

for the wealthiest people in this country. They were all too happy to let the government shovel loans to the biggest banks and companies. But in the middle of the worst crisis of our lifetime, faced with the chance to give money directly to ordinary Americans, my colleagues claim we can't afford it. That is just simply a lie. We are the richest country on Earth.

I remember Bill Spriggs—an economist at Howard University—told the Banking and Housing Committee in September: We didn't win World War II by worrying about whether or not we could afford it. We were in a global crisis. We marshalled all our vast resources and talents to rise to meet it. We grew the economy from the middle class out. We paid down the debt with rising wages.

If we have learned anything from the crisis, it should be that we can do the same again. Americans are tired of being told we can't. It is the only answer that Senator McCONNELL and Senate Republicans ever have for most people's problems: We can't help you. We can't solve your problem. You are on your own.

Let's aim higher. Let's deliver for the people we serve. Let's put \$2,000 into their pockets—money that will make such a difference for so many families. It will help a mother worried about how she will pay back rent. It will keep a laid off restaurant worker from turning to a payday lender. It will allow a father to buy a new computer so his kids are better able to learn online. These are millions of real people—people we swore an oath to serve who would breathe a little easier this new year if we pass this.

So let's be clear about the decision today and this week before the Senate. Are we going to give the people we serve \$2,000, or are you going to stand in the way? It is that simple. Let's come together. Let's pass this. Let's make a real difference in people's lives.

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. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. INHOFE. Mr. President, this is what I have considered to be—and I have heard my friend from the Democratic side, the minority side, say the same thing, that this is the most significant bill that we pass every year.

It is the NDAA, the National Defense Authorization Act. This will be the 60th year—is it the 60th or 61st year?

Mr. REED. The 60th.

Mr. INHOFE. OK. It is the 60th year that we have passed this, and it has passed every year. There were a few

moments there where I thought maybe it wasn't going to pass this year and we would set a record. Senator REED and I don't want to set that kind of record. We want to make sure we get this done.

The reason this is important is this is the blueprint. This tells us what we are going to be doing with our troops. I could make an argument that it is really—we are in the most dangerous situation, I think, that we have been in before. I have often talked about the good old days when we had the Cold War with two superpowers. We knew what the Soviet Union had; they knew what we had. Mutually assured destruction meant something at that time.

But now it is different in a lot of respects because you have rogue countries out there that have weapons and have abilities to wipe out nations. That is why it is so significant.

So, anyway, we suffered through a little bit of a problem back during the Obama administration, during the last 5 years, which would have been from 2010 to 2015. In his budget, he downgraded the military by 25 percent, and that is the same time, during that timeframe, that China increased theirs by 83 percent.

So it is a scary world out there, and it is one that, to me, I have no doubt that this is the most important bill that we will pass all year because we have got our kids, and they are out there right now. They are in the trenches, and we have to support them. That is what it is all about.

I do want to mention how many people are involved in this thing. We are actually starting this right now. We are starting next year's NDAA. So this started a year ago. The ones working on this—you have Liz King and John Bonsell heading up the minority and majority part of the committee, doing a great job and working every weekend—almost every weekend—with a very large staff, all specialists in certain areas. And they have got the bill.

So I am very proud of the bill that we have this year. I think that it passed, when it passed in the Senate, it was 84 to—I think it was 84 to 14, I think it was. I think there were a couple of people not here. But that is the largest—that doesn't happen very often, to pass a bill with those margins, and we did.

So this is a long tradition. We have got to support our troops. They are in there doing the right thing. It has been a joy, personally, for me to be working with Senator REED, and we have, together, kind of provided the leadership on this thing. We didn't work as hard as the staff did. I admit that. But we were there, and I am very proud of this bill.

So right now we have kids that are overseas, and they deserve the pay that was increased—that would be increased when this bill is passed. Right now, we have critical areas like pilots and engineers, doctors, that are in short supply because of the fact that we have had,

up until the pandemic, a good and probably, I would argue, the best economy we have had in my lifetime.

Well, that is good news, of course, but it is bad news in one way because it is hard to keep the people in those critical fields—pilots, for example. They have an opportunity to get out and do things that are—there are jobs out there that are paying a lot more. So we have to have them on the flight hours if something happens. And they are out—there are a lot of jobs on the outside that are paying more. So we just have to make sure that we keep the resources in the right place to do the right job.

