1 percent, they live in our district, they serve in our district. You see them in the lines at a Starbucks or the restaurants and businesses around town. They're hardworking men and women. They love their country, and they serve with great distinction.

Indeed, it's the district, of all 435, it has the highest concentration of men and women in uniform of all 435 districts. And it really is a high honor and really a high responsibility and duty to serve and represent the Second District.

I completely identify with my friend, the gentleman from New York, when the gentleman was referring to how he was inspired by his father's service. Indeed, that's why I sought this office is to honor my father's service, who was in World War II as a marine at Iwo Jima, and really the generation he represents, and also to meet the deep obligation that we have to our grandchildren and our children, and that is to pass on the blessings of liberty and freedom. And the principal way we do that is by meeting our constitutional duty to defend this great country.

Where we're headed, in January of next year, is in direct conflict with us meeting that deep obligation, the cuts that potentially will come if we don't avert it, and I'm doing everything I can with my colleagues here tonight to avert that. The formal term is "sequestration." And as a businessman, I refer to it as a violent reduction. It's between 8 and 12 percent reduction. And it happens immediately.

Even for those who believe that our budget for defense ought to be less, there's no person that I know of that would agree that this is the responsible way to do it.

Now, as I look for leadership, the House has passed a mechanism by which sequestration would be completely averted and, indeed, I have already introduced an amendment to the NDAA which will come to the floor and

I hope will pass, which will incorporate that mechanism into the NDAA, so a vote for the NDAA is also a vote to avert sequestration.

To put this in perspective, in addition to the \$487 billion that was reduced by the President's budget, this is another \$492 billion. It's almost a \$1 trillion reduction over 10 years. It would have disastrous consequences for soldiers, veterans, national security and the economy.

□ 2010

I'll share with you a few examples of, really, the practical implications of this and how detrimental they are: the smallest ground force since 1940; a fleet of fewer than 230 ships when we know that our maritime needs are not decreasing—they're increasing—principally, in the Pacific. Now, that would be the smallest level since 1915; the smallest tactical fighter force in the history of the Air Force.

I know that there are other Representatives here tonight, my colleagues, who want to close on this issue, so I want to close with this thought: I mentioned earlier that leadership is really about setting a clear and compelling vision for our country and then laying out that it's incumbent upon that person to also have a practical plan—the steps that the country needs to take to make that vision a reality.

I am very proud of the House in that we passed a comprehensive plan to do just that. As I look at where the administration is, there truly isn't a plan, and our Commander in Chief has not risen to address sequestration. In fact, he has made it clear that he would veto efforts to avert sequestration. I look to the Senate, and there is absolutely no action coming out of there. It hasn't passed a budget in over 1,000 days.

I am respectfully asking the American people to look at the record. I believe we are an imperfect party in that we haven't done everything just right, yet the record is clear: We have a plan; it's there; it has been passed. In the Senate, there is no plan. The administration really has no plan particularly when it comes to averting sequestration.

So, when my amendment comes to the floor tomorrow—or whenever it does hit the floor—I trust that my colleagues will see the wisdom of incorporating that into the NDAA. It would avert sequestration. This needs to happen in order to meet the deep obligation that we have to every American in order to honor the veterans who have served, to honor those veterans who are serving now and our gold star families—those who have lost loved ones in service to our country. I trust and believe we will do the right thing.

Mr. REED. I so appreciate the gentleman from Virginia for being down here and expressing the sentiments that he did.

Before I yield to the gentleman from Colorado, I had a thought as you were

expressing your words for the RECORD and were addressing the Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I think it needs to be clearly laid out because I have seen some reports in our national media that have kind of set the stage a little bit, in my opinion, that what is going on here in Washington, D.C., with the sentiment and the debate is to try to avoid sequestration. Yes, that is true. We're trying to have an open and honest dialogue with all Americans as to how we can make sure that our men and women are not put in harm's way in our armed services, but what we cannot do is in any way deflect from what is causing this debate to occur, Madam Speaker. The reason this debate is occurring is that the national debt is forcing this debate to occur. What we are having is the conversation of how to address the national debt and to make sure that defense and the cuts are part of this conversation, but we cannot go too far and cross that line in the sand that I referred to earlier.

What I am deathly afraid of is that this is going to turn into some folks trying to paint us on this side of the aisle as just trying to avoid making cuts to the military. Yes, we are trying to do what is responsible and make sure that our military is protected, that our men and women are protected, and that we stand with our veterans and stand with the benefits that they have earned and that they so deserve. But we cannot let the debate end there. The debate has to reflect what is causing this.

