

Norman	Roskam	Thornberry	Harris	Marchant	Royce (CA)	Pallone	Sánchez	Thompson (MS)
Nunes	Ross	Tiberi	Heck	Massie	Ruppersberger	Panetta	Schiff	Thornberry
O'Halleran	Rothfus	Tipton	Hensarling	Matsui	Rush	Pascrell	Schneider	Tiberi
Olson	Rouzer	Trott	Herrera Beutler	McClintock	Sarbanes	Payne	Scott (VA)	Tonko
Palazzo	Royce (CA)	Turner	Hill	McCollum	Schakowsky	Pearce	Scott, Austin	Torres
Palmer	Ruppersberger	Upton	Hollingsworth	McEachin	Schrader	Pingree	Scott, David	Trott
Paulsen	Russell	Valadao	Hudson	McGovern	Schweikert	Poe (TX)	Serrano	Turner
Pearce	Rutherford	Veasey	Huffman	McKinley	Sensenbrenner	Poliquin	Sewell (AL)	Upton
Perry	Schweikert	Wagner	Huizenga	Meadows	Sessions	Posey	Shea-Porter	Valadao
Peters	Scott, Austin	Walberg	Hultgren	Messer	Sherman	Reed	Shimkus	Vargas
Peterson	Sensenbrenner	Walden	Issa	Moore	Smith (WA)	Reichert	Shuster	Veasey
Pittenger	Sessions	Walker	Jayapal	Moulton	Stewart	Renacci	Simpson	Vela
Poe (TX)	Shimkus	Walorski	Johnson (GA)	Nadler	Suozi	Richmond	Sinema	Velázquez
Poliquin	Shuster	Walters, Mimi	Jordan	Newhouse	Taylor	Roby	Sires	Walberg
Posey	Simpson	Weber (TX)	Kelly (IL)	Nolan	Thompson (CA)	Rogers (AL)	Slaughter	Walorski
Ratcliffe	Sinema	Webster (FL)	Kennedy	Norman	Thompson (PA)	Rogers (KY)	Smith (MO)	Walters, Mimi
Reed	Smith (MO)	Wenstrup	Khanna	O'Rourke	Tipton	Rooney, Thomas J.	Smith (NE)	Walters, Maxine
Reichert	Smith (NE)	Westerman	Kihuen	Palmer	Tsongas	Ros-Lehtinen	Smith (NJ)	Watson Coleman
Renacci	Smith (NJ)	Williams	Kildee	Paulsen	Visclosky	Rosen	Smith (TX)	Weber (TX)
Rice (SC)	Smith (TX)	Wilson (SC)	Kilmer	Pelosi	Wagner	Ross	Smucker	Wilson (FL)
Roby	Smucker	Wittman	Krishnamoorthi	Perlmutter	Walker	Rouzer	Soto	Wilson (SC)
Roe (TN)	Soto	Womack	Kustoff (TN)	Perry	Walder	Roybal-Allard	Speier	Wittman
Rogers (AL)	Stefanik	Woodall	Labrador	Peters	Walker	Ruiz	Stefanik	Yarmuth
Rogers (KY)	Stewart	Yoder	LaHood	Peterson	Walz	Russell	Stivers	Yoder
Rokita	Stivers	Yoho	LaMalfa	Pittenger	Wasserman	Rutherford	Swalwell (CA)	Young (AK)
Rooney, Francis	Suozi	Young (AK)	Lance	Pocan	Schultz	Ryan (OH)	Takano	
Rooney, Thomas J.	Taylor	Young (IA)	Langevin	Polis	Webster (FL)		Tenney	
Ros-Lehtinen	Tenney	Zeldin	Larsen (WA)	Price (NC)	Welch			
	Thompson (PA)		Lawrence	Quigley	Wenstrup			
			Lawson (FL)	Raskin	Westerman			
			Levin	Ratcliffe	Williams			
			Lewis (GA)	Rice (NY)	Womack			
			Lewis (MN)	Rice (SC)	Woodall			
			Lipinski	Roe (TN)	Yoho			
			Lofgren	Rohrabacher	Young (IA)			
			Love	Rokita	Zeldin			
			Lowey	Rooney, Francis				
			Maloney,	Roskam				
			Carolyn B.	Rothfus				

NOT VOTING—10

Cleaver	Johnson, Sam	Sanford
Cummings	Lieu, Ted	Scalise
Davis, Rodney	Massie	
Frankel (FL)	Napolitano	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1517

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 14 OFFERED BY MR. MCCLINTOCK

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This is a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 175, noes 248, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 365]

AYES—175

Aderholt	Chu, Judy	Doggett
Amash	Cicilline	Duncan (SC)
Barr	Clay	Duncan (TN)
Bera	Coffman	Ellison
Bergman	Collins (GA)	Emmer
Biggs	Comer	Estes (KS)
Bishop (MI)	Connolly	Faso
Blumenauer	Conyers	Fitzpatrick
Bonamici	Cooper	Fleischmann
Brat	Crowley	Flores
Bridenstine	Davidson	Foster
Brooks (AL)	Davis (CA)	Fox
Brown (MD)	DeFazio	Gabbard
Buck	DeGette	Gallagher
Budd	Delaney	Goodlatte
Burgess	DelBene	Gosar
Cárdenas	Denham	Gowdy
Carson (IN)	Dent	Graves (GA)
Castor (FL)	DeSantis	Griffith
Castro (TX)	DesJarlais	Grothman
Chabot	Deutch	Guthrie

Abraham	Culberson	Johnson (OH)
Adams	Curbelo (FL)	Johnson, E. B.
Aguilar	DeLauro	Jones
Allen	Demings	Joyce (OH)
Amodei	DeSaulnier	Kaptur
Arrington	Diaz-Balart	Katko
Babin	Dingell	Keating
Bacon	Donovan	Kelly (MS)
Banks (IN)	Doyle, Michael F.	Kelly (PA)
Barletta	Duffy	Kind
Barragán	Dunn	King (IA)
Barton	Engel	King (NY)
Bass	Eshoo	Kinzinger
Beatty	Españat	Knight
Beyer	Esty (CT)	Kuster (NH)
Bilirakis	Evans	Lamborn
Bishop (GA)	Farenthold	Larson (CT)
Bishop (UT)	Ferguson	Latta
Black	Fortenberry	Lee
Blackburn	Franks (AZ)	LoBiondo
Blum	Frelinghuysen	Loebsack
Blunt Rochester	Fudge	Long
Bost	Gaetz	Loudermilk
Boyle, Brendan F.	Gallego	Lowenthal
Brady (PA)	Garamendi	Lucas
Brady (TX)	Lujan Grisham,	Luetkemeyer
Brooks (IN)	M.	Lujan, Ben Ray
Brownley (CA)	Gibbs	Lynch
Buchanan	Gohmert	MacArthur
Bucshon	Gomez	Maloney, Sean
Bustos	Gonzalez (TX)	Marino
Butterfield	Gottheimer	Marshall
Byrne	Granger	Mast
Calvert	Graves (LA)	McCarthy
Capuano	Graves (MO)	McCaul
Carbajal	Green, Al	McHenry
Carter (GA)	Green, Gene	McMorris
Carter (TX)	Grijalva	McMorris
Cartwright	Gutiérrez	Rodgers
Cheney	Hanabusa	McNerney
Clark (MA)	Handel	McSally
Clarke (NY)	Harper	Meehan
Clyburn	Hartzler	Meeks
Cohen	Hastings	Meng
Cole	Hice, Jody B.	Mitchell
Collins (NY)	Higgins (LA)	Mooleenaar
Comstock	Higgins (NY)	Mooney (WV)
Conaway	Himes	Mullin
Cook	Holding	Murphy (FL)
Correa	Hoyer	Murphy (PA)
Costa	Hunter	Neal
Costello (PA)	Hurd	Noem
Courtney	Jackson Lee	Norcross
Cramer	Jeffries	Nunes
Crawford	Jenkins (KS)	O'Halleran
Crist	Jenkins (WV)	Olson
Cuellar	Johnson (LA)	Palazzo

