

As others here on the floor have noted, the bill would provide a payment to a family of five making up to \$350,000. A family of five making \$250,000 would receive a \$5,000 benefit. Just to put that in perspective, that is more than was paid to a middle-class family of five under the CARES Act that we passed back in March. In addition, the bill would add an additional \$463 billion—nearly half a trillion dollars—to the annual debt.

Again, it is all money we have to borrow. All of this is money we have to borrow, and that is more than the first two economic impact payments combined. Put that in perspective, and think of other ways you could use that amount of money. The truth is that those types of sums could potentially be spent in many more targeted ways, but our colleagues on the Democratic side don't even want to debate some of those alternatives.

Allowing small businesses a second draw from the Paycheck Protection Program would cost, approximately, \$285 billion. For the cost of the CASH Act, we could do another round of assistance to help small businesses keep their employees on the payrolls and still have almost \$200 billion left over. The expanded unemployment benefits—signed into law last week—will cost approximately \$120 billion for 11 additional weeks. That means, for the same cost as this proposal, we could provide an additional 40 weeks—10 months—of enhanced unemployment insurance benefits to those who have lost their jobs.

This is simply not targeted relief for the people who need it the most, and those who say that we should just vote on this flawed House bill conveniently leave out the fact that they do not want us to amend it to make it better in order to deliver more assistance to the people who are hurting the most.

Again, I will just point out one last time that it has been less than a week, really, since the Senate voted and the President signed into law a proposal negotiated, literally, over months. Every fine point of that proposal was negotiated, and it was signed into law to provide targeted, fiscally responsible assistance to the people of this country who need it the most. This proposal is a shotgun approach, where a rifle makes a lot more sense.

If you really want to help people who need this the most, at a time when we are running a \$26 trillion debt and are borrowing every penny that we are making available to do this, we ought to sit down and figure out how to do it in the most efficient, effective, targeted way possible. This, absolutely, does not do that. When you have a family who is making \$350,000 a year in this country getting up to thousands of dollars of payments and a family making \$250,000 a year in this country getting, under this proposal, a \$5,000 check, I would argue that it is not targeted, that it is not fiscally responsible, that it is not efficient, and that

it is not an effective way to spend the American taxpayers' dollars.

Let's help the people who need it the most. We just passed and signed into law a proposal that does that. I think many of us on this side of the aisle are willing to look at other ideas and things that we could do that would help these people more, but this is certainly not it, so I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The majority—excuse me. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Someday soon.

(Laughter.)

Mr. President, the only thing I would say, through the Chair, to my friend from South Dakota is that the many proposals he proposed as alternatives to our proposal are those to which the Republican majority objected when we had our negotiations on the CARES bill. We believe this can be in addition to the expansion of unemployment insurance and other things. Given the state of the economy, that is what is needed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— H.R. 9051 AND S. 5085

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, let me say to my friend, Senator THUNE, that I certainly concur with you as to what a pleasure it is to be spending New Year's Day with you and our colleagues. It is exactly what I, I know, and every other Member here wanted to do, but here we are because we have to be here. We are here because, back home in my State and all over this country, millions and millions of families are struggling to put food on the table. They are struggling to pay their rent. They are struggling to come up with the money they need to go to the doctor.

This hits me, in a sense, in a personal way. The other day, I received a letter from a colleague of mine in Burlington, VT, where I live—the largest city in the State of Vermont, all of 40,000 people. He wrote to me, reporting on a food drive in Burlington, VT, where I live:

Over 30 volunteers showed up to the Champlain School to help bag groceries and to hand them out to those who came out. Unfortunately, there was not nearly enough donated food to provide a bag to everyone who showed up despite us planning on an increased need. The line of cars filled the parking lot, wrapped around the school, and went out onto the main road for half a mile. This represented a major up-tick for the October event that we were involved in.

This was in Burlington, VT, with hundreds of cars lining up for emergency food and the volunteers not having enough food to distribute. They had to say to the families who were trying to feed their kids: Sorry. We do not have enough food.

So what we are doing today is very simple, and that is that Senator

THUNE, Senator MCCONNELL, and others have raised objection to the House-passed bill. In the U.S. Senate, when we have differences of opinion, what we should be doing is debating that bill. So all that Senator SCHUMER is asking and all that I am asking is simple: Bring the bill to the floor. We are not even asking you to vote for it. Bring the bill to the floor. On top of everything else, we need 60 votes to pass it—60 votes. Can we get 60 votes? I don't know. I think virtually all of the 48 Democrats will vote for it.

