

Mr. Speaker, just a couple of quick points. The Department of Defense budget is 18 percent of the overall Federal budget, and you would be a pretty bad businessperson if you looked at your books and said that a thing that takes 18 percent of the budget has nothing to do with the deficit. It all adds up piece by piece. It absolutely is a big part of what contributes to us having a deficit and a debt, so we cannot ignore what we spend on Defense and how it impacts everything else.

Now, you can make that policy decision that, you know, defense is just so much more important than infrastructure or healthcare or education or Social Security or Medicare or whatever, but to say that it doesn't impact the debt and the deficit is not, well, fiscally accurate.

And second, as far as tax cuts are concerned, yes, President Obama cut taxes repeatedly and by way, way too much and contributed to this problem. Most notably was in 2012 with the permanent extension of all of the Bush tax cuts. So, we did that, and then with the stimulus package back in 2009, there was about a \$400 billion tax cut.

We have repeatedly, in this Congress—and I didn't vote for any of that. We have repeatedly in this Congress prioritized tax cuts over the men and women who serve in the military. That is what I find so ironic. We hear all these complaints about how we are underfunding the military, the complaints about readiness, and what the gentleman from Alabama said, when he talked about the impact that this is having on the men and women who serve, he is absolutely right. The continuing resolutions are devastating to the way we try to function within the Department of Defense.

I will again submit that they are also devastating to every other aspect of our discretionary budget, and that should not be ignored. But to cut taxes by trillions upon trillions of dollars and then look up and say, Gosh, how come we don't have enough revenue to fund our defense is hypocritical.

All I am asking is: Make a choice. If, in fact, we need to spend the amount of money on DOD that you are all saying we are, then let's raise the revenue and pay for it, okay. That is fine. That is a choice. But to both say, we are going to give away massive tax cuts primarily to the wealthiest people in this country, who, by the way, have been doing quite well for quite some time, and then come up and say, Gosh, it is just so irresponsible that we are not funding defense, that is not consistent and it is not a fiscal policy.

And, again, I will come back to the fact that this is all very well and good. I mean, what all these resolutions are saying is if we could just pass the Defense Appropriations bill, then everything would be fine. We have a \$4 trillion plus budget. We have multiple layers of problems here. If we do not address the underlying fiscal issues that we are facing that I have described,

then the men and women who serve in our military will face the brutal uncertainty that is very accurately described by my Republican colleagues over and over and over again.

We have to address the underlying issue, not just come out and make empty statements about how we want to support our men and women in the military after putting in place a budget and a tax policy that makes it next to impossible to do that. We have to deal with the issue up front so that we are in a position to actually provide what my colleagues have said we need to provide.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, again, I appreciate very much my colleague's support for this important resolution. I look forward to having his support as we go forward on these resolutions that lay out very clearly how important it is to fund our men and women in uniform.

He and I have very serious and significant disagreements over tax policy. I believe—I know that the private sector is the engine of growth in this economy; that tax cuts, in fact, generate economic growth, and economic growth generates revenue; that if you really want to deal with the debt in this Nation, then you have got to generate additional revenue.

The way to do that is not by taxing people more. It is by letting people keep more of what they earn so they in fact can reinvest so we can see the kind of economic growth we need.

But I would say my colleague's focus on that issue today points out the problem that we have been facing. We face a number of critically important challenges in this body and in the United States Senate, but we have got to ensure that we don't hold our men and women in uniform hostage while we deal with those other issues.

We are, today, not at a time when we have got an international environment that is one in which we can feel safe in our predominance, in which we can feel safe in our ability to continue to project our power. We are in one where the threat to us is growing, and it is significant.

When you have got servicemen and -women, when you have got service chiefs, when you have got the Secretary of Defense telling us things like: our adversaries have weapons systems we might not be able to defend against, that policies and budget processes and votes that are undertaken in this body are increasing the risk to our men and women in uniform, those are things we have got to pay attention to. And I would say we have an obligation to pay attention to those things that is higher than any other obligation that we have.

We have to commit, Mr. Speaker, to fulfilling that constitutional obligation to providing full and on time funding for our troops.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would like to close today with something that General Dunford said in his testimony before the House Armed Services Committee earlier this year. He said: "The Joint Force must continue to receive sufficient, sustained, and predictable funding for the foreseeable future to restore our competitive advantage and ensure we never send our sons and daughters into a fair fight."