NOES—248

Johnson (OH)	Johnson, E. B.	Jones
Joyce (OH)	Kaptur	Katko
Keating	Kelly (MS)	Kelly (PA)
Kind	King (IA)	King (NY)
Kinzinger	Knight	Kuster (NH)
Lamborn	Larson (CT)	Latta
Lee	LoBiondo	Loebsack
Long	Loudermilk	Lowenthal
Lucas	Luetkemeyer	Lujan Grisham,
Lujan, Ben Ray	M.	Lynch
MacArthur	Maloney, Sean	Marino
Marshall	Mast	McCarthy
McCaul	McHenry	McMorris
McMorris	Rodgers	McNerney
McSally	Meehan	Meeks
Meng	Mitchell	Mooleenaar
Mooney (WV)	Mullin	Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)	Neal	Noem
Norcross	Nunes	O'Halleran
Olson	Palazzo	

NOT VOTING—10

Cleaver	Frankel (FL)	Sanford
Cummings	Johnson, Sam	Scalise
Davis, Danny	Lieu, Ted	
Davis, Rodney	Napolitano	

□ 1522

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. KATKO). There being no further amendments, pursuant to House Resolution 431, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania) having assumed the chair, Mr. KATKO, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2810) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 24 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1532

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FASO) at 3 o'clock and 32 minutes p.m.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 440 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2810.

Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) kindly resume the chair.

□ 1533

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 2810) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, with Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, amendment No. 14 printed in part B of House Report 115-212 offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) had been disposed of.

Pursuant to House Resolution 440, no further amendment to the bill, as amended, shall be in order except those printed in House Report 115-217 and amendments en bloc described in section 3.

Each further amendment printed in the report 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, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

It shall be in order at any time for the chair of the Committee on Armed Services or his designee to offer amendments en bloc consisting of amendments printed in the report not earlier disposed of. Amendments en bloc 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 Armed Services or their designees, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. GARAMENDI

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 115-217.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Strike section 123.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 440, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chair, this amendment facilitates the construction of badly needed icebreakers. The United States does not have any heavy icebreakers that are available all year round. We only

have one, and that is used in the Antarctic and, therefore, unavailable in the summer in the north.

Joining me on this amendment is the ranking member and others from the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

We need icebreakers; in fact, we need six icebreakers. We need to build the first one immediately and get it underway.

Language in the underlying bill provides a mechanism for us to fund that icebreaker using the authorities of the Department of the Navy, specifically, one of their sections. This amendment clarifies the language and makes it clear that the Navy can act as the fiscal agent to carry out the icebreaker task. It does not require in any way that the Navy shipbuilding account be used in any way to pay for the icebreaker. The money for the icebreaker will have to come from other sources. But it makes it clear that the Navy can expend money as a fiscal agent using the special account that was designated, that has been in existence for some time.

I can go into great length about why we need icebreakers, but the very short story is that Russia has over 40 icebreakers, probably closer to 50, many of them heavy icebreakers capable of operating in very thick ice in the Arctic. The United States really has none. We have some light icebreakers, but they will not suffice during the Arctic spring and winter. Therefore, we have to get with it.

We do know that in the future—well, today and this year, this summer—the Northwest Passage will be open for shipping, and the East Passage, which is along the Russian coast, is also open.

So the Arctic is a navigable ocean. The U.S. Navy cannot operate there without an icebreaker. We cannot conduct civil and maritime as well as military exercises without a heavy icebreaker. This allows us to do that.

Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chair, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment to strike a critical provision of this year's NDAA.

I do share my colleague's concern for the current state of our U.S. Coast Guard icebreaker fleet. I do believe there are ways that we can address that issue, but I disagree with his proposed solution.

To be clear, the National Defense Authorization Act authorizes funds for the Department of Defense. The U.S. Coast Guard falls under the Department of Homeland Security.

This amendment seeks to take millions of dollars away from the Navy in the long term and shift it to the Coast

Guard for their expenditures. Make no mistake about it: if this amendment passes, there is no stopping the Department of Homeland Security or any other agency from poaching enormous sums of our Defense Department budget in the future. Today it is Coast Guard icebreakers, and next year it may be the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration research and survey vessels. The possibilities are endless; unfortunately, the funds are not.

Mr. Chair, I would urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this amendment to ensure that our Navy and Department of Defense funds are used only by the Navy and the Department of Defense.

Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. LARSEN).

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the Garamendi-Hunter amendment because I know how important a strong icebreaker fleet is to national security.

The committee recognizes this reality, as elsewhere in the bill we give the DOD some important authorities to support icebreaker procurement. However, this section 123 prohibits DOD funding for icebreaker procurement. This amendment strikes this provision because flexibility will be essential to funding new icebreakers.

Coast Guard shipbuilding budgets are insufficient for icebreaker procurement absent radical cuts elsewhere. As co-chair of the Arctic Working Group, I know that the United States needs icebreakers. These ships protect economic interests in the region, and they defend our sovereignty.

As the Arctic becomes increasingly navigable, the importance of icebreakers will only grow, and I urge my colleagues to support the Garamendi-Hunter amendment.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON), my friend and colleague.

Mr. BACON. Mr. Chair, I rise today in respectful opposition to this amendment.

No one can dispute America's need for icebreakers. These capital ships are indispensable tools to ensure the safe and rapid movement of commerce in Arctic waters. I commend my colleagues for their strong advocacy for these ships and share their belief that we need them.

However, the responsibility and accountability for constructing and operating America's icebreakers must rest solely where the Congress has assigned it: the Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Coast Guard.

The question we are debating today is not whether we need icebreakers, but how to appropriate the funds and who should build them. As important as icebreakers are, they are not warships, and we must not allow funding legitimately appropriated for our combat

fleet to be diverted for nondefense needs.

While I acknowledge the temptation to raid defense accounts for a worthy cause, we must be mindful of how deep in the hole we are with our air, land, sea, space, and cyber forces. We need to keep our eye on the ball in rebuilding our military's readiness and our modernization.

Mr. Chair, I urge a vote "no" against this amendment.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chair, may I ask how much time I have remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chair, just a couple of things.

First of all, there is a thing called the National Sealift Fund, which has been in existence for a long time, and it has been used to build non-Navy ships. That is exactly what we intend to do here is to use the National Sealift Fund, not the Navy shipbuilding fund.

Secondly, you may notice or you may want to know that the U.S. Coast Guard is, in fact, a defense as well as a civilian vessel; it has both obligations.

We also need to understand that we are not stealing money from the Navy. This is simply a mechanism in which the Navy acts as a fiscal agent to carry out the task.

The Coast Guard is not well suited to build ships of this type. We are looking for the most efficient and effective way to carry out the task, and the use of the National Sealift Fund, together with the U.S. Navy as the fiscal agent, is the best way to accomplish that.

I would end by simply saying the U.S. Navy is toothless, useless in the Arctic unless it has an icebreaker. So if you care about the Arctic Ocean and the role of the U.S. Navy in carrying out our national defense functions in the Arctic, then you must help us find a way to build the icebreakers.

We will do so without, in any way, taking funds away from the U.S. Navy shipbuilding. Indeed, it would be up to the appropriators to appropriate money quite hopefully from the Department of Homeland Security for this purpose, putting the money into this National Sealift Fund so that it can then be used to build the icebreaker, with the Navy acting as the fiscal agent.

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

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TURNER), my friend and colleague.

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Chairman, I join with Chairman WITTMAN in expressing opposition to this amendment.

As he has indicated, the Navy has no indication that they have a military requirement for icebreakers. Right now we are trying to reverse the effects of sequestration. We are fighting against budget cuts. When you use money for something other than what it was intended for, it is a budget cut, and that is what this would be. No one is talking

about raising the top line of the overall defense budget, but they are talking about using the funds otherwise for something that is not defense.

I want to join with everyone who is speaking on this issue of the importance of the Coast Guard and certainly its impact and certainly the issues of icebreaking, but shipbuilding for the Navy and for our military should be concentrated on our military. Certainly the funds that we are appropriating to the Department of Defense should remain in the Department of Defense, and, therefore, I rise with Chairman WITTMAN in support of the opposition.