It means, Senator THUNE, that we need 12 Republicans. I gather we have one right here who indicated he would vote for it, and five or six others have been public about saying they will vote for it. Will we get the rest? I don't know. You don't know. What is the problem with giving Members of the U.S. Senate the opportunity to vote on the legislation? When we have that debate, you can come up and raise all of your objections, and we can debate it.

Now, I heard Senator THUNE and Senator MCCONNELL before him talk about this bill being socialism for the rich, which I have to tell you I find somewhat hysterical because that is an issue I have been talking about for many, many years. I am very delighted that my conservative Republican friends now recognize that we do have socialism for the rich. To paraphrase Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., he said we live in a society where we have socialism for the rich and rugged individualism for the poor. King was right.

Despite what my Republican colleagues are saying, the truth is that, according to the Tax Policy Center, the top 5 percent of Americans—the wealthiest people in our country—would receive less than 1 percent of the benefits of these direct payments—less than 1 percent. It doesn't sound, to me, like too much socialism for the rich.

While we are on the subject of socialism for the rich, which my Republican friends have suddenly become very concerned about, let me talk about the Trump tax proposal that was pushed very hard by Senator MCCONNELL and the Republican leadership and that, I think, every Republican voted for. Do you want to talk about socialism for the rich? It is not the bill that puts \$2,000 into working-class hands all over this country. That isn't socialism for the rich. This is socialism for the rich. In that bill, Amazon—oh, by the way, I must say this, if I may: We were quoting the liberal Washington Post, owned by Jeff Bezos—the wealthiest guy in the world. So here is Jeff Bezos' company, Amazon, and they received a tax rebate. They paid nothing in 2018 in Federal taxes. That is a corrupt tax system to begin with, but then, on top of that, they received \$129 million as a tax rebate.

That, Senator THUNE, is socialism for the rich. In fact, this particular company is owned by the richest guy in the world, and you gave him a \$129 million rebate, but it is not just Amazon.

Delta Air Lines also paid nothing in Federal taxes in 2018; yet they received a \$187 million rebate from that particular bill. Chevron, in helping to destroy our planet with their carbon emissions, received \$181 million in a rebate.

That, my friends, is what socialism for the rich is about. Socialism for the rich is not—in the midst of this terrible pandemic—putting \$2,000 checks into the hands of working families.

The truth of the matter is, as a result of this pandemic, we are living through the worst and most difficult economic period since the Great Depression. Tens of millions of families are facing eviction all over this country—in the wealthiest Nation on Earth. Moms are struggling to feed their kids, keep the electricity on, and be able to go to the doctor.

Now, I hear from my Republican friends that the economy is doing better, but I would like to just read to them a few of the stories that I have received in my office. We asked people a simple question: How are you doing out there, and what is going on in your lives? We received many, many thousands of responses from people in every State in this country. I will read a few just to bring some dose of reality here to the U.S. Senate, which often, in the midst of all of the campaign contributions coming in from the rich, does not know what is going on in the real world.

Here is the real world.

A gentleman in Texas wrote:

\$2,000 is the difference between keeping our apartment and being evicted.

A mother in Virginia wrote:

\$2,000 means I can afford to feed my three kids.

Now, maybe we should give her a long lecture on macroeconomics and how well the stock market is doing, but all she is worried about is feeding her three children.

A woman in Wisconsin wrote:

\$2,000 would mean not having to choose between rent and groceries and not having to ration my partner's meds.

A woman in Nevada wrote:

[It means] paying my rent and getting life-saving treatment because I can't afford the \$50 co-pay through my work insurance just to see my neurologist right now.

A father in Florida wrote:

It would mean I could pay my bills. My electricity and phone are about to get shut off. I didn't have money for my son on Christmas, and I won't have money for his birthday on January 2.

A father in New Jersey wrote:

It would mean I could pay off credit card debt accumulated during this pandemic, feed my children, and pay my bills.

A parent in Massachusetts wrote:

It would mean that I could pay my rent and electricity and put food on the table.

A woman in Missouri wrote:

It would mean getting out of crushing debt. It would mean survival without daily fear.

Someone in Texas wrote:

It would mean I could actually put food in the fridge.

A man in Maryland wrote:

It would mean I don't have to beg or go without food, shelter, and medicine. It would mean my family stays warm another couple of months and my dad gets proper treatment.

Mr. DURBIN. Would the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. SANDERS. I would.

Mr. DURBIN. I would like to ask a question of the Senator from Vermont through the Chair.

I have listened to the Republican analysis of the bill, which you and Senator SCHUMER are asking for a vote on. It is a bill which passed the House and would give \$2,000, basically, in allotments or payments to families across America, with certain income restrictions.

