

Defending Freedoms Project to call for the release of all prisoners of conscience.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO SENATOR BOB DOLE

(Mr. YODER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate an American hero, a true public servant in every sense of the word, and a man with whom Kansans are proud to share the Sunflower State as home.

Senator Bob Dole, a Russell, Kansas, native and proud Jayhawk, celebrated his 90th birthday yesterday, and has spent his entire life giving to make his country a better place for future generations. After courageously serving his country in World War II, Senator Dole continued to fight for the future of his country by serving in Congress, the Senate, and as a Republican Presidential nominee.

Like many Americans, I've been inspired by his exceptional leadership, his encouraging and positive personality, his quick wit, and his endless and selfless giving for his fellow man.

Mr. Speaker, as we wish Senator Bob Dole happy birthday, we look ahead toward many happy and healthy years with our great friend, and to a bright future in America because of the work of Senator Dole and the values and ideals he has personified and the qualities he has instilled in so many of us.

CELEBRATING SENATOR DOLE'S 90TH BIRTHDAY

(Mr. McGOVERN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I, too, want to join my colleague, Mr. YODER, in honoring Senator Bob Dole on his 90th birthday.

I call my colleagues' attention to the fact that Senator Dole is really quite an extraordinary man and quite a legislator. He understood the importance of bipartisanship. He reached across the aisle and worked with Senator George McGovern on strengthening our antihunger social safety net. They made Food Stamps a better program. They championed WIC and school meals.

At a time when some of my colleagues are talking about destroying that bipartisan consensus on making sure that we combat hunger in this country, it is important to remember Senator Dole led, in a bipartisan way, to help the least among us.

I want to wish him a happy birthday and many, many more.

U.S. ENERGY EQUALS JOBS

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the need for more homegrown American energy has never been greater. At home, our economy is still in a state of stagnation. Nearly 12 million of our fellow Americans are out of work. It's even higher among returning veterans from Afghanistan and Iraq. Abroad, volatile situations continue to erupt around the world.

We need an all-of-the-above, all-American energy strategy, not more red tape out of Washington, D.C. More American energy means lower energy costs for Americans and for all people in the United States, and that means more money left in your pocket. More American energy means a stronger economy as our energy sector is allowed to grow and expand. Simply put, more American energy means more American jobs, period.

Mr. Speaker, if we take care of ourselves, we can make Middle Eastern politics turmoil, and energy irrelevant.

And that's just the way it is.

COLLEGE COSTS

(Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. The National Journal today noted that borrowing accounts for 18 percent of how the average family pays for college. They also noted that majors vary considerably in terms of their cost, such as social science being about \$28,000 and engineering around \$25,000.

What's notable is the starting salaries for a number of majors is so low that students cannot pay back their loans.

What is also noteworthy is the cost of the actual tuition itself. Since the 1970s, when data first began to be gathered, college tuition costs have gone up 1,120 percent, while inflation itself has gone up a little over 200 percent.

As we're talking about the cost of college, it is very important, Mr. Speaker, that we also call upon colleges themselves to be responsible for trimming costs and for guidance counselors and colleges to also look at how they are advising students to move forward in their careers. An important part of this argument is how students are saddled with a great deal of debt that they can't repay because they simply are not in a major in which they can earn money, and how colleges spend so much on a number of amenities that have little to do with education.

So I hope that universities, themselves, look at how they can trim their costs instead of continuing to raise tuition on the students, who then are faced with a lifelong burden.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2397, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2014; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2610, TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2014

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 312 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 312

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2397) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read through page 157, line 2. Points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI are waived.

(b) No amendment shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, the amendment described in section 2 of this resolution, and amendments en bloc described in section 3 of this resolution. All points of order against amendments printed in the report of the Committee on Rules and against amendments en bloc described in section 3 of this resolution are waived.

(c) Each amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules shall be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, may be withdrawn by the proponent at any time before action thereon, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole.

SEC. 2. After disposition of amendments printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution and amendments en bloc described in section 3 of this resolution, it shall be in order for the chair of the Committee on Appropriations or his designee to offer an amendment reducing funding levels in the bill.

SEC. 3. It shall be in order at any time for the chair of the Committee on Appropriations or his designee to offer amendments en bloc consisting of amendments printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution not earlier disposed of. Amendments en bloc offered pursuant to this section shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations or their respective designees, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. The original proponent of an

amendment included in such amendments en bloc may insert a statement in the Congressional Record immediately before the disposition of the amendments en bloc.

SEC. 4. After the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment, there shall be in order a final period of general debate, which shall not exceed 10 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations.

SEC. 5. When the committee rises and reports the bill back to the House with a recommendation that the bill do pass, the previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 6. At any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2610) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. Points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI are waived. During consideration of the bill for amendment, the chair of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment has caused it to be printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 8 of rule XVIII. Amendments so printed shall be considered as read. When the committee rises and reports the bill back to the House with a recommendation that the bill do pass, the previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 1 hour.

□ 1230

Mr. NUGENT. For the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 312 provides for House consideration of two separate pieces of legislation. The first of these bills is H.R. 2610, which is the appropriations bill to

fund the Department of Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and other Federal agencies. The second bill is H.R. 2397, which is the bill that funds our military and our national security programs for the next year. In perfect honesty, I don't think this is a perfect rule, but I know that it's the right rule for what we're doing today.