□ 1545

Mr. Chair, in closing, I want to say that—going to Admiral Richardson's words—Admiral Richardson clearly states that the mission of icebreaking is a Coast Guard mission. There is not a disagreement there, but the disagreement is using resources that are within the Defense budget in order to do that.

If you are going to put the responsibility for building icebreakers and maintaining and operating them with the Coast Guard, yet you are going to put the money in the Department of Defense budget where there is no control, there is no oversight, that is a catastrophe waiting to happen.

If this is going to happen, it should happen within the Department of Homeland Security's budget or there needs to be a debate about where, ultimately, the Coast Guard needs to be located. But to put money in one area of the budget and expect that it is going to be managed properly and applied properly with someplace where there is not even jurisdiction, I think is problematic.

Again, it is clear where the missions are. It is clear where the responsibility lies between the Homeland Security Department, the Coast Guard, the Navy, and the Department of Defense.

I want to make sure we are building more cutters and icebreakers, and if we are going to do that, let's make sure we do it in the proper way. I think there are ways to construct language to make that happen, but this is not the way to do it.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. BUCK

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in House Report 115-217.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 85, after line 24, insert the following:
SEC. 316. ALTERNATIVE ENERGY USE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

(a) COST COMPETITIVENESS REQUIREMENT.—
(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Defense shall not purchase alternative energy unless such energy is equivalent to conventional energy in terms of cost and capabilities.

(2) COST CALCULATION.—The cost of each energy source described in paragraph (1) shall be calculated on a pre-tax basis in terms of life-cycle cost. Such calculation shall take into account—

(A) all associated Federal grants, subsidies and tax incentives applied from the point of production to consumption;

(B) fixed and variable operations and maintenance costs; and

(C) in the case of fuel, fully burdened costs, including all associated transportation and security from the point of purchase to delivery to the end user.

(3) RESEARCH EXEMPTION.—Nothing in this Act is intended to prohibit alternative energy research by the Department.

(b) PROHIBITION ON RENEWABLE ENERGY MANDATES.—None of the funds authorized to be appropriated by this Act or otherwise made available for fiscal year 2018 for the Department of Defense shall be used to carry out any provision of law that requires the Department of Defense to consume renewable energy, unless such energy meets the requirements of subsection (a).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 440, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. BUCK. I thank Chairman THORNBERRY for the opportunity to speak about my amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018.

Our military is the greatest fighting force in the world. I applaud the Department of Defense's efforts to reduce its carbon footprint. However, with our limited resources, we must ensure that these resources are being put to use in the best possible way.

Every penny spent by the Department of Defense must be used to advance our military's mission and support our troops. Incorporating higher cost fuel sources into the Department's energy acquisition process is money lost to repair planes, buy ammunition, and defeat the enemy.

Moreover, Congress must ensure that we are being good stewards of the American people's money. With our debt soaring towards \$20 trillion, it is irresponsible to ask American families to subsidize with their tax dollars fuel sources that have not yet been proven cost-effective.

Of course, the Department of Defense would still be allowed to research alternative sources of energy. My amendment ensures that the Department of

Defense can conduct research on alternative fuels to ensure these energy sources can be cost-competitive in the future.

My commonsense amendment is simple. It provides a framework for ensuring the Department of Defense is engaging in responsible energy acquisition practices. It prohibits renewable energy mandates placed on the Department of Defense and ensures that every unit of energy our military purchases is the most cost-effective option available while still maintaining the ability to research new sources of energy.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to support my amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Rhode Island is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment is a blatant attack on the use of alternative energy by the Department of Defense. So we have existing contracts right now for renewable energy, both liquid fuels and electricity, at the Department of Defense, and this amendment seeks to really pump the brakes on those policies and bury them in a web of unnecessary requirements.

So requiring procurement managers to track all Federal subsidies and tax credits would be a burden to the government, and requiring suppliers to provide such information would be onerous, expensive, and may, in fact, actually drive them away. Also, this will result in less competition for contracts, and higher costs for the Department of Defense. Ultimately, it is going to result in higher costs to the taxpayer.

So most alarmingly, this amendment does not include any waivers for times of emergency when a retail, time-sensitive purchase of readily available alternative fuels might be imperative to completing the mission, even if it is at a price point higher than the usual market cost.

Mr. Chairman, it also does not provide consideration for renewable energy projects for military installations that, although they might not reduce costs, do have other quantifiable benefits that increase combat effectiveness or enhance mission resiliency.

This amendment is also redundant. For bulk purchases, of which the DOD has many, current law already prohibits the Department from an alternative fuel purchase unless fully burdened cost is cost-competitive with traditional fuels.

Burying suppliers in these requirements is an unnecessary compliance burden and could disincentivize some suppliers from doing business with the DOD.

Finally, this amendment is opposed by the Department of Defense.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS).

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Chairman, I am opposed to this amendment, which would unnecessarily tie the hands of our military as it seeks to diversify its energy supply.

The Pentagon is pursuing alternative energy not because they are some kind of tree hugger, but because the diversity of energy options improves mission capabilities and saves lives.

Just because the price of oil is low today doesn't mean it won't spike tomorrow and force military leaders to divert resources away from mission priorities. In some cases, this has meant turning ships around and cutting their voyages short because of budgeting issues around fuel.

This is of particular concern as we continue the fight against ISIS while pivoting towards the Pacific. The Pacific Ocean has an area of 64 million miles. It includes hotspots like the South China Sea and North Korea, whose recent aggression threatens the region and our security.

As we ask our military leaders to respond to threats at a moment's notice, they need the flexibility that comes with alternative energy sources. But you don't need to just hear that from me. That is the position of General Mattis at the Department of Defense, who opposes this amendment.

My colleagues on the other side are going to say that this is merely about choosing the most cost-effective option, but this amendment would place an undue burden on DOD procurement managers to track all subsidies and credits for fuel. It doesn't include a waiver for national security considerations or increasing combat effectiveness, and it would inhibit innovations that increase readiness and save lives.

A 21st century military with the capability to counter new and dynamic threats cannot be powered solely by the energy sources of yesterday. I encourage my colleagues to join me in opposing this amendment.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, I don't believe that asking the Department of Defense to make a cost-effective decision in any purchase is an unnecessary burden.

Mr. Chair, I disagree with my colleagues, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chairman, as I said, I believe this amendment would significantly hinder the Department of Defense's ability to procure energy, and I urge its defeat. As I stated previously, this amendment is opposed by the Department of Defense.

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

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, the United States military is the greatest fighting force in the world. Our troops need to be focused on the mission at hand and have every tool at their disposal to complete that mission.

My amendment ensures that we practice fiscal discipline in the Department of Defense's energy acquisition process by ensuring that we are buying the most cost-effective source of energy.

I thank the chairman. I urge my colleagues to support my amendment.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. PERRY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in House Report 115-217.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Strike section 336.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 440, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman of the committee for his hard work and his defense of those who wear the uniform and take on that tough task. In these tough and troubling times, especially in financial austerity, he stood up and let everybody know how the military, in actual dollars over the last 8 years, has been cut significantly, and the impact on our national security.

In that vein, my goal with this amendment is to prioritize those limited defense resources on efforts that pose an immediate and direct threat to our national security.

This amendment would strike section 336 of the NDAA, which strikes the requirement for the Secretary of Defense to submit a report on the vulnerability to military installations and combatant commander requirements resulting from climate change over the next 20 years.

I am not here to debate climate change, whether it is real or it is not, how it is created, how we fix it, and all that stuff. That is for another day. My point is that this shouldn't be the priority of combatant commanders in our military. The United States military is currently operating in a very complex threat environment in which our country must be ready to face our adversaries.

Our country is facing direct threats from a myriad of sources, including Islamic extremists: ISIS, al-Qaida, the

Taliban, Abu Sayyaf. The alphabet soup of names in that regard is continuous and unrelenting: North Korea, China, Iran, Russia, even in space.