And I have heard from the other side of the aisle, repeatedly, that this is socialism for the rich, that this is fundamentally unfair, and that we should do things in a targeted way. That is the argument that is made over and over again.

And reference has been made repeatedly to the COVID-19 bill that passed last week with 92 votes, including many of the Republicans—virtually all of them. Not all of them but virtually all of them.

And so that bill, if I remember correctly, had a \$600 payment included in the bill, and I asked my staff: Would you please analyze the formula for distributing the \$600 and compare to it the formula for the \$2,000, which is part of our bill.

And lo and behold, they discovered it is the same formula. So if there is some fundamental, moral injustice in the distribution of these funds, then I am afraid all but six of the Republicans are guilty of the same immorality because they all voted for that formula last week when it was \$600 and now are scandalized by the notion that the same formula they voted for would be used for a \$2,000 payment.

I am sure I have missed something in the translation here. I would like to ask the Senator from Vermont to explain this faux outrage from the Republican side of the aisle.

Mr. SANDERS. Well, I think my friend from Illinois missed nothing in the translation. He is exactly right.

But I also—

Mr. THUNE. The Senator from Illinois makes a good point.

Would the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. SANDERS. Yes.

Mr. THUNE. So if the same formula is used, and you are increasing the amount by \$1,400 per person—so you are going from, basically, for a family of four, what would be a \$2,400 payment to an \$3,800 payment, and you phase that down using the same formula, does the Senator from Illinois understand the math and why that skews toward people who make a lot more money than they would under the other formula?

Mr. DURBIN. If the question is directed toward me, I will answer it.

Mr. THUNE. Well, I just think that you are making a point in the statement which is not accurate because you are saying the formula is the same. The formula is the same, but the inputs change, and so the way it ramps down means that somebody who makes \$350,000 gets a payment under the Sanders-Hawley proposal that they wouldn't—but they wouldn't—no, and it phases out a lot sooner, as you know.

So let's be clear about how that formula works. You are misrepresenting the way that formula works.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont has the floor.

Mr. SANDERS. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

I would ask my friend from South Dakota: Do you disagree with the Tax Policy Center, which says that the top 5 percent of Americans—the wealthiest people in our country—would receive less than 1 percent of the total benefits being disbursed?

Mr. THUNE. I have not seen the Tax Policy Center, but I know math, and I know as a basic principle that when you stick bigger numbers in there and you are using the same formula to phase something out, you are going to make it available to people who make a lot more money. That is a mathematical fact.

And what you are saying, when you talk about the same formula, it skews entirely different in the income scale, and you know that.

And all I am saying is don't misrepresent the facts.

Mr. SANDERS. And all that I am saying is that, according to a very reputable tax center organization—people who do this for a living—less than 1 percent of the benefits of the entire program go to the wealthiest people in this country.

So when you are talking about trying to say: Oh my God, all of this money is going to the rich, that ain't really true.

But I would also ask my friend: When did you suddenly become a religious adherent about concerns of socialism for the rich, when you gave 83 percent of the benefits for the rich and large corporations in the tax bill that you supported? Where was your concern about socialism for the rich when Amazon—owned by the richest guy in the world—got a \$129 million tax rebate? I didn't hear much about socialism for the rich during that debate.

Mr. THUNE. Will the Senator from Vermont allow me to respond to that question?

Mr. SANDERS. Yes.

Mr. THUNE. Well, very simply, what you are suggesting—what you are saying here is that the owner of the Washington Post, who said this is really bad policy and shouldn't be done in this way at the end of this year—is that what you are saying? That because he is a wealthy person, that somehow that is why he is making that statement?

Mr. SANDERS. The wealthiest in the world.

Mr. THUNE. I think the Washington Post editorial board, in most cases, has been very sympathetic to the argument of the Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. That is factually inaccurate.

Mr. THUNE. In fact, they take a liberal point of view on almost every issue.

My point, very simply, is that we have a limited amount of resources. This is borrowed money, as the Senator from Vermont knows. And when we spent months—literally months—and you ask: Why can't you guys just come down here, why can't you just come down here and debate this, we tried for months to get the Democrats down here to debate a bill. We put a bill on the floor in September, we put a bill on the floor in October, a coronavirus relief bill, and you guys blocked it. You didn't even want to talk about it. You didn't want to have an opportunity to amend it.

We have been working at this for months, and we finally arrived, after months, at a proposal that helps people who need it the most, including nutrition assistance, including rental assistance, and including checks to people—

Mr. SANDERS. Reclaiming my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. All that I am saying—all that I am saying—this is a great debate, John. We should have this debate, and in 2 minutes—in 2 minutes, John, I am going to give you the opportunity to say you support what we are doing, and then we will have this debate. That is your opportunity.