When I came to the Rules Committee as a freshman a little over 2½ years ago, one of our promises not only to the House but also to the American people was that we were going to return to regular order. We were going to make sure the House worked in an open and transparent process.

We promised the American people they would see what was happening in the House and read bills before they came to the floor for a vote. We promised that all Members would have the opportunity to amend and improve legislation. We also said we were going to have an open amendment process on appropriations bills.

The rule provides for a true open rule on the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill. However, we're also taking up the Defense funding bill under a structured rule. While that may not be ideal, when I look at the alternatives, I know that this structured rule is the best way forward.

As Members of the House of Representatives, we have a duty to fulfill our core mission of the Federal Government. I can't think of a single function of government more inherently Federal in nature than providing for the common defense of this great Nation.

At a time when our troops are stretched too thin, the Department of Defense has been cut repeatedly in the last few years, and the Pentagon is now facing sequestration head on. We cannot let the new fiscal year begin without passing a Defense appropriations bill.

There isn't anybody in this House who is more concerned about our Nation's involvement in Egypt and Syria or more upset about the allegations of the NSA spying on American citizens than I am. However, we cannot let these issues prevent us from beginning to debate on a bill that ensures our military has the funds it needs to get their job done. So if the choice is between a structured rule and never getting the Defense appropriations bill passed, or a structured rule versus passing a Defense appropriations bill that actually makes our Nation less safe than we are today, then I will vote for a structured rule every time. That doesn't mean I think it's a perfect process, but the alternative is unconscionable.

The Department of Defense already is bearing the burden of half of the sequestration cuts, which, in conjunction with cuts they've already sustained, will completely hollow out our military. We need this Defense appropria-

tions bill if we're going to restore flexibility to our military. And that's an issue that must come to the floor, even if it's under a structured process. So I come here today with a compromise.

Far and away, the vast majority of the amendments offered to the Rules Committee on H.R. 2397 will be allowed on the House floor. Our philosophy when considering amendments really is as simple as this: if it would have been allowed under an open rule, it will be allowed under this rule.

There are only three exceptions to that general rule of thumb. Those exceptions were amendments dealing with Egypt, Syria, and the NSA. And even then, these issues are in no way being swept under the rug. I wouldn't stand for that. I wouldn't allow it.

The rule provides for extended debate time on amendments dealing with both Egypt and Syria. Additionally, the rule provides debate on two amendments getting at the issue of NSA—including one amendment that I personally offered. My amendment would strike a balance between making sure our government has all the necessary tools to keep our citizens safe and protecting American civil liberties. Both of the NSA amendments will get extended debate time.

In total, this structured rule allows for debate on 100 amendments. In comparison, the Defense Appropriations Act of fiscal year 2010 also came up under a structured rule. Back then, however, only 16 amendments made it to the House floor.

As I said, it's not a perfect world. I wish we didn't need to deal with choosing between an unlimited debate on these issues and making sure that our troops have the tools they need to protect themselves and our Nation. But that's the nature of the world we live in today. And when it comes down to it, the Defense appropriations bill isn't the right place to be having some of these debates.

I am downright furious over what NSA has been doing. And the more I learn about the programs, the more outraged I get as it relates to trampling on our rights as citizens of this great Nation. But to try to change these programs on the DOD appropriations bill, where we can't legislate, isn't the right way to go about fixing something that's broken.

I'll be the first one to say that we need to have a long and serious discussion and debate about the current law as it stands. Frankly, it seems to me that we need to fix that law—clearly. That's why I'm a cosponsor of standalone legislation to do just that. The fact is that it's impossible to make the real, substantive changes by amending this bill.

Appropriation amendments are blunt tools. If there ever was an issue that needed thoughtfulness and finesse, it's when we're looking at programs that are used to keep our Nation and its citizens safe. So today, I offer you an open rule—the rule for the Transportation appropriations bill—and one

that is as close to open as we could get while still ensuring that the House votes on and hopefully passes a bill this week that keeps our troops funded, our Pentagon open, and our citizens safe from harm. It's not perfect, but it's as good as we can get in an imperfect world, and I'm proud to bring it today to the floor of this House.

I encourage my colleagues to vote "yes" on the rule, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. NUGENT), my friend, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, we're here today to consider one rule for two appropriations bills, the Department of Defense appropriations bill and the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill.

While the T-HUD bill will be considered under an open rule—that is, if it's ever considered in this House at all—the Defense appropriations bill is another story. That's because the FY 2014 Defense appropriations bill is not an open rule. This bill is structured. Many good amendments were denied. The Rules Committee cherry-picked amendments that could be considered and prevented many germane amendments from being considered today. In fact, Mr. Speaker, last month, Speaker BOEHNER touted Republican use of open rules for appropriations bills. But now, just 1 month later, this Tea Party-run House is limiting debate on the Defense bill just to avoid taking some tough votes.

My colleague said that they made exceptions and limited amendments with regard to Egypt, Syria, and the NSA. Those were the only three areas, he said, that they purposefully made exceptions. Well, those are the three most important areas before us. Those are the things that our constituents want to make sure that we are debating and deliberating on.

Let me note another area where this structured rule inhibits having a robust debate on a critical issue, namely, the debate on the need for greater transparency and oversight of NSA collection of telephone and email records from people who are not under any suspicion or investigation whatsoever.