So I think this is the—I know this procedural vote today is going to bring us, in the next couple of days, to pass the Defense authorization bill.

It is all about the guys and gals in the field. We owe it to them. This is going to be the 60th year. I anticipate that this is going to pass with very large numbers.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I would like to rise and discuss the Fiscal Year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act.

First, I would like to salute the chairman. He has done an extraordinary job. We have both served on the committee for many years, and this is probably the most challenging year we have had due to many different factors: the pandemic, the virtual hearings, all those things.

And this has been particularly challenging, and the chairman, at every point, stood up to the challenge and led us. I want to thank him for that. It was a pleasure working with him.

We all recognize that this legislation passed both Chambers, the House and the Senate, by overwhelming bipartisan majorities. And it is very important legislation. That is why it earned this bipartisan support.

It enhances our national security. It strengthens our military readiness and defense capabilities. It protects our forces and their families and supports the defense industrial base.

Despite all that it does for our troops and their families, President Trump waited until the 10th day after he received it and vetoed it the last day he could exercise his veto. That was December 23, which made quite a Christmas for our military personnel and for all of my colleagues who are here today to start the process of responding to that veto.

The House already took the first step. They returned on Monday. Once again, by an overwhelming vote, over 300 Members of the House overrode the President's veto. Now we face the same task in the Senate. It is my hope we can quickly and resoundingly override

the President's veto and provide our troops with what they need.

I will echo what the chairman said. You can go through all the thousands of pages, literally, but what is the most significant aspect of this legislation is keeping faith with the men and women who wear the uniform of the United States. So if anyone has any thoughts about their vote, just think about those men and women who are all across the world putting their lives at risk while their families share that risk and that sense of danger and sacrifice. That is what I think has motivated the chairman and myself and all of our colleagues on the committee and throughout this Senate to work hard to get this bill passed.

There are several reasons being advanced by the President for suggesting that this bill should be vetoed—the veto should be upheld. One reason is that he claims the bill fails to include critical national security measures. Yet this legislation provides critical tools and authorities for the Department of Homeland Security to perform network hunting for threats and vulnerabilities on Federal networks. These tools and authorities would help to counter breaches like the SolarWinds hack, which is possibly the largest intrusion into our system we have ever seen by a foreign nation state adversary. We do not yet know the extent and the degree of intrusion that we have suffered. In fact, we weren't aware of this intrusion for many, many months.

One of the disconcerting aspects is that it was discovered by a private company that is one of the most, if not the most sophisticated cyber intrusion expert in the world. Yet they were penetrated.

So we have a serious, serious situation on our hands. This legislation would start giving basic tools, which would allow our cyber security experts to go into other Departments to look at their procedures, their policies, all of their cyber activities, and recommend corrections.

In fact, this bill has done more, I think, for cyber based on the work of the Cyber Solarium Commission, which was chaired by Senator ANGUS KING and Congressman MIKE GALLAGHER of Wisconsin and also aided significantly by my colleague Congressman JIM LANGEVIN of Rhode Island. They put the work together. We took a lot of the Solarium's work and put it into this bill. So there is absolutely no credence to the issue that we have not dealt with national security and cyber intrusions in particular.

Then again, the President, in his veto message, wrote that one of the reasons is the failure to essentially repeal section 230 of the Communications Decency Act. But this issue has nothing to do with the military—nothing at all. It was designed years ago to provide legal protections to social media companies so that they could expand and grow. Frankly, I think it has worked

beyond our wildest imaginations. Everyone recognizes it should be reformed, but reform requires thoughtful, responsible analysis of the legislation. The effects of the legislation should offer both sides the opportunity to explain positions. None of that was done, and none of that can be done before we conclude this legislative session.

It is more, I think, a personal feud of the President, the section 230 repeal, than it is one of careful, deliberate, thoughtful legislation by the Senate.