But I want to get back—the Senator from South Dakota did not answer the question that it was not, apparently, a huge concern about socialism for the rich in the bill that they supported or worried about the debt that would incur.

So I see, if I may say so, a bit of hypocrisy here. Senator THUNE and the Republican leadership want to debate this issue, and so do I. I think it is a great debate—great debate.

Now, as everybody knows, Senator MCCONNELL proposed an idea. I don't agree with it, but it is an idea that is worthy of debate and discussion, and he said: Let's combine three elements together. Let's incorporate the bill passed in the House by two-thirds of the House, including 44 Republicans; let's add to that the repeal of section 230 of the Telecommunications Act; and let's also add to that, at President Trump's request, an issue about voter integrity, et cetera, et cetera.

OK. That is what Senator MCCONNELL proposed.

And in one moment, I am going to bring—because I know Republicans think I don't do much for them and I am not concerned about them—but, Senator THUNE, I am going to bring your bill to the floor. Show you what a nice guy I am. New year, I am going to

bring Senator MCCONNELL's bill right to the floor and give you an opportunity to vote for it.

All that I am asking, while I bring Senator MCCONNELL's Republican bill to the floor, we are going to bring the bill that passed the House, with 44 Republicans, to the floor as well.

We will have two votes: One vote on Senator MCCONNELL's bill, which needs 60 votes to pass; one vote on the House bill, 60 votes to pass. That is it.

So it is hard for me to imagine how Senator THUNE will object to us bringing forward the Republican bill.

Here it goes. This is the legalese that I need to say and I am going to bring it forth and I am sure that Senator THUNE will support me in my effort.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that if cloture is invoked on the veto message on H.R. 6395, National Defense Authorization Act, that notwithstanding rule XXII, at 3 p.m. today—short period of time—3 p.m. today, Friday, January 1, the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 645, H.R. 9051, to provide a \$2,000 direct payment to the working class; that the bill be considered read a third time and the Senate vote on passage of the bill; and that if passed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; further, that following the vote on H.R. 9051, the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 644, S. 5085; that the bill be considered read a third time; that there be 1 hour of debate on the bill, equally divided and controlled by myself or my designee and Senator MCCONNELL or his designee; that following the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote on passage of the bill; and that if passed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, I want to say that I can't, for the life of me, figure out why it is so difficult to get a vote on the bills that Senator SANDERS has just referenced, when, by my count, the President of the United States, the Speaker of the House, a large majority of the House of Representatives, and I think a supermajority of this body are all in favor—all in favor—of \$2,000 COVID relief payments to working Americans.

Now, we have had some back-and-forth on the floor today about how we got to the level of \$2,000. We all know how we got to that level. The President of the United States said that is the level he supported. The number originates with him. This is the number that he has asked for and the House adopted it and a majority of Senators have said already publicly that they support it.

And yet we can't seem to even get a vote on it. We can't even seem to have debate on it.

I mean, with all due respect, this doesn't seem, to me, to be a Republicans versus Democrats issue; this seems to be the Senate versus the United States of America and I just don't understand it and I am willing to bet—I am willing to bet that the American people don't understand it either.

I mean, here we are, in the throes of the worst pandemic in a century, that working people have borne the brunt of, and all that we are asking is that those working people be first in line for relief and that they be given meaningful relief that is only approximately commensurate with the hardships that they and their families have borne.

Now, I hear a lot of talk about how we can't afford it. I do notice, however, that we seem to be able to afford all kinds of other stuff. We can afford to send lots of money to other governments. We can afford to send all kinds of tax breaks and bailouts to big corporations. We can afford to spend enormous sums of money on pork—hundreds of billions of dollars in that last bill on pork—hundreds of billions. But we can't seem to find the money for relief for working people that the President and the House and the Senate all support, and yet we can't seem to get it onto the floor.

Let me just share three stories that I have heard just this week alone—this week alone—from my home State, from Missouri.

Danielle, from St. Louis County, called my office. She said her utilities are about to be shut off. She is desperate for help. She said a \$2,000 payment would go a long way to help keep the lights on and her house warm.

I heard from a mother in Southeast Missouri. That is the bootheel of my State. She wrote that her son had lost pay because of his company's cutting back hours because of COVID and that he himself had contracted the virus and so he had to be home and he was missing work, missing shifts. His family can't make it paycheck to paycheck. Her daughter-in-law is donating plasma in order to help earn some extra grocery money—donating plasma in order to get some money to pay for groceries to feed their family.