I'm grateful that a couple of amendments were made in order on this subject, but they were only given 15 minutes of debate apiece. That's it. This is a pretty big issue. We all want to provide our law enforcement officials with the tools they need to safeguard our country from potential terrorist attacks. But we also want to protect the basic rights and liberties guaranteed to all Americans from unwanted and unwarranted searches and invasion of privacy by government agencies.

Issues of transparency, accountability and oversight are critical duties

and responsibilities not just of the executive branch but of Congress. Who is providing the necessary oversight of all of this massive data collection? Who is watching the watchers? Isn't it time for Congress to take a serious review of how the law is being implemented, how it is touching and affecting all Americans, and whether any of those laws and their implementation now require changes? I, for one, welcome such a debate, which I hope will occur at least in a limited fashion on the amendments that were made in order under this structured rule.

I believe a far better debate would have occurred under an open rule, where all Members could have voiced their concerns and outlined proposals for change. Regrettably, this will not happen under the time restrictions of this structured rule.

Turning to the T-HUD appropriations bill, I am disappointed and concerned with the committee's proposed funding level for the Community Development Block Grant program, known as CDBG. The bill cuts CDBG from \$3.071 billion in FY13 to \$1.637 billion in FY14, almost halving the program and bringing it to a historic low in terms of funding. CDBG funds are working in neighborhoods throughout our country, and this proposed reduction will negatively impact local economies and economic development projects all over the country.

Mr. Speaker, I will insert into the RECORD a bipartisan letter signed by 101 Members of the House of Representatives expressing support for effective CDBG funding levels. If this bill is actually considered by this body before the end of the fiscal year, I hope there will be an attempt to restore funding for this critically important program.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, June 25, 2013.

Hon. TOM LATHAM,
*Chairman, Subcommittee on Transportation,
Housing and Urban Development, and Related
Agencies, Washington, DC.*

Hon. ED PASTOR,
*Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Transportation
Housing and Urban Development,
and Related Agencies, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN LATHAM AND RANKING MEMBER PASTOR: We write to share our concern about the impact the proposed funding levels for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program in House Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Subcommittee-passed bill would have on redevelopment authorities and local municipalities. While we understand the difficult fiscal decisions we must make in Washington, the proposed bill reduces CDBG formula grants by nearly 50 percent, from \$3.071 billion in FY2013 to \$1.637 billion in FY2014. This proposed funding level also marks an historic low since the program's beginnings in the 1970s.

As you know, 144 Members signed a bipartisan letter in April for your review in developing FY2014 legislation. The letter supported maintaining the funding levels that the subcommittee recommended last year. The now proposed, substantial reduction—essentially halving the program—would impact local economies, threaten the program's national scope, curtail on-the-ground lead-abatement projects helping to revitalize our

older cities, and reduce ongoing capabilities to aid veterans and other workforce training services.

We are concerned about the implications of this reduction, especially as the program's funds have already fallen substantially—by nearly \$1 billion since FY2010. As you know, CDBG is largely managed by local municipalities, providing flexibility and tailored needs in our local economies and remains a lifeline for families and communities. For example, HUD reports that between FY2007 and FY2011, CDBG helped over 174,000 businesses expand economic opportunities and over the last decade, CDBG programs have rehabilitated more than 1.4 million homes for low- and moderate-income homeowners and renters. As a proven program with an effective track record, it serves an ongoing, continual need that not only impacts lives, but provides a documented return on its investment to leverage local dollars: Every \$1.00 of CDBG leverages an additional \$3.55 in non-CDBG funding, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The pressing need in the current economy for these funds remains critical. We look forward to working with you to maintain effective funding levels for this work. If we can provide any further information, please contact Kate Ostrander, Legislative Director of the Northeast-Midwest Congressional Coalition, at 6-6106 or kate.ostrander@mail.house.gov. Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

Mike Kelly; Michael R. Turner; Robert A. Brady; Lou Barletta; Peter T. King; David B. McKinley; James P. McGovern; Chaka Fattah; Christopher P. Gibson; Emanuel Cleaver; Niki Tsongas; Jim Gerlach; Steven Pearce; Marcia L. Fudge; Peter Welch; Elijah E. Cummings; John K. Delaney; Tony Cardenas; Matt A. Cartwright; Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan.

Colleen W. Hanabusa; Nick J. Rahall, II; Wm. Lacy Clay; John D. Dingell; Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.; Chris Van Hollen; Juan Vargas; Mark Takano; Robert C. "Bobby" Scott; Mike Doyle; Ann M. Kuster; William R. Keating; Danny K. Davis; Jim Matheson; Bobby L. Rush; Carolyn McCarthy; Alcee L. Hastings; Janice D. Schakowsky; Linda T. Sanchez; Doris O. Matsui; Brian Higgins; Louise McIntosh Slaughter; Eliot L. Engel; Rubén Hinojosa; Albio Sires; Yvette D. Clarke; Charles B. Rangel; Diana DeGette; John Conyers, Jr.; Richard M. Nolan; Paul Tonko; Gene Green; James A. Himes; Anna G. Eshoo; Suzan K. DelBene; Sander M. Levin; Ron Kind; David Loebsack; Grace F. Napolitano; Michael H. Michaud.

Corrine Brown; John F. Tierney; Lloyd Doggett; Bradley S. Schneider; Joyce Beatty; Steven A. Horsford; Judy Chu; Carol Shea-Porter; Gloria Negrete McLeod; Jerrold Nadler; Louis Capps; Gwen Moore; Tammy Duckworth; David N. Cicilline; John A. Yarmuth; Cedric L. Richmond; Pete P. Gallego; Suzanne Bonamici; Theodore E. Deutch; Loreta Sanchez.