Over the past 8 years, our military strength and readiness has suffered as a result of the underfunding and neglect from the previous administration that are in support of sequestration. Through the NDAA, we simply must prioritize, decide what is most important and be for that, and let our warfighters know where we stand.

These things must strengthen the rebuilding of our Armed Forces and resolve their focus on what they need to pay attention to. Literally litanies of other Federal agencies deal with environmental issues, including climate change. This Federal mandate detracts from the essential mission of the Department of Defense, which is to secure our Nation from enemies, and is best left to the agencies that are better suited to deal with these issues.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chair, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Rhode Island is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chair, I yield myself 1½ minutes.

Mr. Chair, this amendment would strike a provision that we have already thoroughly debated and approved in a bipartisan fashion within the Armed Services Committee. Section 336 acknowledges what Secretary Mattis has already said and what we already know: that a changing climate will affect our military's readiness and alter the threat landscape for years to come, and that we must study these impacts to prepare for them.

I cannot see the harm in gathering information and doing an assessment. We already see the strategic implications of new sea lanes being cut in the melting Arctic, where countries are seeking an economic advantage. As we speak, along our coasts, rising seas are affecting our naval installations, including at Naval Station Norfolk, the home of the Atlantic Fleet.

The report required in section 336 is not about causes of climate change, nor do we discuss specific emissions, targets, or green energy goals. Instead, my section of the Armed Service Committee is very factual. We focus squarely on the readiness of our Armed Forces to combat the coming and existing climate threat, starting with a study of the 10 most vulnerable bases in each service, and a report on how a changing climate will affect combatant commanders' strategic battle plans.

□ 1600

As Secretary Mattis has said, "the effects of a changing climate—such as increased maritime access to the Arctic, rising sea levels, desertification, among others—impact our security situation."

Mr. Chairman, we need to support our leaders in the military and intelligence communities in addressing these concerns, so I urge defeat of this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire how much time is remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 2½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Rhode Island has 3½ minutes remaining.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. STEFANIK), who is my good friend and the chair of the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities of the House Armed Services Committee.

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Chairman, today I rise in opposition to Mr. PERRY's amendment which would strike language that requires the Department of Defense to compile a report on the vulnerabilities of military installations and combatant commander requirements resulting from climate change. As we heard earlier today, this language passed by voice vote on a bipartisan basis during our markup in committee.

Increased maritime access to the Arctic, rising sea levels, desertification, increases in natural disasters, damage to existing infrastructure, and other effects of climate change are drivers of geopolitical instability and degrade the security of the United States.

We would be remiss in our efforts to protect our national security if we do not fully account for the risk climate change poses to our bases, our readiness, and to the fulfillment of our Armed Forces mission.

This is about a report. Let's get the information. This is why I believe we have bipartisan support within the committee. We must incorporate environmental factors in our threat assessments and contingency planning to ensure the long-term operational viability of our missions and the safety of our men and women in uniform.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this Perry amendment which will strip vital language regarding the impact of Department of Defense activities associated with climate change.

The Defense Department does so many vital things for the safety and security of the United States and the American people. We all owe the brave men and women who wear the Nation's uniform a debt of gratitude that we can never truly repay. However, we must be cognizant of all the impacts that DOD activities have across the globe.

The Defense Department has such a large footprint, and the amount of military construction and other activity that it undertakes year round impacts our environment. How could it not?

We are talking about possible implications such as contributions to sea level rise—which is particularly important to my constituents in south Florida—that it would be irresponsible for us to ignore.

I have a Coast Guard base in my district, Coast Guard Miami Beach, located right there on the water in Miami Beach, and we know the impact of sea level rise in that area.

So as a member of the Climate Solutions Caucus, I urge my colleagues to oppose this Perry amendment. We have got to be clear-eyed, Mr. Chairman, about every possible impact of our military activities, and that includes the impact that we place on our environment.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS).

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Chairman, last year the Pentagon released a directive stating that the Department of Defense must be able to adapt to climate change in order to maintain an effective and efficient U.S. military.

General Mattis—now Secretary Mattis—during his Senate confirmation said: "Climate change is impacting stability in areas of the world where our troops are operating today." Bases in the region I represent in San Diego—which is home to the largest concentration of military forces in the world—are already facing challenges from sea level rise, drought, and reliable energy sources.

For years, the most decorated military leaders in our country have been telling us that climate change is a national security threat. Congress cannot afford to make this debate about politics or ideology.

We don't have to agree on what causes climate change. We only have to agree with our military leaders that the effects of climate change are altering the security environment and the threats we face.

Mr. Chairman, I oppose this reckless amendment and ask my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, how much time remains?

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia). The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 2½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Rhode Island has 30 seconds remaining.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chairman, as we noted in our committee markup, there would be nothing controversial about studying this threat and being prepared to mitigate the risks. In fact, that is our responsibility.

The support for this climate resiliency language was truly bipartisan in

committee, and I hope we will send a strong message of support to the servicemen and -women who will have to lead with the effects of climate change by opposing this amendment.

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

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, it seems to me the Secretary of Defense doesn't need Congress to tell him what the threats are. He knows what the threats are.

I can tell you as a person who has been privileged for over 30 years to wear the Nation's uniform—the Army, the military's uniform—and as a person who was privileged to lead troops in combat in the Middle East, I didn't need Congress to tell me who the enemy is or was. We know that. We also don't need Congress to tell us to report the issues that we might have in defending the Nation to the Congress or to the Commander.

We know our duty, and we will do our duty. If we have issues that need to be reported—whether it is sea level rise or the enemy has a new weapon or we can't feed our troops or what have you—we will report it, and we will resolve it. We don't need people in Washington, D.C., telling us how to run the war. That is our job. That is the military's job.

This amendment simply says that we ought to prioritize that. We ought to let them prioritize that. We ought to let combatant commanders—we ought to let the men and women who wear the uniform and defend our country focus on the enemy. If the enemy, indeed, is climate change, then they will focus on that as well, and they will submit information so that we can make decisions.

The point is, should somebody—should all of us in this uniform in Washington, D.C.—be telling the fine men and women in uniform across the globe defending our country that we know better? That is exactly what I am trying to avoid here.

Little by little, drip by drip, we have watched our Nation's and military's focus eroded—this and that. Believe me, I have filled out the reports. As an officer, I have filled out a whole bunch of reports on a regular basis that have nothing to do with completing the mission of securing our Nation and defeating the enemy—nothing to do with it. This is just one in the long line of them.

My only goal is to send this to where it needs to be—the agencies best adapted to deal with it and take it out of the agencies that shouldn't be dealing with it and should be dealing with securing our Nation and fighting the enemy.

Mr. Chairman, I ask my colleagues to support the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Chair, Naval Air Station Key West provides key training and support for the nation's military operations and readiness. The base trains fighter pilots from all branches and is home to the Joint Interagency Task Force South, which combats illicit narcotics.

However, most of the land in the Florida Keys lies at elevations 3 feet or less above sea level, making the Naval station extremely vulnerable to sea-level rise. But this threat is not unique to that station; many of our bases across the country and around the globe are susceptible to the effects of climate change.

Recognition of this threat, and prudent planning for these contingencies, are vital to our military bases and maintaining the national security interests of the United States abroad.

I congratulate the gentleman from Rhode Island, and the Committee, for recognizing this and including language in the underlying bill asking the Pentagon to report on the vulnerabilities posed by climate change so we can responsibly identify and implement adaptive measures. This includes an honest discussion of the realities of our changing environment.

As co-chair of the Climate Solutions Caucus, I urge all my colleagues to reject the Perry Amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. GOSAR

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in House Report 115-217.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Insert after section 344 the following:
SEC. 345. DETERMINATION OF PREVAILING WAGE UNDER THE DAVIS-BACON ACT.