Every single time we have to deploy our forces, Mr. Speaker, we must ensure that they have everything they need to prevail.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the resolution. I urge a continued focus on completing the Defense funding process on time and getting the bill to the President's desk.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. CHENEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 995.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### EXPRESSING SENSE OF THE HOUSE THAT THE UNITED STATES NAVY'S TOTAL READINESS REMAINS IN A PERILOUS STATE

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 998) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Navy's total readiness remains in a perilous state due to high operational demands, increased deployment lengths, shortened training periods, and deferred maintenance all while the Navy is asked to do more with less as financial support for critical areas waned in the era of sequestration and without consistent Congressional funding.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

#### H. RES. 998

Whereas Navy readiness could further deteriorate in areas such as training, ship construction, ship repair, and deployability if Congress does not provide stable funding for the Department of Defense;

Whereas the USS Fitzgerald, a United States Navy destroyer, collided with a container ship while transiting through Sagami Bay near Japan on June 17, 2017, resulting in the deaths of seven sailors and hundreds of millions of dollars in damage;

Whereas the United States Navy's investigation of the USS Fitzgerald collision concluded that the event was "avoidable" and that numerous failures included failure to plan for safety, failure to adhere to sound navigation practice, failure to execute basic watch standing practices, failure to properly use available navigation tools, and failure to respond deliberately and effectively when in extremis;

Whereas the USS John S. McCain, a United States Navy destroyer, collided with an oil tanker while transiting through the Straits of Singapore on August 21, 2017, resulting in the deaths of 10 sailors and hundreds of millions of dollars in damage;

Whereas the United States Navy's investigation of the USS John S. McCain collision concluded that the crew suffered from a "lack of preparation, ineffective command and control, and deficiencies in training and preparations for navigation";

Whereas the Navy the Nation Needs, the United States Navy's plan for building and sustaining a lethal, resilient force through balanced investments across readiness, capability, and capacity, explicitly states a need for 355 Battle Force ships, yet the Navy's 30-year shipbuilding plan peaks at only 342 Battle Force ships in 2039 before a predicted decline;

Whereas an efficient and supported industrial base will be vital to building and maintaining a 355 ship Navy;

Whereas over the previous 5 decades, 14 defense-related new-construction shipyards have closed, 3 have left the defense industry, and only 1 new shipyard has opened;

Whereas stable and predictable funding allows for Navy leaders to properly forecast their missions and adhere to the Optimized Fleet Response Plan while also enabling industry partners to prepare for ship repair work at the most competitive prices to the United States Government;

Whereas China's shipbuilding industry, according to a Naval War College professor, is poised to make the People's Liberation Army Navy the world's second largest navy by 2020, and, if current trends continue, a combat fleet that in overall order of battle is quantitatively on par with that of the United States Navy by 2030;

Whereas China continues to develop forward operating bases on manmade islands in the South China Sea and, by doing so, consolidate its control over the strategic corridor between the Indian and Pacific Oceans through which  $\frac{1}{3}$  of global maritime trade passes; and

Whereas Russia's shipbuilding industry's focus on undersea warfare has positioned the Russian Navy to add six modernized nuclear attack submarines to its naval inventory by 2023 and aggressively modernize its aging Oscar-class nuclear attack submarine fleet: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the United States Navy's need for congressional support to address readiness, training, and modernization challenges that threaten to weaken naval superiority; and

(2) finds that failing to provide the United States Navy with stable, predictable funding negatively affects its ability to project power around the world, reassure critical allies, and defeat adversaries when necessary.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. CHENEY) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wyoming.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Wyoming?

There was no objection.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN), who is on the Armed Services Committee, to discuss his resolution.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I begin by thanking the gentlewoman from Wyoming for all of her efforts, as well as all of my colleagues for their continued effort to do everything possible to assure the passage of the National Defense Authorization Act and the Defense Appropriations bill prior to the end of the fiscal year. That is key.