This is why I truly do believe that Admiral Mullen echoed those words to the President—that the biggest threat to America is our national debt—because with the national debt, what Admiral Mullen was pointing out to Madam Speaker and to everyone across America is that the national debt is going to cause us to have the debate in Washington, D.C., as to whether or not we are cutting too much out of defense and putting our men and women in harm's way. That is where we are in Washington today, and we cannot have the simple conversation that we are trying to avoid cuts for the purposes of avoiding cuts. No, Madam Speaker, we are dealing with a national debt crisis that is forcing us to have this debate.

What we are trying to do on this side of the aisle is to make sure that we do the responsible thing and to make sure that our military is strong—that she is ready to defend us on a moment's notice from any threats, foreign and domestic—and that we do not put men and women in harm's way when we ask them to go and fight for our freedom.

With that, I yield to the gentleman from Colorado, who has joined us this evening on this important topic.

Mr. GARDNER. I thank the gentleman from New York for his words and for his comments on sequestration, on defense spending, on the challenges that we face in this country. I also want to thank the Speaker, who is our colleague from Alabama, for her work

in making sure that we are providing the leadership necessary for our Armed Forces.

The gentleman from Virginia mentioned a key word. He mentioned the word "leadership." The leadership is obvious that this House has shown in making sure that we are strengthening and keeping our defense strong in this Nation while also addressing the very serious crisis that we face with our national debt and deficit: passing a reconciliation plan, working with Members of this House to make sure that we come up with ways to find spending cuts, to reduce spending but to do so in a way that is responsible, to do so in a way that provides the leadership that our Armed Forces deserve and that the people of this country deserve.

Last week, a week ago yesterday, I had the incredible opportunity to go to the Iwo Jima Memorial where I was able to join over 100 veterans from my district in northern Colorado who had served in World War II and the Korean war. These veterans came from Greeley, Fort Collins, and from across the State's eastern plains. They were there to spend one day in Washington to visit the World War II Memorial and to visit the various monuments that are here in their honor for their service and their sacrifice.

I met three brothers who served on the same ship in the Korean war. I met a gentleman who was 92 years old who had never been on an airplane since his time in World War II. As I was leaving, as they were departing for their bus, a gentleman who was 85 years old came up to me and put his hand on my shoulder. He stopped me and I turned around.

He said, You know, I don't have much time left here—I really didn't know where he was going and what he was talking about—but he said, We're counting on you.

And I've thought about that. I thought long and hard about those words: "we're counting on you" to do the right thing, to do what is right for our country, to do what is right for our military, to do what is right for our men and women across this country who go to work each and every day to try to make ends meet but who are protected by people they've never met around the globe.

There is no doubt that we have a very serious fiscal challenge in front of us. There is no doubt that we are \$15 trillion in debt. There is no doubt that \$1.5 trillion deficits must make tough decisions around this place happen. The one thing that we cannot do is jeopardize the safety and security of this country and put our men and women in uniform at risk.

I am somebody who has come to the House floor time and time again, who has gone back to the district, and who has stood with many of my colleagues—with the gentleman from New York—to say, You know what? I believe we can reduce spending at the Department of Defense. I believe there

are ways that we can reduce spending. We can find waste, abuse. We can reduce duplicative programs, including those programs that may be within the Department of Defense. But we can never, never jeopardize the security of this country, the security of our men and women in uniform—those people who are serving on the front lines of freedom around the world—by cutting too far and too deep.

The question that, I think, every American and every person in this Chamber ought to be asking is: Where is the leadership from the White House? Where is the plan to avoid these cuts that jeopardize not only our men and women but the very security of this country? Where is that plan to avoid very costly cuts that jeopardize the future of this Nation?

We passed a plan out of this Chamber to reduce spending by \$1.2 trillion but to do so in a way that provides the leadership that this Nation desperately needs.

Our men and women are standing up around this country—those men and women I met at the Iwo Jima Memorial a week ago, who stood in the trenches in Korea and World War II, who are counting on us to do what is right. Their legacy of freedom didn't end when the wars ended. It continues to this very day as they stand with their brothers and sisters in arms to make sure that this country has the ability to protect and defend itself.

