

small. This is all going to pass quickly. Don't worry about these families who don't have enough to provide food and shelter and the basics for their families. They will get by with a lot less—from \$600 a week to \$200 a week. They will do just fine, according to Republicans.

I disagree. Our first obligation should be to these working families who are going through the toughest period they could ever imagine. Stick with them. Stand with them. Be prepared to put the money on the table, which we know they will spend right back into the economy.

We will see more unemployment if we follow the Republican approach. It is estimated that some 3 million jobs will be killed by the Republican approach of cutting unemployment and the consequent downturn in spending by these same families.

Let's stick with those families now. They need us.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, Congress has no greater responsibility than providing for a strong national defense and keeping Americans safe. The National Defense Authorization Act is one of the most important pieces of legislation that is considered each year by the U.S. Senate. It authorizes the weapons systems, programs, and resources that support the men and women who serve our country in the Armed Forces as well as their families.

Last week, the Senate completed its work on the fiscal year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act for the 60th consecutive year. The bill received, as it should, wide bipartisan support in an 86-to-14 vote. I was proud to support the NDAA.

In my home State of Colorado, our military installations, including Fort Carson, the Air Force Academy, Buckley, Peterson, and Schriever Air Force Bases, along with Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station, are on the cutting edge of space operations, military training and readiness, and protecting our national security.

I want to thank Chairman INHOFE and the ranking member for their bipartisanship at the Senate Armed Services Committee and for doing such a great job in fulfilling their tremendous responsibility in providing for national defense. It cannot be overstated enough how grateful we all are, and I appreciate the time and work they dedicated to this effort. The security of the United States should always be more important than any partisan politics, and I appreciate their commit-

ment to placing national defense above partisan bickering. We have seen how even in the most rancorous political times Republicans and Democrats can come together through the Defense Authorization Act to renew the country's commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific region, such as when the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act became law in December 2018.

As was stated in the U.S. Department of Defense "Indo-Pacific Strategy Report," which was released in July of last year, "This legislation [ARIA] enshrines a generational whole-of-government policy framework that demonstrates U.S. commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific region and includes initiatives that promote sovereignty, rule of law, democracy, economic engagement, and regional security."

Now the U.S. Senate has taken the next step toward renewing the country's commitment to the Indo-Pacific region by passing this NDAA bill, enshrining and establishing a new Pacific Deterrence Initiative, PDI, that will complement ARIA and implement its vision of a more robust U.S. military presence in the Indo-Pacific. This initiative will enhance the security commitment set forth in ARIA and help guide the Congress and the Pentagon in making the tough choices necessary to prioritize the Indo-Pacific and to extend critical deterrence initiatives to check our adversaries.

Earlier this summer, Chairman INHOFE and I authored an op-ed entitled "Renewing America's Commitment to the Indo-Pacific." It described the Pacific Deterrence Initiative, which will complement the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act and implement its vision of a more robust U.S. military presence in the Indo-Pacific.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have the op-ed in the Diplomat of July 2, 2020, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Diplomat, July 2, 2020]

RENEWING AMERICA'S COMMITMENT TO THE INDO-PACIFIC—A NEW PACIFIC DETERRENCE INITIATIVE WILL COMPLEMENT ARIA AND IMPLEMENT ITS VISION OF A MORE ROBUST U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE INDO-PACIFIC

(By Jim Inhofe and Cory Gardner)

As China braashly tries to impose its own system of rules and order in the Pacific, the United States and our allies in the Indo-Pacific confront a time for choosing. We must choose to advance our vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific. We must choose to ensure the success of the principles of regional and global order that remain essential to our shared security and prosperity. These are difficult choices that will come at increasingly greater cost. Beijing will do its best to make sure that the right choice and the easy choice are never the same, but we believe Americans and our allies are up to the task.

For instance, U.S. allies like Australia are already making the tough choices, while braving Beijing's bluster and bullying. By standing by its calls for an independent in-

quiry into the origins of the coronavirus and by remaining open to trade while refusing to trade away fundamental values, Australia has set a proud example for all the world. As Beijing lashes out across the region from the Himalayan Mountains to the South China Sea, Australia's actions serve as a reminder for our other allies that in a free and open Indo-Pacific, right makes might—and not the other way around.

Australia should not be alone in this effort. The United States stands with our allies, and we are prepared to make our own tough choices.