We have heard testimony about how money is wasted and uncertainty has led us to where we are today. Without that, we must do everything we can to assure passage of both of those bills.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 998, which expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Navy's total readiness remains in a perilous state due to high operational demands, increased deployment lengths, shortened training periods, and deferred maintenance all while the Navy is asked to do more with less as financial support for critical areas waned in the era of sequestration and without consistent congressional funding.

We have heard that laid out. We agree on both sides that this has created the uncertainty that creates the situation we found ourselves in today.

I think it is important to define what the term "Navy total readiness" truly means. The Navy conducted an independent Strategic Readiness Review composed of retired Navy admirals, as well as current senior civilian executives in the aftermath of the tragic USS *Fitzgerald* and USS *McCain* collisions. This Strategic Readiness Review identified institutional deficiencies that have developed over a long period of time resulting in a weaker Navy.

Factors that contribute to total Navy readiness include: the total number of assets—we know them as ships—manning and training, that is, in particular, personnel, in how well they perform their jobs; equipping and maintaining, that means providing sailors gear and maintaining ships; command and control, which means establishing clear lines of leadership and funding; and operations, which is the tempo at which our men and women in uniform execute their missions.

□ 1445

If one or all of these total readiness factors are lacking, the Navy will suffer. Unfortunately, that is the situation we find ourselves in today.

But we didn't arrive here by accident. I believe we have a tendency to respond to the crisis of the day rather than prepare for long-term strategic problems with corresponding solutions.

Make no mistake about it, our adversaries are looking in the long term. Don't think for a moment that China isn't watching what we are doing and planning for where they will be not

next week, not next month, not next year, but 10 years down the road, 20 years down the road, or a century down the road. The same with Russia, North Korea, and Iran. We need to do the same.

After the Cold War and the Reagan administration came to an end, our Navy rapidly decreased in size. In the next few decades, funding levels became smaller and smaller. Tough cuts were made. The surface warfare community decreased their level of training, weakening the skills of their officers and reducing their capacity to effectively and safely perform their jobs as ship drivers and warfighters. Ships retired without replacements.

Then, a nationwide financial crisis brought upon a shortsighted decision for sequestration, further crippling the Navy's ability to take care of itself.

Meanwhile, threats to the United States and operational tempo have not decreased. This created a situation where the Navy was overworked with too few resources.

But our men and women in uniform never complain and never say they can't accomplish their mission. They have the kind of resolve in doing the things this Nation asks them to do that this Congress should have in our commitment to providing them the resources necessary for them to continue the great job that we ask of them.

But at a certain point, we all know we can't continue to operate this way. Things begin to break down when they aren't given the resources necessary. When their ships aren't properly maintained, when training doesn't take place at scheduled intervals to make sure they maintain that expertise that we need of them, sailors get stressed. When there are simply too many jobs to do and not enough time for people to do them, mistakes happen, costly mistakes.

We won't be able to reverse this trend immediately, but we can continue to make targeted, strategic investments in assets, training, and manpower to improve the Navy's readiness. I am proud of the work that Congress has done in recent years, in particular, this year's National Defense Authorization Act.

The House-passed NDAA adds a total of 13 battle force ships to the Navy's inventory, makes critical investments in ship maintenance accounts to take care of the ships we already have, and takes strong action in regard to surface warfare officer training and command and control structures within the Navy.

In consultation with our Senate counterparts, I am confident that we will deliver a bill that supports the Navy's rebuilding efforts and the drive and the objective of a 355-ship Navy.

We cannot be complacent. Yes, we have the best Navy in the world, but we can be better. Our sailors and marines are the best on the face of the Earth, and they do a spectacular job, folks. But until they can walk on water,

which someday they may be able to do, until they can walk on water, then we must continue to build them ships.

It is imperative that this Congress supports the United States Navy financially and authoritatively in a manner that allows for reassuring our allies, maintaining global presence, and defeating adversaries when necessary. We must give our sailors and our marines the tools they need to succeed in an atmosphere and an environment that is even more challenging than it has ever been in the era of great power competition where we know that our allies are committing to not just countering the United States, but defeating the United States strategically.