For purposes of this Act, any determination of the prevailing wage conducted under section 3142(b) of title 40, United States Code (commonly known as the Davis-Bacon Act) shall be conducted by the Secretary of Labor acting through the Bureau of Labor Statistics using surveys carried out by the Bureau that use proper random statistical sampling techniques.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 440, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to offer a commonsense amendment with the intent of accurately and transparently determining the prevailing wage for Department of Defense contracts. My amendment would require the calculation of wages for contractors and all defense projects to be based on actual statistics calculated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, or BLS, as opposed to the current process which determines these rates based on fundamentally flawed surveys within

the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor, or the DOL.

This amendment is needed. A 2008 Department of Labor Inspector General report found that "one or more errors existed in 100 percent of the wage reports." The Congressional Budget Office estimates that upwards of \$13 billion could be wasted over 10 years if Davis-Bacon is left unreformed. As stewards of the public treasury, we have an obligation to spend taxpayer money wisely. This amendment addresses that very need.

Additionally, this amendment doesn't remove funds from the Defense budget. The money this amendment saves—potentially in the billions of dollars—will be kept within the Department of Defense budget to be used for other important defense priorities. In a fiscal environment where every dollar counts, this amendment presents a welcome opportunity to make our defense dollars go further.

This amendment isn't an attempt to repeal Davis-Bacon. It is about competition, equality, accuracy, and transparency for everyone. It simply asks that wage determinations for Department of Defense contracts be made with statistically sampled information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics so that we are able to spend Federal dollars in a more efficient manner and support more jobs. The BLS has proven time and time again that they are the only agency capable of accurately determining these wages.

A fair wage for a fair job is fair to the American taxpayer. Again, I thank the chairman and ranking member for their continued work on the committee.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I come here today to speak in opposition to the amendment, one that would hurt the local economy, devalue workers' pay, and take a very important tool out of the toolbox for both Republicans, Democrats, and Americans.

Almost 100 years ago, two Republican Congressmen, James Davis and Robert Bacon, realized there was a problem with Federal contracts. Those contracts were unfair to the local economies. So in 1931, Congress unanimously approved Davis-Bacon prevailing wage. It ensures that construction workers are paid the same as construction workers in that local community.

The prevailing wage is based on surveys of local wages and benefits, not whether there is a union or not. It keeps the community vibrant, and it takes into account those things that happened in that local community. So when you hear the term "if it ain't

broke don't fix it," this is a classic example.

They are trying to talk about surveys and methodologies. Quite frankly, this system has worked for over 80 years. They are talking about technicalities, but the fact of the matter is this is about cutting wages in your local community. Why would you ever want to go back and say, I want to hurt the people I represent? But apparently that seems to be what we are doing.

So we want to make sure that local workers are paid a fair wage. The system has worked fine for so many years and makes sure that those men and women who work hard each and every day are properly compensated.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY).

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, I thank Mr. NORCROSS, my co-chairman of the Congressional Building Trades Caucus, to be able to discuss this.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to this amendment offered by my friend from Arizona. His amendment would change dramatically the methodology used to determine wage rates paid to construction workers across America.

While this proposal may appear to be reasonable at first blush, it would dramatically depart from the current practice and would result in massive pay cuts for working families.

Unlike the current system, the methodology would not take into consideration the total value of all wages and benefits into account. It excludes the cost of pensions, healthcare, and, vitally, training that we need to have.

So what we are trying to say, Mr. Chairman, is the full benefit must be considered, and it is not in this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, as someone who began in the construction industry in 1965, 52 years—after 52 years in this business, I understand how the Davis-Bacon Act works and how it works across the country.

So let's not forget, these wage protections are not just for union workers but for all construction workers. It ensures that the local workers can make a fair living on projects in their community. This amendment, unfortunately—as well intended as it might be—would undermine that. I urge a "no" vote.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, this amendment is not anti-Davis-Bacon. Let me give you some fun facts. In some cities, the Wage and Hour Division's calculated wages are 75 percent higher than the actual prevailing wage. In other areas throughout the country, they are below minimum wage and only 33 percent of the actual prevailing wage. What is fair is fair.

When you start looking at the figures that are used for calculation, they

haven't been updated in many cases since 1970. Give me a break. This isn't about Davis-Bacon, this is about crony capitalism. This is about a vestige of the Jim Crow era.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1615

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE).

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Chairman, I align myself with the remarks of my friend, Mr. NORCROSS, and that of my friend, Mr. MCKINLEY.

There is bipartisan opposition to this amendment because we know what it would do. You can talk about it any way you want to talk about it, but the net effect is reduced wages for workers in the communities we represent.

I come from Flint, Michigan. I represent folks who play by the rules and have the right, after working in a trade, to get compensation that is equal to the quality of the work that they deliver. If we don't support that, all we are going to do is continue this race to the bottom.

We all talk about the fact that wages have not kept up. Here is yet another effort that will undermine the ability of American workers who work hard every single day to be able to have a decent wage, take care of their families, put their kids through school, and set something aside for retirement. This is the American Dream. Back in the 1930s, this is why this legislation was first put in place. This amendment would undermine that promise.

Mr. Chairman, I urge a "no" vote.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chair, may I ask how much time I have remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Arizona has 2½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from New Jersey has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Chairman, I want to just bring this back home.

Why in the world would you ever want to cut the wages of the men and women you represent? This is about fairness, leveling the playing field. It works, and we want to continue it.

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

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, once again, this is not anti-Davis-Bacon. We want to make it an issue like that, but the statistics speak for themselves.

The Federal Government is willing to pay the wages for our hardworking contractors on what they deserve, but as stewards of the taxpayer dollar, we must insist that these wages are accurate, fair, and transparent.

The inspector general has stated there are fundamental problems with the current methodology. We owe it to the American taxpayer and the contractors themselves to make sure funds are based upon accuracy and wages are being paid fairly.

The opposition claims to be fighting in favor of Davis-Bacon, but if they

really cared about its longevity and effectiveness, they would support this amendment and improve and strengthen it.

The opposition also believes this amendment is an attack on the American worker. Tell that to my contractors who have been put out of business with the military in south Arizona. Please tell them that when they couldn't calculate the Davis-Bacon application and were put out of business by the Department of Labor.

That couldn't be further from the truth. This provides certainty and clarity to the wages of hardworking tradesmen and women across the country who perform services for the government.

We as a body should be for fiscal responsibility and for proper worker compensation. This amendment is an opportunity to act exactly on this. I urge my colleagues to support this good-governance and commonsense approach.

I ask my colleagues: Do you support transparency and accuracy? Support my amendment.

Do you support the responsible use of taxpayer dollars? Support my amendment.

Do you support workers and fair compensation? Then support my amendment.

Do you support a fair wage for the hardworking contractors of the DOD? Support my amendment.

Anything stays safe in the military budget. This is military-specific.

Mr. Chairman, I thank the chair and the ranking member for their help, and I urge everybody to vote "yes" for this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. THOMAS J. ROONEY OF FLORIDA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 6 printed in House Report 115-217.

Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Strike section 541 (page 146, beginning line 20), relating to prohibition on release of military service academy graduates to participate in professional athletics.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 440, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Chairman, on April 29, Secretary Mattis issued guidance requiring graduates of the Air Force Academy, West Point, and the Naval Academy to compete 2 years of active commissioned service before they can seek permission to pursue a professional sports career while at the same time fulfilling their service obligation.

Traditionally, the service Secretaries may exercise discretion over whether or not to permit the very few academy graduates with the exceptional athletic talent to jointly serve either in the reserves, in Active Duty, or a combination of both, and be part of a professional sports team.

My amendment supports the flexibility and the discretion that has always been built into the Secretary of Defense's discretion to determine on a case-by-case basis how to deal with his own personnel.

Section 541 of this year's NDAA replaces Secretary Mattis guidance with a far more stringent, one-size-fits-all policy that allows for no exceptions, without explanation.

No one is saying that graduates should not fulfill their service requirement. No one is saying that graduates shouldn't pay for their education.

Section 541 is a significant departure from the policy which allows the Secretary of Defense and the military branches discretion, and more specifically, today, it handcuffs our own Secretary Mattis from implementing the policy as he sees fit, just like Secretaries of the past have always done.