□ 2020

Ultimately, the leadership provided by this House will make sure that we continue to fund our defense, that we continue to fund our men and women in uniform appropriately, and that our national security will remain protected against any and all threats. I believe the Secretary of Defense has even recognized the grave challenges that the sequestration poses for our men and women in uniform. But I think it's time the question be asked to the President of the United States:

Mr. President, where is your plan to protect our men and women in uniform? Where is your plan to continue the great protection of this country?

While my colleague from New York and my colleague from Virginia come and speak about the great risks and challenges that we face, everybody recognizes that we have to address our debt-and-deficit situation. It reminds me of a time when Zell Miller, a Senator from Georgia, asked the question: What are we going to do? Are we going to provide the ammunition for our men and women in uniform with spitballs, or are we going to do what is right, by providing them the ability to defend themselves?

With that, I thank again our colleague from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY) for her leadership on this very important issue.

Mr. REED. I so appreciate the gentleman from Colorado coming and offering his comments on this important issue.

Just briefly before I yield, I am reminded from the gentleman's comments when he referenced leadership and the story that the gentleman tells of the 85-year-old veteran who put his hand on his shoulder and said, We're counting on you, because that is the sentiment that forced or caused me to run for Congress in the beginning and to become a part of this freshman class of 2010.

I look at the national debt, I look at the economic turmoil that we find ourselves in, the fact that we cannot create jobs in America to the level so that people can put food on their table and put a roof over their head and go to bed comfortable and confident that they're going to get up tomorrow with a job to go to. I see the turmoil we face in America right now at the same magnitude as that generational crisis that that 85-year-old war veteran stood up for in World War II to stand as a united country to save Lady America and the freedom that she represents.

What I'm hearing in Washington, D.C.—and I'm sad to say out of the gentlemen in the administration, I see leadership that is trying to divide this country when we face a crisis the magnitude of such that is generational. Ladies and gentlemen of America and Mr. Speaker, the time is now to unite, not divide, and conquer this issue of the national debt because it is forcing us to have the conversation of cuts to our military that is going to put men and women in harm's way. That is not acceptable on our watch.

Mr. Speaker, at this point in time I know the gentleman from Virginia would like to speak, but I'm going to yield the balance of the time to the leader of the freshman class, the gentlelady from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY) who scheduled this Special Order.

Mrs. ROBY. Thank you to my friend from New York. I appreciate you being here tonight and controlling the time for a little while.

As we have a few more minutes, I would like to yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. RIGELL. I thank the gentlelady, my friend. It's a pleasure and a privilege to serve with the gentlelady on the House Armed Services Committee. I appreciate her leadership on the House Armed Services Committee and in holding this time tonight to talk about just the critical subject of defending this great country.

Just last night, I was with Congressman FORBES and Congressman WITTMAN in Chesapeake, Virginia, listening for over an hour to local contractors speaking about how this looming issue of sequestration is already affecting not only our larger economy in our region, but also just our ability to defend our great country. Companies are making decisions right now and critical and talented people are being laid off right now in advance of the sequestration that very well could occur in January of next year.

If I go back to my previous comments, I was talking about the failure

of leadership, as I see it, the administration and also the Senate, because it's so important to understand kind of how we got here. In the role of Commander in Chief, it is really incumbent upon the President, in my view, to articulate and put forth a plan that would avert what his Secretary of Defense has made so clear is completely unacceptable. The level of cuts, the severity of the cuts, the suddenness of the cuts is really what we're referring to here. It's not the almost half a trillion that was already proposed in the administration's budget. That's bad enough. We're here tonight, I think in part, to sound the alarm to the American people that this is an additional almost half a trillion dollars of cuts. Mr. Speaker, you cannot build 90 percent of a submarine; you cannot build 90 percent of a carrier. It will be a legal nightmare. Contracts will have to be broken and then renegotiated. It will be a quagmire from just a legal standpoint.

So I thank the gentlelady for yielding and for the opportunity to again address this critical issue. And I call upon the administration and I call upon the Senate to meet the House where we are, which is to put forth specific plans. This is leadership.

I thank the gentlelady for yielding. Mrs. ROBY. Thank you to my friend from Virginia.

I just point back to H.R. 5652, which is the Sequester Replacement Reconciliation Act that we passed in this House. Here we spend so much time while we're here in Washington, when we're back home in our districts, for me when I'm at the grocery store or pumping gas or taking my kids to school, talking about jobs and the economy. We're talking about the things that we here in this Congress have done to create so much uncertainty for you, the small business owner, and the reflection of the lack of jobs because of decisions that are made here.