Michael E. Capuano; Donna M. Christensen; Debbie Wasserman Schultz; Ann Kirkpatrick; Janice Hahn; Gerald E. Connolly; Filemon Vela; Julia Brownley; Timothy J. Walz; Jim Costa; Joe Garcia; Raúl M. Grijalva; Stephen F. Lynch; Earl Blumenauer; Jared Huffman; Xavier Becerra; Maxine Waters; Bill Pascrell, Jr.; Eleanor Holmes Norton; Jared Polis; Patrick Murphy.

Now, as for the Department of Defense appropriations bill, everyone in this House on both sides of the aisle supports our men and women in uniform. We want to make sure that they have the equipment, the training, and

the logistical support they need to carry out their duties and missions, and that they have peace of mind that their families are being taken care of when they're deployed to perilous places abroad.

We want the most effective and efficient modern military in the world. There is no argument and no debate over these priorities in this House. However, that doesn't mean we should just throw money at the Pentagon, which is infamous for wasting tens of billions of taxpayer dollars each and every year for as long as I can remember.

In these tough budget times, we need to be smart with our money, and that includes with our defense dollars. I strongly believe that we could make better choices if the Republican majority would recognize that we need to negotiate a balanced approach to our national budget in order to get rid of the harsh and indiscriminate cuts caused by sequestration and I appeal to them to appoint conferees so that we can begin negotiations with the Senate on the budget. Now, I thought that was a priority for the House Republican leadership, but clearly I was wrong, as they have let budget negotiations languish for months.

Now, in the absence of a balanced approach to the budget, which would have provided greater clarity to our defense priorities, I have several concerns about the fiscal year 2014 Defense appropriations bill.

First, the bill neither reflects the current levels of defense spending that are the result of the current sequestration, nor does it reflect the next round of potential sequestration cuts that will go into effect for FY 2014. This would be easier to understand if the Republican majority showed any inclination to go to conference with the Senate on the budget resolution or return to serious negotiations with the White House on an overarching budget agreement. But the Republican leadership has stated clearly, time and again, that it will not negotiate a balanced and comprehensive solution to resolve our overall budget spending, revenue and deficit issues.

While critical domestic priorities are facing deep cuts in other appropriations bills, and the Appropriations Committee is demanding sequestration cuts be included in these bills, the Defense bill sails on through relatively untouched. In reality, it's those painful and draconian cuts in the other appropriations bills that allow this Defense bill to emerge relatively unscathed.

So let me share with my House colleagues a few words from the Statement of Administration Policy on the Defense appropriations bill:

Enacting H.R. 2397—while adhering to the overall spending limits in the House budget's top-line discretionary level for fiscal year 2014—would hurt our economy and require draconian cuts to middle class priorities. These cuts could result in hundreds of thousands of low-income children losing access to Head Start programs, tens of thousands of

children with disabilities losing Federal funding for their special education teachers and aides, thousands of Federal agents who cannot enforce drug laws, combat violent crime, or apprehend fugitives, and thousands of scientists without medical grants, which would slow research that could lead to new treatments and cures for diseases like cancer and Alzheimer's, and hurt America's economic competitiveness.

□ 1245

The statement goes on to say:

Unless this bill passes the Congress in the context of an overall budget framework that supports our recovery and enables sufficient investments in education, infrastructure, innovation, and national security for our economy to compete in the future, the President's senior advisers would recommend that he veto H.R. 2397 and any other legislation that implements the House Republican Budget framework.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert into the RECORD the Statement of Administration Policy on H.R. 2397.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET,
Washington, DC, July 22, 2013.
STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY
H.R. 2397—DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
APPROPRIATIONS ACT 2014
(Rep. Rogers, R-KY)

The President is committed to our national defense and funding other important priorities within a budget framework that strengthens our economy and advances middle-class priorities. The Administration believes H.R. 2397, making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes, funds critical priorities, and looks forward to working on its provisions as part of an acceptable budget framework.

However, enacting H.R. 2397, while adhering to the overall spending limits in the House Budget's topline discretionary level for fiscal year (FY) 2014, would hurt our economy and require draconian cuts to middle-class priorities. These cuts could result in hundreds of thousands of low-income children losing access to Head Start programs, tens of thousands of children with disabilities losing Federal funding for their special education teachers and aides, thousands of Federal agents who cannot enforce drug laws, combat violent crime or apprehend fugitives, and thousands of scientists without medical grants, which would slow research that could lead to new treatments and cures for diseases like cancer and Alzheimer's, and hurt America's economic competitiveness.

More than three months have passed since the deadline for action and the Congress has yet to appoint conferees and agree on a budget resolution. Prior to consideration of appropriations bills the Congress should complete an appropriate framework for all the appropriations bills.

Unless this bill passes the Congress in the context of an overall budget framework that supports our recovery and enables sufficient investments in education, infrastructure, innovation and national security for our economy to compete in the future, the President's senior advisers would recommend that he veto H.R. 2397 and any other legislation that implements the House Republican Budget framework.

The Administration would like to take this opportunity to share additional views regarding the Committee's version of the bill.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response. The Administration appreciates the support

of the Committee in working to eliminate the threat that sexual assault in the military presents to our Service members and our national security.