We must do nothing less than fully support our Navy-Marine Corps team, giving them what they need not just for today, not just for next year, not just for within our purview of what this Congress has to do, but for years to come, for decades to come, and for centuries to come. For it is only with that, that we will be able to counter what our adversaries are doing every second of every day, and that is finding ways to defeat the United States strategically. We must do nothing less than the same.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's motion. It is part of the same discussion we had on the previous resolution, and I, as I said, completely agree. The lack of certainty on the continuing resolutions has negatively impacted the Department of Defense and our readiness. There is absolutely no question about it. The only thing I would debate today is: What is the best way to address that problem? How do we honestly get at it?

These resolutions would suggest that if we simply fund defense and ignore everything else, then we will be fine. I think the way we got into this mess is instructive, and it is also going to be helpful in terms of how we get out of this mess going forward.

It is worth noting, at the end of this, we talked a little bit about tax cuts and how one thing doesn't have to do with the other. Tax cuts do not increase revenue. If they did, we would have the easiest job in the world. Also, a tax rate of zero would generate the most revenue for the United States Government. Obviously, that is not true.

Now, it is true that tax policy, depending on how it is structured, can be more encouraging to investment. But we have never had lower tax rates on the Federal level than we have right now. After all of the Bush tax cuts, as I mentioned the tax cuts under President Obama, and now the tax cuts under President Trump, all of that has added up to a massive decrease in our revenue, and that is part of the equation.

When President Bush put the tax cuts in place in 2001, for three consecu-

tive fiscal years after that, we had a real dollar decrease in the amount of revenue that the Federal Government took in.

Now, I also understand that taxes are always a burden on the people who have to pay them. If we are running government well, we are going to try to keep those taxes as low as is humanly possible. But if we are going to meet the needs of government, we have to raise revenue.

What we have heard today is a very, very compelling case for how, over the course of the last decade, we haven't met the needs of readiness within the Department of Defense. So, again, I simply urge us to make a choice here. If we want to cover these costs, then let's raise the revenue and pay for it, and not pretend with this fantasy that somehow cutting the amount of revenue you take in is going to increase the amount of revenue you are going to take in. It doesn't work that way, and it certainly doesn't work in the current economic environment.

The second thing I would say is, while national security is critically important, it is not the only thing we do that is important. And that is the other thing that worries me about this debate. We massively slash revenue so we have less money to play around with, then we make the case for why we need to massively increase our defense budget, and everything else that the Federal Government does just sort of drifts away as an afterthought.

There are a lot of examples of this. I used infrastructure in the previous debate, and I will use a different example this time, the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. It is not in my district, but it is just across the street from my district in Seattle, Washington.

It is doing incredible work right now on cancer. They are literally this close to, in some cases, curing it. They have come up with a new way for dealing with blood cancers—taking the white blood cells out of the body, reenergizing them, and putting them back in—that has achieved truly miraculous results.

Fred Hutch gets an overwhelming amount of their funding from the National Institutes of Health, from the Federal Government. The budget that President Trump originally proposed last year would have cut funding for Fred Hutch by 75 percent.

So while we are caring about national security, I think we also have to care about, well, curing cancer. It is not irrelevant. It actually saves lives and makes a difference.

Lastly, I do, as I said earlier, worry about a view of the world that says, basically, the entire world is out to get us and we have to spend as much money as is humanly possible here in the United States to defend ourselves.

We face threats. There is no question about that. We need a National Security Strategy and a national security budget to meet those threats. But in

order to really create a safer and more prosperous world, we need to build alliances so that we are threatened by fewer people and so that we have more friends who will help us deter those who do threaten us. This is a point that Ms. CHENEY made that I completely agree with.

Deterrence is incredibly important. In a place like North Korea, will Kim Jung-un attack South Korea? Or will Iran attack? If they feel like they face a credible deterrent, they won't, and the U.S. needs to be part of that. But our allies need to be part of that as well.

Here, Russia is a great example. If Russia feels that NATO is weak, they will be emboldened. We already are seeing what they are doing in Ukraine. Estonia, Latvia, and other countries in Eastern Europe feel threatened by Russia. They need to know that the United States stands with our allies in Europe in order to deter that aggression and stop the war before it happens.

That does not all fall on the United States defense budget. It falls on us having friends and allies who can back up our credible deterrence.

Lastly, I just close by saying that we certainly face the threats we face. It is worth noting that we still, in the United States, spend way more money every year on defense than any of our adversaries, than any other country in the world. So it is not just a matter of money; it is a matter of having a smart strategy and spending that money well.