There is another reason the President has used, and that is we have established a commission to make recommendations for the renaming and removal of symbols, displays, monuments, and paraphernalia that honor or commemorate Confederates who served voluntarily with the Confederacy. There is a clear exemption, by the way, for gravestones that we would absolutely respect. But these individuals—many of them who were on Active service with our Army or Navy at the time—decided to consciously fight against the United States of America. It is that simple. Yet we have bases that are named after them.

The President said this is part of the American heritage of victory and freedom, but, again, these are named after men who took up arms against the United States. In some cases—in most cases, they weren't particularly exemplary generals, with some exceptions. And it was done in a way that I think was not to honor the service of these individuals but to advance other forces.

I think it is time that this history be changed, that this chapter be closed, and the senior Defense Department officials have indicated they are open to these changes. There is bipartisan support for cooperation on this issue. It passed the committee. It passed the floor. It passed the House. Now, it is in this legislation.

When the President vetoed the bill, he also said it is a "gift to China and Russia." I would strenuously disagree. This is one of the strongest bills yet on countering the threat China poses to the United States and our partners, including allies such as India, Taiwan, and other countries and regions.

Among the provisions of this legislation is the Pacific Deterrence Initiative. That is a new authority for the Department of Defense, modeled after the European Deterrence Initiative and authorizes an additional \$150 million in funding.

This was the work—I was proud to collaborate, but the lead was the chairman, Chairman INHOFE, and I was his copilot on that one. This is the first time we really stepped back and said: We have a new threat—significant threat—rising in the Pacific. We have to take a holistic review of strategy, capabilities, equipment, and we have to make this a top priority.

So rather than doing nothing about China, as the President alleges, I think we have made one of the most signifi-

cant steps forward in consciously recognizing the relationship that has developed between China and the United States.

With regard to Russia and Europe, the conference report enhances our ability to deter Russian aggression, maintains strong support for Ukraine, and reaffirms our commitment to the transatlantic partnership, including by calling for a strong U.S. force posture in Germany.

Now, President Trump also vetoed this legislation because he wants the ability to remove our military from "far away and very unappreciative lands." Those are his words. Particularly, I have concern about the situation in Afghanistan. First—and I have been to Afghanistan somewhere close to 20 times—since the beginning.

In fact, I was on the first congressional delegation to go in January after the invasion. I have tried to pay attention to what is going on there. And one point is that the Afghan people have struggled and fought with us side by side. They have suffered greatly. I don't think it is right to say they are unappreciative. I think every day they have been suffering casualties. They have been fighting with our soldiers—in fact, in some cases, saving and helping our soldiers survive on the field.

Second, essentially, the provision allows the President to make the decision. In fact, he can waive all the provisions we built in by simply declaring that it is in the national security interests of the United States and communicating that to the respective leaders in the House and the Senate. That is something that is almost pro forma. So the notion that this seriously hampers his ability is misplaced.

What it does, though, is signal that we have to be very careful in recognizing all of the equities that are involved in Afghanistan. The fact is that there are numerous terrorist groups there, and we have to maintain a counterterrorism presence; the fact that, as I indicated before, the Government of Afghanistan, the Afghan people, in many cases, have suffered more than we have considering the onslaught of the Taliban and other forces. So, again, I don't think that reason measures up to the demands.

The National Defense Authorization Act has passed for 59 years. We need to ensure it will pass for 60 years by overriding the President's veto. The House, as I said, has already done that—322 to 87. I encourage my colleagues to show similar support for our military personnel and their families and override this veto.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, let me elaborate a little bit on something that my good friend from Rhode Island said about China.

I think it is very, very significant that we realize that this is the toughest bill on China that has ever been

passed. That didn't come just from me; that came from the American Enterprise Institute, which has all the credibility in the world. They talk about the serious things that are going on, and they actually said this bill has the most substantial and consequential China-related provisions since—in, probably, history.

That is significant because all of us remember—I know that Senator REED and I have both spent time in the South China Sea, the seven islands that they are doing right now. China—it is illegal, but they have taken over—no, they have created seven islands in the South China Sea. When you go down there, it looks as if, on those islands, they are preparing for World War III. A lot of our allies in that area are very much concerned because they are making a lot more noise than we are, and they are demonstrating very clearly some of the things that they do that we haven't done. Hypersonics is an example. That is a state-of-the-art thing that we do in modernizing our military equipment and abilities. It has been very successful, but they are still ahead of us, so we are in catchup mode.