Section 541 stipulates that academy graduates must fulfill, without exception, 5 years on Active Duty before they are able to request release to pursue an athletic career. This policy is overrigid and will make it nearly impossible for graduates of our service academies to pursue any professional athletic career.

Denying student athletes on a Secretary-approved, case-by-case basis the opportunity to pursue a professional athletic career in conjunction with their military service is a mistake. The possibility, no matter how remote, of going pro is a powerful recruiting tool that can attract exceptional, diverse high school athletes to attend and excel in our service academies.

Very few college athletes are talented enough to play professionally. I played college football and I ended up here. Most high school athletes dream and believe that they can go pro. The truth is, most won't. But to kill that dream before a student chooses a college also ruins the chance of the academies from recruiting top athletes.

Why does this matter? Because striking section 541 will maintain Secretary Mattis' policy, which was created to ensure that preserving the option for our academy athletes, we do so in a way that maintains the readiness and lethality of our military services. But

it is also about morale at the academies.

I taught at West Point. I serve on their board today. I served on the Navy board before. I can tell you that if section 541 is retained, we lose out on the boost in morale afforded to the academies with competitive athletic departments and the recruitment benefit of the soldier athletes' exposure with professional sports teams and their fans.

If section 541 is retained, we will be sending a message that if you are a highly talented high school athlete and you also want to go to the Naval Academy, West Point, or the Air Force Academy, you need to give up any possibility of athletic aspirations after school.

We will be doing ourselves a disservice by not recruiting the absolute best and brightest individuals who could be so versatile enough to be professional athletes and also serve their Nation honorably.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I claim time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Colorado is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong opposition to the gentleman from Florida's amendment. This amendment strikes section 541 of the 2018 National Defense Authorization Act, which ensures that graduates from military service academies fulfill their military service commitments, without exception, before participating in professional sports. Current policy allows a cadet or midshipman to be released from their 5-year Active Duty service to participate in professional sports just 24 months after graduating from a military service academy.

As chairman of the Military Personnel Subcommittee and a Marine Corps combat veteran, I believe that the service academies exist to develop future officers to lead, enhance readiness, and increase the effectiveness of the Armed Forces.

This is not an issue of recruiting qualified and motivated applicants. Each year, my district office receives far more applications from talented and qualified students who wish to serve their country than we can accommodate. For example, there were 17,000 applications for 1,100 slots last year at the Naval Academy. All of our military service academies have similar numbers of applicants.

We are a country still very much engaged in hostilities around the world, and we need these officers leading our troops and defending the country, not playing professional sports.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support the provision in the overwhelming bipartisan HASC-passed FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act and

oppose Representative Rooney's amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MURPHY).

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I am proud to co-lead this bipartisan amendment. It would strike section 541 of the bill, a provision that would make it nearly impossible for graduates of the military service academies to play professional football, basketball, or any other sport.

I serve on the Board of Visitors at West Point, and I believe section 541 will be detrimental to recruitment and morale at the service academies, could undermine efforts to bridge the military-civilian divide through the use of sports ambassadors, and could compromise the effectiveness of our officer corps.

If our amendment is successful, the policy governing the circumstances under which graduates can play professional sports will be the guidance issued by Secretary Mattis earlier this year. Pursuant to Secretary Mattis' guidance, an academy graduate must complete 2 years of active commissioned service before he or she can seek approval to pursue a professional sports opportunity.

Section 541 goes far beyond this existing guidance, requiring a graduate to serve 5 years on Active Duty before pursuing a professional sports opportunity. This is the functional equivalent of prohibiting a graduate from playing professional sports altogether.

Section 541 applies retroactively to current academy student athletes, not just prospectively to future athletes, which strikes me as unfair. Moreover, it removes the flexibility and discretion built into Secretary Mattis' guidance, replacing it with a one-size-fits-all policy that allows for no exceptions. Before Congress takes such drastic action, we should carefully weigh the arguments for and against such action. That process has not taken place.

I ask my colleagues to support this amendment and to allow Secretary Mattis' guidance to remain in effect until such time as we can examine this issue more fully.

Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER).

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chair, I am truly impressed by my colleague, Mr. ROONEY, on any number of issues. This is not one of them.

This is absurd. It is absolutely absurd. We have military academies to train the next leaders of this country. We are not running a training camp for the National Football League.

If you want to serve as a leader of the military, then you go to one of the

military academies. If you decide you want to have a pro football career, then pay back the \$500,000 that the taxpayers of this country have paid for each and every one of these students.

In the Rules Committee yesterday, Mr. ROONEY listed three names of examples of academy graduates continuing in professional sports after graduation. All of the names he mentioned—Roger Staubach, David Robinson, and Alejandro Villanueva—served on Active Duty for at least 2 years.

The model for how this should work is like Villanueva, who served his 5-year commitment, deployed three times to Afghanistan, received a Bronze Star for valor, and then pursued a professional football career.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield the gentleman from California an additional 30 seconds.

□ 1630

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Chair, I will just say that going pro, as Mr. ROONEY has said, is not the goal of our military academies. If we are concerned about morale because we want to make sure they can go out on the football field and have great games against the Army and the Navy, fine. If in the end you want to go pro, then pay back the money and go pro. Otherwise, you are taking a very important slot from any number of talented young men and women who want to be trained and then serve as the leaders of our military.

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY), my friend and colleague.

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition. As the only Air Force Academy graduate in Congress, we train these cadets to become officers and leaders and warfighters for our military. We are not training them to become pro athletes, just like my colleague said here.

And you want to talk about morale?

Having been there, there is nothing worse than watching somebody try to get out of their commitment to go play pro sports, for the rest of the cadets that are there ready to lead America into battle.

I strongly support the underlying bill. We are at a time of military crisis and readiness crisis right now. We do not release people to go fly for the airlines or go start their own business or go be an entrepreneur or go to a high-tech company and then just say: Oh, just pay it back.

There are so many people that are trying to get into these academies so they can wear the uniform and lead America into battle.

So this is about warfighting, not about becoming a linebacker. So let's please—I am urging my colleagues to vote down this amendment and to support the underlying bill.

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I think that if Roger Staubach played

for the Dallas Cowboys, graduated from the United States Naval Academy, served his entire Active-Duty commitment of 5 years before he went to play professional sports, this does not eliminate somebody from playing professional sports.

The fact is that we are a nation at war, and it is very competitive to get into these academies, and they ought to fulfill their 5-year obligation. If they want to play professional sports, there are lots of schools they can go to outside of our service academies.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. KEATING

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 7 printed in House Report 115-217.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title VII, add the following new section:

SEC. 725. TICK-BORNE DISEASES.

Using funds authorized to be appropriated by this Act or otherwise made available for fiscal year 2018 for the Defense Health program, the Secretary of Defense may authorize grants to medical researchers and universities to support testing ticks for the purpose of improving the detection and diagnosis of tick-borne diseases.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 440, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer an amendment that would authorize the Secretary of Defense to make existing funds available from the Defense Health Program for collaboration with medical researchers and universities to address the growing number of tick-borne diseases through research and testing.

The Army Public Health Center has operated a basic tick testing program for nearly 30 years. Through this program, military personnel can assess tick identification services through military healthcare facilities at no charge.

However, the tests provided by this program are limited to only six tick-borne diseases, whereas the Centers for Disease Control and the Department of

Defense have now identified 16 of these tick-borne diseases, some of which can be fatal.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, around 30,000 cases of Lyme disease are reported each year. However, additional CDC research reveals the actual number of diagnoses could be as high as 300,000. And, alarmingly, nearly 20 percent of the people surveyed in areas with high incidence of Lyme disease were unaware that the disease was even a risk.

This issue is of particular concern in my region. According to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, my district includes the counties with the five highest rates of Lyme disease in the Commonwealth, including Barnstable County, home of Joint Base Cape Cod.

However, my region is not alone on this issue. Ticks carrying dangerous diseases can be found in all corners of the continental United States, from Massachusetts in the north to Texas in the south, from Pennsylvania in the east to California in the west. Our servicemembers are especially vulnerable as they frequently are exposed to heavily tick-infested areas.