I am pleased that—knock on wood—this is supposed to be the first year in forever that the Department of Defense will actually have a full audit of where they spend their money. But making sure the money that is spent is spent efficiently and effectively is also part of having an adequate national security budget. So I worry that, basically, we say, look, all we have to do is spend as much money as the Pentagon wants and everything will be fine. I think it is a lot more complicated question than that. Again, it comes back to having a sound fiscal policy and a sound national security policy.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, my colleague, Mr. SMITH, is worried about a lot of things that really just aren't the case over here on this side of the aisle.

I agree with Mr. SMITH that weakness is provocative. We certainly need look no further than the Obama administration to see what happens when the United States is weak, to see what happens when the United States abandons its longstanding allies in the Middle East, including Israel, in order to provide funding and a pathway to nuclear weapons for the Iranians. We see what happened again and again and again.

We saw what happened when the Obama administration, President Obama, decided to pull troops out of

Iraq based on a timeline that he established in Washington, D.C., with no regard to the facts on the ground. We saw what happened. What happened was the rise of ISIS.

So the problem that we have is, in order to deter, we have to make sure people understand that we are strong. We have lived through 8 years in the previous administration of apologies and weakness, and President Trump is turning that around. President Trump is making clear that people understand that no longer will that be the case, and that we, in fact, are going to be a Nation that stands up for what we believe in.

I think it is also very educational, Mr. Speaker, to think about this debate we are having here today, this discussion, and to think about what it sounds like to men and women who are serving overseas and to their family members. What we are supposed to be discussing here and debating here is a resolution that expresses a sense of this body that the United States Navy has been hurt extensively by the lack of predictable funding. Instead, what we are getting is a lot of discussion and conversation about a whole bunch of other things that I am more than happy to debate.

Mr. SMITH and I clearly have very different opinions about the economy and about what you have to do to generate economic growth in this economy. But that is not this resolution.

I think we have the opportunity here, on a bipartisan basis, once and for all, to show that we are in a position where we are going to provide the kind of support that our men and women in uniform need.

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting, and I agree, that the fundamental point is that we need to make sure that we adequately provide for, in this case, what the resolution is focused on, the Navy and the Marine Corps. As I have agreed throughout, adequate readiness for them is incredibly important. The CRs and the budget fiasco that we have had have not provided that.

□ 1500

What I am trying to do is, rather than just an empty resolution that says, gosh, it would be great if we actually looked after you, to talk about the policy steps that are going to be necessary to actually do that. So I think that is an incredibly important part of this debate.

Now, we can have every resolution all day long saying we want to cure cancer, we want to bring peace to the world. That is great. But what are the steps that are going to be necessary, in this case, to get to the point where the Navy and Marine Corps has the adequate funds that they need, or at least has predictability for what they are

going to be able to do, because we have been having these discussions about how, gosh, we ought to do this, and then we don't.

I am trying to explain to the people who serve in the military and everybody else exactly why we don't; instead of just giving them empty promises saying we would really like to help you, it just seems like year after year, somehow we don't. We don't, for all of the reasons that I have listed in terms of fiscal policy going forward.

The other thing that I would like to point out is, Obama is no longer President. Donald Trump is President. And it seems to me like the one thing the Republican Party would want to do, they would love to have Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama to kick around for, like, ever. But you are actually in charge now; so why don't you be responsible for the policies that we have right now.

And I just, I couldn't believe that I heard the Representative from Wyoming say that America is now projecting strength. If there was ever an example of the President of the United States projecting the most embarrassing, abject weakness I have ever seen than what President Trump just did with Vladimir Putin in Helsinki, I can't think of it. And quite frankly, a number of Republican commentators that I have seen talk over the last 24 hours can't think of it either.

So I know it is incredibly comforting, from a policy perspective, to blame everything, absolutely everything, that has gone wrong in the world on President Obama, but he is not in charge anymore.

Donald Trump is in charge. The Republican Party is in charge of the House and the Senate, and it is time to focus on policies that are going to move us forward and advance our interests; and not just feel comfort in the fact that we can sort of rewrite history and blame President Obama for absolutely everything that has gone wrong.