Detainee Matters. The Administration strongly objects to the provisions of sections 8107 and 8108 that limit the use of funds to transfer detainees and otherwise restrict detainee transfers, which, in certain circumstances, would violate constitutional separation of powers principles. Section 8107 undermines national security and this unnecessarily constrains the Nation's counterterrorism efforts, particularly where Federal courts are the best—or even the only—option for incapacitating dangerous terrorists. For decades, presidents of both political parties have leveraged the flexibility and strength of this country's Federal courts to incapacitate dangerous terrorists and gather critical intelligence. The continued prosecution of terrorists in Federal court is an essential element of counterterrorism efforts—a powerful tool that must remain an available option. Additionally, the restrictions in section 8108 on the transfer of detainees to the United States and to the custody or effective control of foreign countries or entities in the context of an ongoing armed conflict may interfere with the Executive Branch's ability to determine the appropriate disposition of detainees and to make important foreign policy and national security determinations regarding whether and under what circumstances such transfers should occur.

In addition, the Administration strongly opposes section 8109, which would prohibit the use of funds to construct, acquire, or modify a detention facility in the United States to house individuals held in the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. This would constrain the flexibility that the Nation's Armed Forces and counterterrorism professionals need to deal with evolving threats, intruding upon the Executive Branch's ability to carry out its mission.

Topline Funding Levels. The Administration strongly objects to unrequested Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding in the bill and the reduction of base budget funding relative to the President's request. The FY 2014 Budget carefully aligns program priorities and resources based on the President's strategic guidance, and it fully funds OCO requirements.

Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). The Administration strongly urges the Congress to provide BRAC authorization and funding as requested so that the Department of Defense (DOD) can right-size its infrastructure while providing appropriate transition assistance to affected communities. Without a new round of BRAC, DOD cannot properly align the military's infrastructure with the needs of its evolving force structure, a critical tool for ensuring that limited resources are available to the highest priorities of the warfighter and national security.

TRICARE Fees and Co-Payments. The Administration strongly urges the Congress to support its proposed TRICARE fee increases, because military retirees deserve an excellent, sustainable health care benefit. The Administration is disappointed that the Committee has consistently failed to support requested TRICARE fee initiatives that seek to control DOD's spiraling health care costs while keeping retired beneficiaries' share of these costs well below the levels experienced when the TRICARE program was implemented in the mid-1990s. While the bill restores the projected FY 2014 TRICARE savings associated with the initiatives, the Department will be forced to make deeper reductions to troop levels, readiness and modernization accounts in order to offset higher health care costs of over \$8 billion through FY 2018.

Military Pay. The Administration strongly urges the Congress to include the proposal to set the military pay raise growth at 1.0 percent in FY 2014. Consistent with the views of the uniformed military leadership, the President's Budget requests a 1.0 percent increase to basic pay, a 4.2 percent increase in the Basic Allowance for Housing, and a 3.4 percent increase in Basic Allowance for Subsistence. This total compensation level recognizes the sacrifices made by the men and women in our Armed Forces, while adhering to the current budget constraints faced by DOD. The bill provides \$580 million in additional appropriations to fund the pay raise in FY 2014, but it would increase costs by a total of \$3.5 billion from FY 2014 through FY 2018. After FY 2014, these future costs would need to be offset by deeper reductions to troop levels, readiness and modernization accounts at a time when statutory spending caps require defense reductions.

Building Partner Capacity. The Administration strongly objects to reductions in funds for programs to build partner capacity, which would limit the Department's ability to address current and emerging threats to our national security. The bill provides \$83 million less than the \$358 million requested for the Global Train and Equip program and does not fund the request for \$75 million for the Global Security Contingency Fund.

National Intelligence Program Consolidation. The Administration strongly objects to section 8105 because the provision's prohibitions would impinge on the President's prerogatives to seek efficient budget structures and unduly constrain the President in future budget decisions.

Unrequested Funding. The Administration is concerned about the billions of dollars provided for items DOD did not request and does not need, such as Light Utility Helicopters, National Guard High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWV), additional medical research, and the modernization of seven cruisers and two amphibious ships. The Administration is also concerned that the bill makes spending on these and other unnecessary items statutorily required, diverting scarce resources from more important defense programs and limiting the Secretary's flexibility to manage the Department efficiently.

C-130 Avionics Modernization Program (C-130 AMP). The Administration objects to the \$47 million in unrequested funding provided for the C-130 AMP, which would start initial production of C-130 AMP kits for the modernization of earlier generation C-130 airlift aircraft. The President's FY 2013 Budget canceled the C-130 AMP because of its high total program cost of \$2.7 billion, and because the aircraft would still be able to perform their missions with less expensive upgrades. In addition, as required by the FY 2013 National Defense Authorization Act, DOD is conducting an independent cost-benefit analysis of the C-130 AMP, and it would be premature to reinstate the program before that study is complete.

Advanced Innovative Technologies. The Administration objects to the \$115 million cut for Advanced Innovative Technologies, an 88 percent reduction from the President's request, which funds on-going research and development efforts that support the new Defense Strategy and the rebalance to the Asia Pacific. Specifically, this program supports initiatives that would provide cost-effective and cost-imposing capabilities that are critical for meeting the Combatant Commander's objectives in the region. This capability is needed to address real world threats and full funding is required to research, develop and test performance of the Electromagnetic Railgun system.