For example, Powassan. The Powassan virus is a serious tick-borne illness known to cause encephalitis, meningitis, and even death. Multiple cases of Powassan have already been reported in Massachusetts this year, yet the DOD tick testing program does not even include a test for Powassan in their regimen.

Mr. Chair, I realize there is a concern that amendments to this legislation might lead to a Defense Health Program pushed beyond its capacity. That is not the case here. The military tick testing program already exists. This amendment would necessarily help the Department of Defense modernize the existing program to meet new challenges in the field of tick-borne diseases.

Indeed, the DOD's own website informs us that emerging tick-borne diseases are being discovered all the time and that yearly cases of known tick-borne diseases have been increasing steadily for years. We are fortunate to have experts already working to combat the rise in tick-borne disease.

My amendment would facilitate collaboration among these experts in DOD to test more tick samples for more diseases, meet the growing needs of our military, and ultimately lead to better healthcare outcomes.

Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague from Pennsylvania, Mr. THOMPSON, for joining me as a cosponsor in this amendment. Pennsylvania is among the States in the mid-Atlantic region experiencing drastic increases in the incidence of tick-borne illnesses.

And the hope is our efforts today on the floor and by the Secretary of Defense in the next fiscal year will help save lives.

Also, I thank Chairman THORNBERRY for his work on this important legislation as well.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Chairman, I have tremendous respect for the gentleman from Massachusetts. He is exactly right, the Department of Defense Medical Research Program is already spending money on tick-borne diseases. I believe it is about \$5 million this year. It was about \$5 million last year. And as I understand the gentleman's amendment, he would expand the number of diseases that they can research.

I rise to claim the time in opposition, however, to express concern about the direction of this program.

Mr. Chairman, I have a chart that indicates the tremendous growth of dollars going into this congressionally directed medical research program. It has increased tremendously in recent years, and I would like to take just a few moments to read some of the diseases that it is researching: ALS, Lou Gehrig's disease, autism, bone marrow failure, breast cancer, leukemia, muscular dystrophy, epilepsies, food allergies, lung cancer, multiple sclerosis. There is a couple here that I can't pronounce, so I won't read. Osteoporosis, ovarian cancer, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, cancer, Peer-Reviewed Orthopaedic, prostate cancer, spinal cord injuries, of course, tick-borne disease, tubular sclerosis, and the list goes on.

And let me just say I certainly support Chairman TOM COLE's attempts to increase funding for NIH and other sorts of medical research through the NIH. What I am concerned about is that, increasingly, DOD dollars are being spent to research diseases that have a tangential, at best, connection with the Department of Defense and our military. And what happens is it is taking dollars away from the sorts of injuries and diseases that our military does confront. This is a trend that is getting worse each year.

So I don't necessarily oppose the gentleman's amendment. As he points out, there is research going on here, but it is a trend I do think we have to be cautious about.

And for that reason, I want to at least raise a warning flag about the trend to add to the amount of money and the number of diseases which we are looking to the Department of Defense to help research diseases which are not related, necessarily, to key functions of the Department of Defense.

So I appreciate the gentleman letting me express that concern, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Chairman, in my earlier remarks, I did associate myself

with the chairman's concern that the Department of Defense, the Defense Health Program could be pushed beyond its capacity. It is very important to recognize what he recognized, because if it gets pushed too far, it can't accomplish the things that it is working to really address.

In this instance, as he mentioned, I believe I did distinguish the fact that this is nearly a three-decade program, and what we are doing here is making sure its mission is modernized so it is dealing with what is happening in the healthcare field within that area of tick-borne illnesses.

So I do appreciate the comments of the chairman, and I think it is wise to point that out. I do hope my colleague supports this amendment, because I have been able to distinguish that from this trend.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 8 printed in House Report 115-217.

It is now in order to consider amendment No. 9 printed in House Report 115-217.

AMENDMENT NO. 10 OFFERED BY MRS. HARTZLER

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 10 printed in House Report 115-217.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title VII, add the following new section:

SEC. 704. PROHIBITION OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE MEDICAL TREATMENT RELATED TO GENDER TRANSITION.

Funds available to the Department of Defense may not be used to provide medical treatment (other than mental health treatment) related to gender transition to a person entitled to medical care under chapter 55 of title 10, United States Code.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 440, the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Chair, today, North Korea is plotting the next ballistic missile test, Russia is threatening the NATO alliance, ISIS is spreading evil, and China continues their expansion in the South China Sea in defiance of the international community.

Our military has never been in such high demand, yet our readiness to confront these threats is at a dismal level. We must confront these challenges by ensuring our defense dollars maximize the military's readiness and lethality.

That is why I am offering an amendment to advance these goals by prohib-

iting taxpayer dollars from funding gender reassignment surgeries and related hormone therapy treatment for members of the military and their dependants.

There are many problems with this policy, but funding transition surgeries with tax dollars is especially problematic because the surgery is very costly. Surgical recovery time decreases deployability of our soldiers, and there is lack of medical consensus on the effectiveness of gender transition treatments.

Funding transition surgeries means diverting money from other defense priorities. Surgical costs alone can top \$1.3 billion over the next 10 years. These resources could fund 13 F-35 aircraft to fight near peer adversaries like China and Russia; 14 F-18 Super Hornets to fight ISIS; or 8 KC-46 tankers needed for long-range strike missions to North Korea.

Our spending priorities must match our threat mitigation priorities. We must have soldiers who can deploy if called upon.

Military members undergoing transition surgery are nondeployable for up to 267 days. Similarly, regular hormone treatments renders individuals nondeployable into the future. It makes no sense to create soldiers who are unable to fight and win our Nation's wars, and it is unfair to nontransitioned individuals who must leave their families and deploy in their place.

For all these reasons, Mr. Chair, I offer this amendment as a responsible member of the House Armed Services Committee who has studied the threats and heard from each servicemember about the need for increased funding and readiness.

□ 1645

Prohibiting funding for transition surgery is the right policy for our military, our budget, and it is the right policy for the American taxpayer.

I ask my colleagues to support this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Chair, this amendment goes backwards in an area where we have gone forward. This amendment takes us in the wrong direction. For years, we have had people serving in the military who are openly gay, lesbian, and transgender, and they have served, and served this country well.

For a lot of years, we did not allow them to do so openly. We finally repealed that for lesbians and gays, and now, just last year, we had the Department of Defense say we are going to do the same thing for transgender. So the people who have been fighting and protecting our country will be allowed to do so openly. It does not harm readiness at all. These people have served in

the military, served it honorably, and served it well.

As far as the costs, the military pays for people who have addictions, who have alcoholism, who smoke. They pay for a lot of things that are contained within the military.

This amendment would target one specific group, and very unfairly. And most unfairly, it wouldn't just, first of all, target transgender surgery, it would target some of the hormone drugs, which cost, like, \$100 a year, cost absolutely virtually nothing to the military.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I yield myself an additional 30 seconds.

Most importantly, this wouldn't just impact transgender people who are serving, it would impact their children. If you are serving in the military and you happen to have a child who is transgender, you would now be cut off from this military service. All these other things, alcoholism, drug addiction, smoking, all manner of different problems would be served, but transgender people would be targeted to not be allowed to provide healthcare for their children.

This isn't going to help readiness. This is a social agenda that has no business being in the Defense bill. We didn't have it in committee, we shouldn't have it here on the floor.

Let's focus on the threats that Mrs. HARTZLER talked about, not make this into a social agenda based on the ignorance of what transgender truly is.

Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Chair, I yield myself 30 seconds.

First of all, this does not preclude service by the transgendered. This simply says that we are not going to have taxpayers pay for this surgery.

This is different than somebody going in and having a cold, because this is a major surgery that requires a medical diagnosis that is going to render someone nondeployable. Just the recovery from the surgery alone is 287 days, and then the ongoing treatment precludes them from certain abilities to serve overseas.

So we need to take a look at all of this and make sure that we are addressing the threats, and we are spending every dollar that we can to go after the threats.

Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY), Army National Guard Brigadier.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chair, I thank Mrs. HARTZLER, my good friend, for offering this amendment.