It is a big, complicated, and difficult world for President Trump. It was for President Obama. We need to work together. We need to find ways to confront the challenges we face in a thoughtful way. Simply blaming the past president for absolutely everything isn't going to get us there.

So, again, let me just conclude by saying I completely agree. The issue that needs to be addressed is to make sure that we have adequate readiness for all of the men and women who serve in the military.

We are only talking about the Navy and Marine Corps. As I think the gentlewoman said, we are going to talk about the Air Force and the Army next week. I think we should talk about all of them at the same time, because it is all equally important. But to get there, we need to have a strategy that is actually sustainable, instead of one that is based on hope.

And to my mind, that is the worst thing that we can do to the men and

women who serve in the military is say we want you to do all of this, and we don't really have the funds to do it, so you are going to have to figure it out as you go. It would be far, far better to say, look, here is, realistically, where our budget is at. Here is, realistically, what we can do.

Give them that task, and then they will be trained and equipped to do it, instead of being asked to do more than we are willing to provide money for.

And it is one thing if this was just 1 year. It is one thing if we had a surplus. But we don't. We have the budget environment that we have. So if we are going to get to the point where we adequately address readiness and address the issues that are being raised, then we need to be realistic about what we can do and, like I said, not keep blaming past administrations for things; actually try to implement policy right now that is going to make sure that we have the strongest national security policy we can, and that, again, the men and women who serve in the military, at a minimum, are trained and equipped to do the missions that we are asking them to do; that we don't ask them to do missions that go beyond the funds that we provide for them.

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

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

These resolutions do lay out the steps necessary. These resolutions make clear that the House has done its business, has done its work; we need the Senate to do its work, and we need to get these bills to the President's desk.

As I recall, Mr. Speaker, the only person that had hope as a policy was Barack Obama, and my colleague is right, that he is no longer—President Obama is no longer in the Oval Office. However, the damage that his policies did are so devastating and so long-lasting that we are having to dig out from under it. That is why we are here today.

We are here today because not only have continuing resolutions hurt the Department of Defense, the policies of the last 8 years have created a situation, geopolitically and militarily, where the work that we have got to do to undo those very ill-guided policies is significant and requires the kind of funding that we are talking about.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN) to close.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentlewoman from Wyoming, again, for all of her efforts today to highlight this important issue about the commitment this Nation has to make to our military to make sure we rebuild this lost readiness, and H. Res. 998 is purely simply about that.

Are we willing to state our commitment to our sailors and Marines about what we must do as a Nation to provide the resources that they need to do the job that we ask them to do?

Are we willing to send a message to them that says, we are committed to standing by them for everything that has to happen to provide certainty to them so they know what their future holds?

Are we willing to send a message to our adversaries to say that this Nation is committed to rebuild our Navy and Marine Corps team to make sure that they are a force to be reckoned with anytime an adversary of ours may think of acting badly around the world; that that Navy and Marine Corps team will be there. That is what this resolution is about.

It is also sending a message to every one of our constituents; is this Congress committed to the right policies to making the commitment of resources to make sure that our Navy and Marine Corps team has what they need? That is another important part of this message.

And will we, as a nation, assure that in the long-term we are committed to countering what our adversaries are doing? And we see that. We see that in scores. Whether it is something like submarines, where we are on path, by 2029, to be down to 42 total attack submarines, the most requested asset in the entire United States inventory. We are down to 42 submarines in 2029.

China, by 2020, will have 70 submarines, total attack submarines and ballistic missile submarines, building five to six per year, so that by 2029, when we are at 42 submarines, attack submarines, and on the way to rebuilding Ohio-class submarines, the Chinese could be as high as 124 submarines. Now, quantity has a quality all of its own.

This resolution today says, are we going to make the commitment to make sure that we can counter those adversaries? Are we going to be able to tell our children and our grandchildren that when we had the chance we made the commitment? We made the commitment to our sailors, to our Marines, and as we will next week, to our soldiers and our airmen, and subsequently our Coast Guardsmen, to make sure that they have what they need, that this Nation makes the commitment to assure that we have the future of our Nation's defense well in hand. That is what today is about.