Joint Urgent Operational Needs Fund (JUONF). The Administration objects to the

elimination of funding requested for the JUONF. This funding is critical to DOD's ability to quickly respond to urgent operational needs of Combatant Commanders. Elimination of funding may delay fielding of important capabilities that help accomplish critical missions.

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Programs. The Administration objects to the restoration of funding for the STARBASE program, which would perpetuate the Federal Government's fragmented approach to STEM education, whereby more than 220 programs are scattered across 13 agencies. The Administration's proposed reorganization of STEM programs would improve STEM education quality and outcomes across the Federal Government.

Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Fund (DAWDF). The Administration opposes the reduction of \$205 million from the FY 2014 Budget request for the DAWDF. Failure to provide the full request would require DOD to collect the shortfall between the appropriation and the statutory minimum for DAWDF from other budget accounts. In addition, the Administration opposes appropriations language that would not allow use of prior year expired funds for the FY 2014 DAWDF collection. Components should be allowed to use these funds per the authority provided in current law.

Civilian Pay Raise. The Administration urges the Congress to support the proposed 1.0 percent pay increase for Federal civilian employees. As the President stated in his FY 2014 Budget, a permanent pay freeze is neither sustainable nor desirable.

Missile Defense. The Administration appreciates the support for DOD's air and missile defense programs, as well as support for the government of Israel's Iron Dome rocket system.

Afghanistan Security Forces Fund. The Administration appreciates the Committee's continued strong support for U.S. efforts to build and develop the security forces of Afghanistan. However, the Administration strongly urges the Congress to make \$2.6 billion of the \$7.7 billion request contingent upon pending policy decisions and the progress made by the Afghan National Security Forces during FY 2014, as requested in the President's Budget.

Limitation on Funds Available to Procure Equipment. The Administration appreciates the support of the Committee for a responsive and flexible program to train and equip the security forces of Afghanistan. However, the Administration is concerned that some of the limitations proposed in section 8119 will prevent the Department from meeting critical equipment requirements and delivery timelines for the Afghan National Security Forces and will unnecessarily increase costs for the U.S. taxpayer. The Administration urges the Congress to work with the Department to develop an alternative approach.

The Administration looks forward to working with the Congress as the FY 2014 appropriations process moves forward.

Finally, and most importantly, Mr. Speaker, this bill not only continues funding for the war in Afghanistan; it also increases the Overseas Contingency Operations account, adding \$5 billion more above the Pentagon's request, for a total of \$85.8 billion.

Now, let me see if I understand this correctly, Mr. Speaker. During the time period when the United States is significantly reducing the size of our forces in Afghanistan, and when we are withdrawing from the war, this bill ac-

tually adds \$5.1 billion to the OCO account above and beyond what the Pentagon asked for.

That is simply crazy, Mr. Speaker. Maybe those extra billions will pay the \$70-plus million exit tax that Afghanistan is demanding of the United States to pull out our military equipment. That's not fuzzy math, Mr. Speaker. The word for that is "extortion."

My colleague from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) had an amendment that simply said that the American taxpayers aren't going to pay this extortion tax that Mr. Karzai is demanding. His amendment wasn't even made in order. It was germane, but it wasn't even made in order.

While I appreciate the language in the bill that none of these funds can be used for President Karzai's personal benefit, since we found out earlier this year that he was lining his pockets from a U.S. taxpayer-dollar slush fund, it certainly won't stop Karzai's government from squeezing every last dollar it can from the United States to carry out the military drawdown over the next 15 months.

Mr. Speaker, I am sick and I am tired of asking our brave servicemen and -women to fight and die for this corrupt government. While I hope to be surprised, I really have little faith that next year's parliamentary and presidential elections in Afghanistan will be free and fair, let alone usher in a new order committed to eliminating corruption and cronyism.

I am sick and tired of U.S. tax dollars being wasted in Afghanistan on military headquarters that will never be used, only to see them built and torn down.

I am sick and tired of building roads to nowhere or having our convoys pay a tax to transport troops and much-needed supplies to provinces outside of Kabul.

In brief, just like the overwhelming majority of the American people, I want to see this war brought to an end and our troops safely home, reunited with their families and loved ones, and contributing to home communities right here in the United States.

Let us be clear, Mr. Speaker: the \$85.8 billion total for the OCO account is still designated "emergency funding." That means it is all put on the national credit card. Not a penny of the hundreds of billions of dollars for this war has ever been paid for or offset or balanced with revenues from someplace else in the national budget.

We certainly do not need to add even more billions to the OCO account. What we need to do is to end this war as quickly as possible and bring our troops home.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN).

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for the time and rise in support of his rule and the underlying Department of Defense appropriations bill for fiscal year 2014.

First of all, I congratulate my chairman, Mr. ROGERS, and also Defense chairman, Mr. YOUNG, as well as Mr. VISCLOSKEY and Mrs. LOWEY, for their hard work and leadership getting this legislation forward.

Mr. Speaker, as we are all keenly aware, the budget of the Department of Defense is under severe stress. We are already seeing the effects of the President's budget cuts and the sequester on military readiness.

To fight effectively, our Armed Forces must be staffed, equipped, and trained to operate under dangerous, complex, and uncertain conditions, often with little or no warning. They require the right personnel using the right equipment and the right training.

But if history teaches us anything, it teaches us that the future is highly unpredictable. Unanticipated events often catch us by surprise. We constantly ask our military to be prepared for any contingency. Yet today we have burdened them with new levels of budgetary uncertainty hampering modernization, planning, and training.