All you have to do is look at the Sequester Replacement Reconciliation Act to see that what we need to be focusing on is priority. It's about priority. What is our job as Members of Congress as laid out by the Constitution of the United States? As I've already pointed out, it's to provide for a strong national defense. When we talk about jobs and the economy and then the stripping away of the tools that our men and women in uniform need in order to defend this country—I just want to give you a little snapshot to end on what that picture looks like.

Specifically, 200,000 soldiers and marines would have to separate from service, bringing our force well below pre-9/11 levels. We would have a fleet of fewer than 230 ships. That would be the smallest since 1915. We would have the smallest tactical fighter force in the history of the Air Force and a reduction of 20 percent in defense civilian personnel to go to your point.

These industries—aerospace, defense, and industrial base—directly employ

more than 1 million people and support more than 2 million middle class jobs across the United States, all in an effort to protect our men and women who are fighting for and defending the freedom and liberty that everyone in this room so enjoys.

□ 2030

I could go on and on. You know that we could talk well past the hour, although we don't have that time.

Very quickly, I will thank my friend from Virginia once again. And is there anything else my friend from Colorado would like to add?

Mr. GARDNER. I know our friend from Virginia talked about the concerns of the Secretary of Defense, yet we still have no plan from this White House on how to deal with the very serious problem that faces our troops and jeopardizes our country's security.

I thank the gentlelady from Alabama for her leadership tonight.

Mrs. ROBY. I thank you both. Again, to all of our veterans and military servicemembers and personnel, we just say thank you.

And I urge my colleagues to support the National Defense Authorization Act this week, as we move through the open process that we have, so that we can continue to give those men and women and their families all that they need to ensure that they are able to accomplish the mission.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHILLING. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Congresswoman ROBY for holding this important leadership hour. I rise today to speak on some important issues facing our military as well as some provisions within the National Defense Authorization Act.

Here is the bottom line: Our national debt, which is approaching \$16 trillion—or \$50,000 for every person in this country—is a national security threat and we must find ways to bring our spending under control.

This House has acted to change the debate from how much can Washington spend to how much spending can we cut? We've led by example and cut our own office budgets by almost 12 percent. With the belief that more common sense in Washington can lead to uncommon savings for the taxpayer we have taken a government wide approach to cutting spending.

The House has also stressed efficiencies when it passed a bill by my colleague ALLEN WEST that would cut the Department of Defense's printing budget by 10 percent.

However, placing our warfighters at risk is not the solution to our debt problem. There are proposals out there to make deep cuts to the Department of Defense that would only create dangerous consequences for the stability of our fighting forces. One proposal would reduce Department of Defense civilian employee levels beyond what our organic industrial base can handle. As a member who represents a vital part of our organic base, the Rock Island Arsenal, these proposals strongly concern me.

The largest concentration of civilians in the Army is within the Army Materiel Command and the largest concentration of civilians within Army Materiel Command is found in our

arsenals and depots—or our organic base. This organic base is what ensures that our military is warm and ready to go at a moment's notice.

That is why I am also concerned about proposals that would reduce organic base specialization in areas like manufacturing.

Without the ability to specialize in these areas, our warfighters could be left flatfooted when emergencies happen. For example, the Rock Island Arsenal was able to produce up-armor kits for the doors of Humvees for our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan when their vehicles were being attacked with IEDs. The Arsenal's ability to do this work quickly gave industry the time it needed to create long-term fixes for them and provided our troops with the tools they needed to most safely and effectively accomplish their missions.

During this time of fiscal constraint we must be careful not to penalize our organic base—which provides quality to the warfighter and value to the taxpayer. We must preserve and strengthen our organic base, not weaken it. The workers at the Rock Island Arsenal are a great example of how manufacturing skill can yield success for our warfighters.

In addition to serving on the House Armed Services Committee, I also serve on the Small Business Committee where our focus is solely on job creation through helping small businesses.

Small businesses have proven that they can perform a service or produce goods for the government at a lower cost and often at a faster pace than their larger counterparts, but many challenges remain for businesspeople seeking to break through the bureaucracy.

My colleague on the Small Business Committee, Representative JUDY CHU, and I introduced H.R. 3985, the Building Better Business Partnerships Act in February, which passed through the Small Business Committee last month, to reform mentor-protégé programs that exist to help small businesses win government contracts.