In the United States, we have seen how even in the most rancorous political times, Republicans and Democrats have joined together to renew the country's commitment to the Indo-Pacific region, like when the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act (ARIA) became law in December 2018. As was stated in the U.S. Department of Defense Indo-Pacific Strategy Report, released in July 2019: "This legislation enshrines a generational whole-of-government policy framework that demonstrates U.S. commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific region and includes initiatives that promote sovereignty, rule of law, democracy, economic engagement, and regional security."

In the coming days, the U.S. Senate will take the next step toward renewing the country's commitment to the Indo-Pacific region by passing the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021, which establishes a new Pacific Deterrence Initiative that will complement ARIA and implement its vision of a more robust U.S. military presence in the Indo-Pacific. This initiative will enhance the security commitments set forth in ARIA, and help guide Congress and the Pentagon in making the tough choices necessary to prioritize the Indo-Pacific and extend critical deterrence initiatives to check our adversaries.

Last year, a seminal report from the United States Studies Centre (USSC) at the University of Sydney provided one of the clearest explanations of why the need for the Pacific Deterrence Initiative is both real and urgent. The report shows how China is attempting to "undercut America's military primacy" and "sowing doubt about Washington's security guarantees in the process." In the face of this development, the report describes an "increasingly worrying mismatch between America's strategy and resources," especially in the Indo-Pacific. Even as "America's military services have started to implement much needed changes," the report warns, it's not clear that America will have the "budgetary capacity or strategic focus to deliver these in a robust and timely way." We share these concerns, and the Pacific Deterrence Initiative is designed explicitly to address them.

First, the Pacific Deterrence Initiative will enhance budgetary transparency and congressional oversight by organizing our defense budget around critical Indo-Pacific priorities. The initiative will make it easier to translate regional priorities into budget priorities, and ensure that security requirements are being matched with the necessary resources.

Second, the Pacific Deterrence Initiative will focus resources on key capability gaps to give U.S. forces everything they need to compete, fight, and win in the Indo-Pacific. The initiative would focus new resources in many of the areas recommended by the USSC report, including a more distributed regional defense posture, resilient logistics networks, fuel and munitions storage, missile defenses for U.S. bases, and more experimentation to test and prove new operational concepts.

Third, consistent with ARIA provisions, the Pacific Deterrence Initiative will

prioritize cooperation with allies and partners across the Indo-Pacific. The initiative will increase security assistance for our regional allies and partners, and invest in interoperability. In the future, we expect the initiative will provide resources to support new mechanisms for deepening regional defense cooperation, including multinational fusion centers and joint training and experimentation.

Fourth, and finally, the Pacific Deterrence Initiative will help preserve peace in the Indo-Pacific by bolstering credible deterrence. The initiative will focus resources on efforts to deny our adversaries the possibility of a quick, easy, or cheap victory. By injecting uncertainty and risk into the calculations of our adversaries, we can discourage them from choosing the path of aggression.

The Pacific Deterrence Initiative is by no means a cure-all. After all, achieving credible deterrence in the Indo-Pacific region is not America's task alone. It can only be realized through a collective effort with our allies and partners such as Australia. Moreover, the challenges we face today are not limited to, or even primarily, military in character. As ARIA emphasized, we must also step up our diplomatic and economic security efforts while remaining true to our values. Nonetheless, we hope the Pacific Deterrence Initiative will serve as another demonstration to our mates in Australia, as well as our other allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific, that America's commitment to the region remains bipartisan and enduring.

Mr. GARDNER. I would also like to thank my colleagues for their bipartisan work on the Defense bill. We had a number of bipartisan amendments included and provisions that improve the use of secure facility space and make sure military communities have access to clean and safe drinking water—an incredibly important issue facing Colorado, Colorado Springs, the Fort Carson area, and others as they address the PFAS issues this Nation has dealt with.

I think it is important to remember that when one member of the family serves our country in uniform, the entire family serves, and this legislation supports military families in Colorado and truly all over the world. It provides a much needed pay increase for our military members and continues to support military spouses seeking employment.

The NDAA addresses the challenges servicemembers and their families face living in privatized housing. It expands resources to continue to address PFAS water contamination in our military communities.

In Colorado, we are proud to play a very key role in defending the United States. Our military installations are critical to national security and supporting operations in space. This year's defense authorization includes language to ensure there is transparency when it comes to selecting the final home for the headquarters—the permanent basing decision of U.S. Space Command—and that Space Command's critical mission drives the decision-making process. That is what we ensured through the Defense Authorization Act.