Mr. Speaker, our men and women in uniform need this Defense appropriations process to move forward. We should not force them to contemplate another inefficient continuing resolution on top of additional crippling sequester cuts. That is what will happen if this House cannot find a way to pass this important legislation: more delay, more uncertainty, diminished readiness, more risk for the men and women we ask to go into harm's way.

Is this a perfect rule, this structured rule? Absolutely not. The committee always prefers open rules and regular order.

At the same time, I urge my colleagues to support this rule and the underlying bill so that we can work with the Senate to fulfill our most basic mission under the constitutional duty—to provide for the common defense.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, let me just remind my colleagues again why these are tough budgetary times. This Defense bill is being treated differently than appropriations bills that actually fund needs right here in the United States.

I would remind my colleagues that national defense also includes what happens here in the United States—whether people have housing, whether people have food, whether or not people have good health care, whether or not we have good roads and good bridges, whether or not we have jobs. All these domestic needs are being ignored. In fact, they are being obliterated by the Republican numbers in the appropriations process.

Mr. Speaker, at this point I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH).

Mr. WELCH. I thank the gentleman. I also thank my colleague from Florida. I appreciate the courtesy that the Rules Committee extended to Mr. GIBSON and me last evening when we offered our amendment on Syria.

Mr. Speaker, my moment here is to discuss this fundamental question about whether America is going to be taking military action in Syria without any congressional debate. We have a responsibility under the Constitution.

Article I, section 8, clause 11 gives Congress the power to declare war and raise and support the Armed Forces. My colleague from Florida rightly said that we have an obligation to support the military men and women. They will do anything that we ask them to do.

But this is the moment when we face our responsibility or shirk it—to give them a policy worthy of their willingness to sacrifice. The idea that we would take military action, and arming the Syrian rebels is military action, it is intended very specifically to take down the Government of Syria—and I want Assad to go, and we all do—but I don't want this Congress to back into a policy, stumble ahead, where we find ourselves engaged in military conflict where we haven't even met our basic responsibility to have a debate about it.

We have to decide: Are we going to be men and women of Congress, are we going to do our jobs, are we going to be Congressmen and -women, or are we going to be cowards? It is the coward's path to avoid taking responsibility for a momentous decision that we know at this moment is upon us.

Vote "yes" or vote "no." But to have no debate, to actually once again stumble into a military action, have we learned nothing from Iraq and Afghanistan? Iraq right now is supporting Assad; it is supporting Iran.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. WELCH. Afghanistan is now, after 11 years, ripping us off as we try to bring our material home. Does anybody on the either side of the aisle support this? Why don't we have a debate?

I admire Speaker BOEHNER for saying he wants to have this House work its will. But I say to Speaker BOEHNER: give us a vote, let us debate, let us meet our responsibility. There will be men and women that will go into harm's way, stumble ahead, because we did not stand up and take responsibility. We are accountable to the people who elect us.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I thank the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege of serving on both the Armed Services Committee, as well as the House Depot Caucus. Our U.S. military has its own defense, repair, and sustainment capabilities, precisely because the government needs to guarantee that soldiers in the field will be sustained and supported in times of war. They will guarantee that needed equipment will be

there in working order when and where it is needed because their lives and our freedom depend on it.

That is why I object to the current furlough policy of some of our DOD civilian workers. I have great sympathy for the Department of Defense. Unlike every other budget of the Federal Government, they did not receive an increase of appropriations before sequestration. In fact, the military is the only area where in this administration they received two cuts in their funding before sequestration hit, which was the third cut. Our defense has been hit disproportionately because of sequestration.

The Department of Defense's approach is to have everyone sharing in the burden or the pain of it. That is actually a political decision, and I don't use that in a pejorative sense. But Congresses have understood the work of our sustainment sector for decades, passing title I, sections 129 and 2472, which deal with working capital funds, and we have five such working capital funds.

These are revolving funds that are self-sustaining, which means by law if you have a workload and you have the funds, then these employees should not be thrown under the bus with a furlough. It is silly to think that the workload would be there. The funds are actually there, but the workload will be sitting in depots and the technicians and mechanics working on those will be forced to take off days without pay. It will increase our delay; it will increase our cost. The furlough working fund that funds employees does not save the government any kind of money, but it hurts delay.

The gentleman from Oklahoma will have an amendment, which I hope the House will take seriously, which will look at these working capital funds, and realize the unique situation they have within our system and will hopefully solve this problem going forward in the future.

It has been said that we have a foreign policy which we will fund. Actually, the book I read said, "The foreign policy for which we will pay for." I just didn't want to end in a preposition.

Our foreign policy is funded here in the Defense Department appropriations. This is what gives us the flexibility diplomatically to do things not now, but 5 years from now and 10 years from now and 15 years from now.

We are truly looking at our future with this particular fund, and it must be taken seriously. We are living since the Cold War ended in a much less secure world than we were while we were in the Cold War, not just because of what is being done by our traditional adversaries in Russia and China, but in the Rim countries, Third World countries, which have used new technology to create what is called "technological claustrophobia," as their efforts are now compressed together and we are having to respond to that.