I would say this: When you go and you look and you see the buildups that they have—I can remember—it wasn't long ago that every time China got involved in any kind of an effort, they did it from their own city limits there. Now they are all over Djibouti, Tanzania, and all around the world.

We made this bill to establish the Pacific Deterrence Initiative. That is \$2.2 billion for foreign posture to put ourselves in the position where we are going to pass, with this bill—we will pass China, and then we will be shifting the supply chains away from China—semiconductors and printed circuit boards, the pharmaceuticals—stimulating the U.S. economy, protecting weapons systems and our troops, and bringing China's malign national security activities into light to make sure everybody knows what they are doing there.

We have a new report in this bill on the true China defense security spending, new assessments of China's industrial base, new list of Chinese companies operating in the United States and making it more difficult for them to do that. It is all in this bill. There is a new report on the fishing fleets they have out there. It extends the successful China Military Power Report, supports Taiwan and a new plan against—that is better than anything we have ever done before.

Yesterday, I put this into the record—all the things that we are doing just concentrating on the threat that is posed to the United States from the country of China. It is all in this bill. So this is something we have taken great pride in because we recognize the threat that is posed to our country from the Chinese.

This is a good bill. It is one that deserves overwhelming support. I will say

one more time that a lot of work went into this from both sides of the aisle. We were in agreement on it with huge margins of support in both Chambers of the House and the Senate. We will have a chance to move procedurally toward that and make that a reality before the end of the week.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

QUORUM CALL

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll, and the following Senators entered the Chamber and answered to their names:

[Quorum No. 5 Leg.]

Alexander	Grassley	Portman
Barrasso	Hassan	Reed
Bennet	Heinrich	Risch
Blumenthal	Hoeven	Roberts
Blunt	Hyde-Smith	Romney
Boozman	Inhofe	Rounds
Braun	Johnson	Sasse
Burr	Kelly	Schatz
Capito	Kennedy	Schumer
Cardin	Leahy	Scott (FL)
Collins	Lee	Shaheen
Cornyn	Manchin	Shelby
Duckworth	Markey	Sullivan
Durbin	McConnell	Tillis
Enzi	Moran	Toomey
Ernst	Murkowski	Wicker
Feinstein	Paul	Young
Fischer	Peters	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOZMAN). A quorum is present. The majority leader.

WILLIAM M. (MAC) THORNBERRY NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021—VETO—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask that the Chair lay before the Senate the veto message on H.R. 6395, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Georgia (Mrs. LOEFFLER), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Alabama (Mr. JONES) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 80, nays 12, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 290 Leg.]

YEAS—80

Alexander	Feinstein	Reed
Baldwin	Fischer	Risch
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Roberts
Bennet	Grassley	Romney
Blumenthal	Harris	Rosen
Blunt	Hassan	Rounds
Booker	Heinrich	Sasse
Boozman	Hirono	Schatz
Brown	Hoeven	Schumer
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Cantwell	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Capito	Johnson	Shaheen
Cardin	Kaine	Shelby
Carper	Kelly	Sinema
Casey	King	Smith
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Lankford	Sullivan
Coons	Leahy	Tester
Cornyn	Manchin	Thune
Cortez Masto	McConnell	Tillis
Cramer	Menendez	Toomey
Crapo	Moran	Udall
Daines	Murkowski	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murray	Wicker
Enzi	Peters	Young
Ernst	Portman	

NAYS—12

Braun	Lee	Sanders
Cruz	Markey	Van Hollen
Hawley	Merkley	Warren
Kennedy	Paul	Wyden

NOT VOTING—8

Blackburn	Graham	Perdue
Cotton	Jones	Rubio
Gardner	Loeffler	

The motion was agreed to.

WILLIAM M. (MAC) THORNBERRY NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021—VETO

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Veto message to H.R. 6395, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2021 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Shall the bill pass, the objections of the President of the United States to the contrary notwithstanding? The question is debatable.

The majority leader is recognized.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the veto message on H.R. 6395, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2021 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, James M. Inhofe, Todd Young, John Cornyn, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Mike Braun, Deb Fischer, John Barrasso, Roger F. Wicker, Richard