The bill also supports the ongoing standup of our Nation's newest mili-

tary branch, the U.S. Space Force, to include my legislation establishing the Space Force Reserve. The Space Force Reserve will mirror its sister military service branches, and as a result, the Space Force will better organize the military to handle Space Force's operations and bring all military members working in the space domain under the same organizational umbrella.

General Raymond is working hard to make sure the U.S. Space Force is agile and prepared to respond to national security threats in the space domain.

As we continue to work in establishing the U.S. Space Force, Colorado is proud to continue its support of our Nation's military operations in space. That is why in the coming weeks I will be working with my colleagues in the Senate to establish the U.S. Space Force Caucus, led by bipartisan co-leads and chairs. The caucus will provide my colleagues and their staff the opportunity to learn more about military space operations and the critical threats we face in the space domain. I welcome my colleagues' support and participation in the establishment of this caucus.

Again, I thank my colleagues, Chairman INHOFE and Ranking Member REED, for their work on this important bill, and I am proud to support legislation that authorizes \$268 million for military construction projects in Colorado and provides a 3-percent pay raise for the men and women serving our Nation in uniform.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. LOEFFLER). The Senator from West Virginia.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, the world we are living in today is a very different one than we envisioned when we rang in the new year in the beginning of 2020 or even when we celebrated St. Patrick's Day in March. COVID has altered almost every aspect of our lives, from where we gather to celebrate or mourn to how our children are educated.

Far too many across the country have lost loved ones to this disease, or they are living with health complications because of it. However, while we are rightly focusing much of our energy on the coronavirus, this is not the only health crisis we are battling.

Unfortunately, across the Nation, drug overdose deaths are rising amidst the coronavirus, negating much of the progress we have made over the last several years. A White House Office of National Drug Control Policy analysis shows an 11.4-percent increase in fatalities for the first 4 months of 2020. My home State of West Virginia reported 923 overdose-related EMS calls in May, which is roughly a 50-percent jump from May of 2019. Our neighboring State of Kentucky—and I am sure the neighboring State of Ohio too—has estimated a 25-percent increase in overdose deaths between January and March.

Is COVID-19 directly causing these overdose deaths? No. Is the pandemic exacerbating our Nation's addiction struggle? Absolutely. It is not hard to see why. The past several months have been difficult for all of us; however, for someone in recovery, this disruption may cause them to have a hard time keeping their treatment regimens in place. The need for social distancing makes in-person recovery programs that are a lifeline for some almost impossible. Social distancing may also lead to more individuals using drugs alone, raising the risk of overdose deaths because there is no one there to help or intervene.

Last week, I had a chance to talk with CDC Director Redfield about where we are in our Nation's battle against addiction. The preliminary CDC data recently released showed drug overdose deaths climbed to a record high last year and how the addiction crisis continues to shift also, with overdose deaths rising in our other States, such as Alaska and the Dakotas. He also pointed out that deaths involving methamphetamine and cocaine have been steadily increasing despite the fact that deaths caused largely by synthetic opioids have been decreasing—or actually pills, have been decreasing. We talked about how issues like neonatal abstinence syndrome, where babies are born exposed to opioids, continue to spread.

We talked about the work we have done here in Congress and what we continue to need to do. Over the years, as I mentioned, we have seen a decline in the deaths from prescription opioids. We have seen increases in access to treatment resources. Moreover, we have seen a recognition that, as a country, we have a real addiction crisis. However, these recent statistics and the evidence we are seeing related to substance abuse during our current pandemic show us there is so much more work to do, and it has a sense of urgency to it for many of us.

This sentiment was also shared when I met with Director Carroll of the ONDCP. We met in Huntington just last Friday. Huntington is a town that is particularly hard hit by addiction. Director Carroll expressed his concern over the rising numbers of overdose deaths. He acknowledged that the public health threat posed by COVID-19 and the essential mitigation measures implemented across the country to slow the spread together have created unprecedented obstacles for Americans seeking drug treatment.

We discussed some of the responses the Trump administration has taken to the pandemic and our new reality. The Trump administration has relaxed some of the rules related to the prescribing of medication-assisted treatment. That has been helpful. The increased role of telehealth in behavioral and mental health care—that has been helpful.

The Director updated me on ONDCP's work in working to address the specific