I ask my colleagues to join me to make sure that we are willing to make this simple commitment. While it may be in words, those words will speak volumes to our sailors, to our Marines, to our citizens, and to our adversaries, that this Nation has an unshakable resolve to make sure that we have what we need to counter the threats abroad, and to counter anybody that thinks of threatening the United States, or our friends, or our allies, or would want to act badly. Today's resolution is all about that, not just for today, but for decades to come.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARTON). The question is on the motion

offered by the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. CHENEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 998.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### EXPRESSING SENSE OF THE HOUSE THAT THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS BUDGETARY UNCERTAINTY ERODES MILITARY READINESS

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 994) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Marine Corps faces significant readiness challenges and that budgetary uncertainty impedes the Corps' ability to meet ongoing and unexpected national security threats, putting United States national security at risk.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

#### H. RES. 994

Whereas since fiscal year 2010, United States Marine Corps active duty end strength has shrunk by 8 percent from 202,100 to 186,000;

Whereas, on March 1, 2016, Marine Corps Commandant Robert Neller stated, "The fiscal reductions and instability of the past few years have impacted our readiness. As resources have diminished, the Marine Corps has protected the near-term operational readiness of its deployed and next-to-deploy units in order to meet operational commitments. This has come at a risk";

Whereas, on February 26, 2015, now Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Joseph F. Dunford stated, "[a]pproximately half of our non-deployed units—and those are the ones that provide the bench to respond to unforeseen contingencies—are suffering personnel, equipment and training shortfalls";

Whereas, on February 8, 2017, Assistant Commandant Glenn Walters stated, "A focus on [ongoing] operations, the decrease in funding levels from Fiscal Year (FY) 2012, fiscal instability and the lack of an inter-war period have left your Marine Corps insufficiently manned, trained and equipped across the depth of the force to operate in an evolving operational environment";

Whereas the Marine Corps' Assault Amphibious Vehicle (AAV-7A1) and Light Armored Vehicle (LAV) average over 40 and 26 years old, respectively;

Whereas the Marine Corps has a stated requirement for 38 amphibious ships to support the operations of 2 Marine Expeditionary Brigades, but the amphibious fleet numbers only 32 ships today;

Whereas former Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Jonathan Greenert testified on March 12, 2014, that, "[t]oday, in the world that we live in, the world that the Navy and Marine Corps lives in, and the future, we probably need 50 [amphibious ships]";

Whereas, on April 5, 2017, Marine Corps leaders testified that, "The most dire readiness situation lies within our Aviation element. An unhealthy percentage of our aviation units lack the minimum number of ready basic aircraft (RBA) for training, and

we are significantly short ready aircraft for wartime requirements. We simply do not have the available aircraft to meet our squadrons' requirements";

Whereas during parts of 2016, only 43 percent of the Marine Corps' total aviation fleet was available for operational employment, including less than 1/3 of its F/A-18 Hornets;

Whereas from fiscal year 2013 through fiscal year 2017, Marine Corps aviation accidents increased by 80 percent from 56 to 101 per year;

Whereas between 2011 and 2017, aviation accidents killed more than 60 Marines, including 19 over a 2-month period in 2017; and

Whereas, on March 10, 2017, Deputy Commandant Gary L. Thomas stated, "Unstable fiscal environments prevent the deliberately planned, sustained effort needed to recover current readiness of our legacy equipment in the near term, and to modernize in the longer term . . . We must work to avoid a budget-driven strategy and return to a strategy-driven budget, informed by the strategic requirements of the current and future operating environments. Unless we do so, the range of options we have to address current and future threats will further erode": Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes that the United States Marine Corps faces significant readiness challenges, as well as shortfalls in end strength and delayed modernization;

(2) finds that failing to provide the Marine Corps with stable, robust, and on-time funding impedes its ability to meet ongoing and unexpected security threats, putting United States national security at risk; and

(3) commits to enhancing the Marine Corps' ability to meet our Nation's threats "In the air, on land, and sea".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. CHENEY) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wyoming.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Wyoming?

There was no objection.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GALLAGHER), my colleague on the Armed Services Committee, to discuss his resolution.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my good friend from Wyoming for yielding the time but, more importantly, for her leadership in this effort to highlight the devastating impacts when we fail to provide full, on-time, and robust funding to our military.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 994, which would recognize the significant readiness challenges facing the United States Marine Corps, and warn that budgetary uncertainty is undermining the ability of our Marines to do their vital work day