Mr. Chair, we are \$20 trillion in debt. Taxpayers, by my figures, are projected to pay \$3.7 billion over the next 10 years for sex reassignment surgery and hormone therapy for those in the military who wish to transition from one sex to another. The total cost includes the manpower lost while the individual

transitions, which can take up to a year or longer, depending on complications.

Sex reassignment patients also require specialized medicine following the procedure. And I find that interesting, in the face of the fact I just had a young gentleman come to my office who wants to serve, but he can't serve, because he has got a peanut allergy. Right? He can't go downrange, because we can't have the medicine downrange, and that doesn't cost the taxpayers anything, but we are going to spend \$3.7 billion over the next 10 years on sex reassignment surgery as opposed to buying aircraft and body armor and the things that warfighters need to be successful in defending the Nation.

It is really just a priority issue. With limited defense resources and the current state of our Armed Forces, we must prioritize increasing our strength and readiness.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, there is no study whatsoever that shows this is going to cost \$3.7 billion. And this amendment is not just about transgender surgery, it is about any treatment. Let's keep that in mind.

Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the distinguished minority leader.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for his extraordinary leadership as our ranking member on the Armed Services Committee. I thank him for his leadership in trying to help define what our security mission is so that we have the resources that are necessary to honor our oath of office to protect and defend.

Mr. Chair, I thank Mr. THORNBERRY as well for his leadership in the defense of our country. The bipartisanship in defending our country is something that we value, and any interference with that is unfortunate.

It takes a special kind of person, my colleagues, who steps forward to serve in the U.S. military. They are men and women of courage, of strength, and of patriotism, who shoulder the burden of defending our liberties so that the rest of us can live in security and freedom.

We owe these heroes an immense debt, a solemn responsibility to do everything we can to defend those who are risking and giving their lives for the United States of America.

The Defense bill before us today should be about honoring that responsibility, protecting those who protect our national security; instead, here we are considering a Republican amendment purpose-built to attack the health and dignity of thousands of men and women serving with honor and courage today.

Make no mistake, the effect and the intent of this unjust and mean-spirited amendment is to ban patriotic Americans from serving our country. It is designed to drum transgender servicemembers out of the military.

Instead of protecting the men and women who risk their lives to defend

our freedoms, they are fighting to rip away the healthcare of thousands of brave servicemembers.

The integration of openly transgender servicemembers into our Armed Forces is the unfinished work of the bipartisans—and I commend our colleagues—efforts to repeal the discriminatory Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy.

I call upon my Republican colleagues that you immediately withdraw this cruel, discriminatory, and appalling amendment.

If not, I call upon all my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to defeat this amendment, prevent this assault on transgender servicemembers, and get us back to the subject at hand, which is the defense of our country, which the distinguished chairman, Mr. THORNBERRY, and ranking member have served this Congress and our country so well in doing.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Chair, I yield myself 15 seconds.

Mr. Chair, I just want to point out that this amendment doesn't address any of the full healthcare that every soldier is entitled to; it just says that in this particular instance, we are not going to pay for the gender reassignment surgeries and related hormone treatment. And there is a high cost for it, there is a reason for doing it, and that is why we are addressing that today.

Mr. Chair, how much time do I have left?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman has 45 seconds remaining.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Chair, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER).

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time.

Mr. Chair, I appreciate the minority leader's words. I did three tours as a U.S. marine.

This is the silliest opposition to this amendment that I have ever heard. You are joining the U.S. military. Choose what gender you are before you join. We are not saying that transgender people can't serve, but if you are going to take the big step of serving in the U.S. military, figure out whether you are a man or a woman before you join up.

We are not stopping transgender people from joining. We are saying taxpayers in this country right now are not going to foot the bill for it.

This is a silly thing. It is time to put this to bed. I support the gentlewoman's amendment. Let's Make America Great Again.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY).

Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chair, I would note to my colleague from California that perhaps the members of their family are supposed to decide on all their future medical care, because this relates to their healthcare, and not just to the servicemembers'.

Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to the Hartzler amendment. No one in the Pentagon has called for this. In fact, we know right now Secretary of Defense Mattis is running a review of this issue. He does not need to be micromanaged by Members of this body to advance their own agenda.

Until last night, all of us had worked in good faith across the aisle to keep this important Defense bill free from political booby traps and land mines, but if you are feeling *deja vu*, well, don't worry, because I am, too. You may remember that I stood here last year and fought against a similar amendment, again to the Defense bill. That amendment would have allowed Federal contractors to fire LGBT workers under the pretense of religious observance.

I told you then that my dad was a disabled veteran, that he taught me to support and honor the military, but also to speak the truth and know the difference between right and wrong.

I told you that I had never voted against the Defense bill, and I never imagined I would. And then, after a lot of twists and turns, 43 of our Republican colleagues joined with us to vote down that discriminatory amendment, and I want to publicly thank them for their courage.

Well, here we go again. The Hartzler amendment would single out and rob a small group of military servicemembers and their families of their healthcare merely because these folks or members of their family experience gender a little differently.

Mr. Chair, it is that simple. We are talking about Americans who right now are risking their lives to keep us safe, and we should not undermine their military service.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the distinguished minority whip.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chair, this amendment is not about defense, this amendment is about politics, and I congratulate Chairman THORNBERRY for urging that this amendment not be added to the bill in committee.

We ought to defeat this amendment. It has one purpose, and one purpose only: to politically denigrate some of our fellow citizens, to treat them less equally than we would want to be treated.

Let us not do that. Let us not sink to that level. We are better than that. We are representative of all of the people.

Reject this amendment. Get on with the defense of this country and its values.

Mr. Chair, I rise in very strong opposition to this amendment.

It is discriminatory.

It is disparaging to our military—to all our men and women in uniform.

And it hinders our armed forces from carrying out their mission of keeping our country safe.

It is appalling that the Rules Committee would even make this amendment in order, the first ever to come to this floor that directly takes away the rights of transgender Americans.

For those transgender Americans currently serving, it would deny them health care services open to other service-members.

For those thinking of enlisting, it would be a powerful deterrent, keeping talented, driven, and dedicated men and women from serving.

I hope my colleagues in both parties who are ashamed that this amendment has reached the floor will join me in voting to defeat it.

Mr. SMITH OF Washington. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Chair, this is about addressing Korea, Russia, ISIS. We need every defense dollar to go to meeting those threats, not anything else, and we need to make sure our troops are ready and can be deployed.

Mr. Chair, I ask my colleagues to support this commonsense amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the Hartzler Amendment.

Transgender individuals are part of the fabric of America and have always been part of our military, whether we have historically acknowledged them or not. Selectively denying healthcare to trans servicemembers, which is available to other members of the military, only serves to alienate, undermine, disrespect and ultimately harm those serving our country.

This amendment is a shameful and targeted attempt to enact a conservative agenda that singles out transgender individuals. It circumvents, our military's doctors and uses the denial of healthcare to force currently serving, and future transgender members of our armed services from their posts entirely.

Transition related care is considered medically necessary by nearly every major medical association. It should not need to be said that when a military physician determines that hormones, surgery or other transition related care is necessary, we must treat it as we would any other medical care. Anything less is an abdication of our duty to provide healthcare to those who have chosen to serve our country.

Using finances to tie the hands of our military's medical professionals to target transgender individuals demonstrates an appalling lack of respect for our servicemembers, their doctors and the democratic ideals of equality our country was founded on. I urge my colleagues to support our servicemembers by opposing this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Missouri will be postponed.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Chair, I move that the Committee do now rise. The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PERRY) having assumed the chair, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2810) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 59 minutes p.m.) the House stood in recess.

□ 1705

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia) at 5 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 440 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2810.

Will the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) kindly resume the chair.

□ 1706

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 2810) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, with Mr. COLLINS of Georgia (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, a request for a recorded vote on amendment No. 10 printed in House Report 115-217, offered by the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER), had been postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in House Report 115-217 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 1 by Mr. GARAMENDI of California.

Amendment No. 3 by Mr. BUCK of Colorado.