The Building Better Business Partnerships Act allows the Small Business Administration to oversee civilian mentor-protégé programs to streamline the process for each agency and ensure the programs are benefitting all small businesses.

This bipartisan language was successfully included in the FY 2013 NDAA in Committee to help small businesses compete for and win more government contracts so they can create jobs and get folks back to work.

This week, the House will debate the Defense Authorization bill. Our Constitution requires that we “provide for the common defense” and for fifty years in a row, Congress has acted to authorize defense programs. I look forward to working on a bipartisan basis to deliver a strong, common sense defense bill for the United States of America.

Again, I want to thank Congresswoman ROBY for holding this leadership hour. This July, the Rock Island Arsenal will celebrate 150 years of protecting our brave men and women. As a member of the House I will continue to pursue policies that allow our arsenals to thrive and grow their workload so that the Rock Island Arsenal can celebrate another 150 years and beyond.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4970, VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2012, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4310, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013

Ms. FOXX (during the Special Order of Mr. REED), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 112-481) on the resolution (H. Res. 656) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4970) to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, and providing for consideration of 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, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REAUTHORIZING THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROKITA). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to take this 1 hour.

We want to spend this hour discussing a piece of legislation that is extraordinarily important to every woman and every man who lives within the United States. It's the Violence Against Women Act, which is up for renewal, and we'll be discussing that. But before I go into that, we've just heard an hour of discussion on an extremely important matter, which is the issue of national defense.

I do sit on the House Armed Services Committee, and I spent about 16 hours last week working to move that bill out of committee. Every single person on that committee and every single person in this House and in the Senate cares deeply about this Nation's security and providing the necessary support for the men and women who are currently in the military and those who have served in the past. There's no doubt about that.

There is, however, a very important debate underway about how we provide those services, given the ability of this Nation to find the money to pay for it. You heard a most remarkable debate this last hour—or a discussion this last hour, not a debate—but a discussion that basically, on the one hand, said, we've got this terrible deficit problem, and we have to deal with it; and on the other hand, we have to spend more and more money on the military.

Now recognizing that the war in Afghanistan is drawing down and hopefully will very soon be over, we are moving away from carrying on two

major wars to a period in which we will not be having men and women overseas in these wars. That allows this Nation to draw down the military in an appropriate and very careful manner. Unfortunately, the bill that moved out of the House Armed Services Committee didn't do that. In fact, it moved away from the current law, which is one that was voted on by all of our Republican colleagues, which was the Budget Control Act that actually said the military had to be brought down. And the discussion you heard here about the President not having a plan, it simply isn't true. The President has put forth a balanced solution to the deficit within the confines of the Budget Control Act, a balance that has been rejected by the Republicans, a balance that calls for revenues, ending unnecessary tax breaks—for example, for the oil industry. Why should they receive \$5 billion a year of our tax money on top of the tens of billions of dollars in profits that they are making in the sale of overpriced gasoline and diesel to the American public?

So the President says, take away those unnecessary subsidies and bring those back into dealing with the necessary things that we must do in this Nation. He also said that men and women who earn over \$1 million a year in adjusted gross income ought to be paying their fair share.

There was discussion a moment ago about the budget reconciliation bill that passed this House. Understand that the budget reconciliation bill, as proposed by the Republicans, would increase the national deficit by \$4 trillion. How does it do it? By giving an extraordinary new tax break to those at the very top. Those who earn more than \$1 million a year would see their taxes reduced. So at \$1 million a year in earnings, they would receive an additional tax reduction of \$394,000. That's neither fair, that's neither balanced, and that clearly leads to an additional \$4 trillion.

Back to the defense. We need a wise Defense appropriations bill out of this House. Unfortunately, though, what did pass was not wise, and it actually increased the number of men and women in Afghanistan. These are our Armed Forces. Under that bill, there would be an increase of 20,000 new soldiers into Afghanistan. That's not where we want to go.

Having said enough about that, I just thought we ought to put a little balance on the previous hour of discussion. So let us get on to what we really wanted to talk about tonight, which is, how do we protect women in America?

In 1994, a previous Congress passed the Violence Against Women Act, and that act provided a level of protection to every woman in America to be protected from domestic violence. I have with me tonight one of the key architects of that piece of legislation. She is now a Member of Congress. She is from the great State of Maryland. Her name is DONNA EDWARDS. Back in the nineties, she was the founding director and