There are many issues in this particular bill which help us move forward, not only in defense of our military, but in our foreign policy opportunities. There are a few amendments out there that actually do harm to that. I hope we look at it very carefully. It is a well-crafted rule with a whole lot of amendments—perhaps far too many amendments made in order—and it will provide for a logical debate. I hope when we come out of it, we realize the significance of this, not just funding our military, but also funding our diplomatic future.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to build on something that Mr. WELCH of Vermont said here on the House floor about the lack of debate on Syria. As somebody who was here when the Afghanistan war began and when the Iraq war began, I believe that both of those wars were unnecessary. We ended up getting Osama bin Laden not in Afghanistan with 100,000 troops, but with a small well-trained group of Navy SEALs in Pakistan.

This notion that somehow our strength can only be measured by the number of troops we have overseas or the number of weapons that we send overseas I think is just crazy. I think the amount that we have spent on these wars that have been added to our debt have weakened our security. I think the fact that we have lost so many incredibly brave men and women to these conflicts is a tragedy.

What the gentleman from Vermont raised was the issue that I think is on a lot of our constituents' minds, and that is what is going to happen in Syria. The real problem with this rule, Mr. Speaker, can be seen in the debate surrounding Syria. There is a real split when it comes to Syria. There are some who don't believe we should get involved at all; and there are others, like Senator MCCAIN, leading the Republicans over in the Senate, saying we ought to do more, we ought to get more involved in Syria.

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Yet this rule denies any real substantive debate on one of the most important issues facing our military. The Republicans, despite making 100 amendments in order, ducked this issue entirely. The rule makes in order one amendment on Syria, and that amendment simply reiterates current law. Despite the sheer number of amendments made in order, the Republican leadership has ducked a real important debate when it comes to Syria, and I hope that a few years down the road we don't look back on the fact that we avoided a debate on Syria and express regret that somehow we got sucked into this war without a real debate. I mean, that's what we're here for.

So, when people say, "Oh, these are tough issues," I'm sorry. We can't duck every tough issue. Maybe that has been the problem with a lot of our overseas

policies—that we haven't talked about what needs to be done, that we haven't debated these issues. Sometimes we've gotten involved in wars that we've found are more complicated than originally thought. There is nothing wrong with debate, and it is incredibly important. In the people's House of Representatives, we ought to have a debate on this issue.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NUGENT. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for yielding to me.

I want to also thank our ranking member of the Defense Subcommittee, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKEY), as well as to thank our mutual friend and colleague from Florida, Chairman BILL YOUNG, for their hard work on this bill, which will benefit our Nation, our men and women in uniform, our Armed Forces, and all of those who are touched by what is contained in this legislation.

Within the limits provided and despite severe cuts, this bill has been written in a bipartisan way by our subcommittee. I thank the members for working so collaboratively together. It is a model for this House and our committee on how to do the work necessary to meet the needs of the American people.

The bill includes \$125 million above the President's request for funding health research for traumatic brain injuries and posttraumatic stress conditions—the signature wounds of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The bill also includes \$544 million for cancer research, including breast cancer, prostate cancer, ovarian cancer, and lung cancer research, which are endured at a much higher percentage among our troops than among the population at large.

The bill also contains continuing support for our NATO responsibilities, including continuing joint operations related to the Newly Independent States. The bill includes the requested amount in the budget for the Iron Dome missile defense partnership with Israel.

The bill also includes \$1.5 billion above the request for the National Guard and Reserve Equipment account to fund equipment requirements of the National Guard and Reserve components. During the last decade of war, our National Guard and Reserve units have proven themselves as the strategic partners for our Nation. Our subcommittee continues to provide the funding necessary for our Guard and Reserve units to continue their missions, which they do extremely well and much more cost-effectively than in the active forces.

This legislation also continues the military's commitment to lead our Na-

tion toward energy independence. The Pentagon, which is the largest petroleum user in the world, must lead our Nation forward toward energy independence. No challenge could be more vital to our national security and economic security than energy independence.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentlelady an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. KAPTUR. Thank you, Congressman MCGOVERN.

High fuel costs are an enormous burden on America's families and our military. It is also a burden on every branch of the service in which it costs us \$400 a gallon to deliver 1 gallon of gasoline—fully costed—to the troops at the front line.

Thank you again to Chairman BILL YOUNG and to Ranking Member VISCLOSKEY for their leadership and to our ranking member on the full committee, the gentlelady from New York (Mrs. LOWEY), and to the gentleman from Kentucky, Chairman ROGERS, for working with all of our members in order to meet the needs of our Nation and of our Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force—those who serve the American people every day so nobly.

Mr. NUGENT. As to the thoughts of the gentlelady from Ohio, I appreciate her comments and her support for the military.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I am going to urge people to vote "no" on the previous question. If we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule that will allow the House to consider the Van Hollen resolution, which calls on Speaker BOEHNER to proceed to a conference on the budget. It is time for the majority to follow regular order by immediately appointing conferees to negotiate the 2014 budget conference agreement with the Senate.

To discuss that proposal, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished ranking member of the Budget Committee, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN).

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I thank my friend from Massachusetts.

Mr. Speaker, at the outset, I want to associate myself with the remarks of Mr. MCGOVERN and Mr. WELCH regarding the importance of this body's having a debate and a vote on whether or not we should be sending U.S. taxpayer dollars to engage and support the rebels in the civil war in Syria. After all, this budget supports the Defense Department, and it also supports the intelligence agency. So this is the time and place to have the debate about taxpayer dollars going to a civil war in Syria.

It is also the time and high time that we get on with passing a Federal budget. We've heard a lot of talk on the floor today about the importance of supporting our military—absolutely