Richard from St. Louis wrote to me and said any extra help that he could get would go directly to paying his rent and his utilities. He had a job that he lost, in the retail business, the retail sector, and he is desperately struggling.

I would state to the Presiding Officer that these people are not ne'er-dowells. These are working people. These are strong people. These are proud people. And all they ask for, as I have said many times on this floor before, is a chance to get back on their feet and to be able to provide for their families. And I can't for the life of me understand why we cannot get so much as a vote on these bills.

For that reason, Mr. President, I do not object. In fact, I enthusiastically support the measures that Senator

SANDERS is trying to bring to the floor, and I would vote for both if we were given the opportunity.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I know Senator TOOMEY is delayed coming to the floor, and on his behalf, I will object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the veto message on H.R. 6395, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Veto message, a bill (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 Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, these are the last few words that Senator REED and I will say before the vote, and I want to mention something that I haven't talked about as much as I probably should have.

First of all, the cooperation and working with Senator REED and his staff—this is a long enduring thing. It is hard for people to believe, but we are actually starting on next year's bill now. We have already started.

I thought I would mention something that hasn't been talked about as much as it should have been talked about since we have suffered arguably the worst cyber attack in American history. This is the most significant piece of cyber legislation in American history. It contains 27 of our Cyberspace Solarium Commission recommendations. All 27 are in this NDAA, to include provisions that are directly relevant to the SolarWinds attack that would have allowed us to get ahead of this—most notably by allowing decisive cyber security measures in DHS to begin hunting for threats on dot-gov networks.

We have other recommendations to enhance our cyber resilience for our nuclear command and control systems in this NDAA. Establishing a national cyber director is in the NDAA, strengthening the size and elevating

his leadership, giving him more resources. I fear that the SolarWinds attack is a harbinger of things to come. I am very proud of the work our Commission has done, and the provisions are absolutely critical.

The final thing I would say is that this is arguably the most serious piece of legislation when it comes to deterring China that we have had in decades, if not ever, including provisions such as the Pacific Deterrence Initiative. This is kind of a followup to last year's European Deterrence Initiative, where we are concentrating more on Russia, but this is specific to China.

That is what the whole division of this bill is about—to enhance our presence and our deterrence posture in the INDOPACOM provisions for protecting against Chinese industrial espionage, more transparency for Chinese military companies, reporting on Chinese United Front Work Department in the United States and abroad, and the list goes on and on. It is a very serious piece of legislation when it comes to deterring China. That is one of the things we are concerned about. China is our No. 1 threat and will be for perhaps, regrettably, decades to come. So this bill brings us along to where we should be.

Once again, I want to say thanks for the effort that has gone into this bill, the weekends, the hard work. LIZ CHENEY and John Bonsell, I have to say, along with JACK REED—they probably worked more weekends than they have not worked weekends. So it has been a real effort.

It is the most important and significant piece of legislation that we will pass, and this next vote is a very critical vote.

I will yield to Senator REED for any comments he would like to make about this. Keep in mind that this is a real—people talk about how the Democrats and Republicans don't do things together. This has been an example of what can happen in government.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, let me first begin by commending the chairman for his extraordinary efforts. He led this process, let there be no mistake about it. He rose to the challenges. This is the most challenging NDAA for so many different reasons—because of the pandemic, the need for social distancing in terms of hearings, the whole scope of challenges that have arisen in the past few months—and the chairman has done a remarkable job.

Let me start by saying that this is essential for our national security. This bill is not optional. If we want to continue to maintain our security for the United States, we have to pass this legislation. It is that simple.

What does it do? Well, it does things that we have to do every year. One, it provides for the support of our service men and women. I know we are all celebrating New Year's Day here. It is kind of disconcerting to be working

when everyone else is partying, but if you feel a little bit put upon, think about the soldiers in forward operating bases in Afghanistan who are facing danger. Think about the ballistic submariners protecting the United States. Think about the airmen who flew the B-52 bombers. Think about them and their families, and I think you will appreciate more what they do every day and what we do once in a while.

One of the issues that the chairman spoke about is how cyber security is essential. We based our efforts on an insightful report by the Cyber Solarium Commission, headed by Senator ANGUS KING and Congressman MIKE GALLAGHER.

Every day, we are learning more about the Russian penetration of our whole national security apparatus and civilian companies. Just today, Microsoft announced that they have been deeply penetrated by the Russian intrusion, and I suspect it is very serious.

This legislation was done, remarkably, before we knew of such an intrusion and responds specifically to this type of cyber breach on the United States. It gives the Department of Homeland Security the authority to audit other agencies in terms of their cyber security and take other steps to hunt for threats. It is just the first step, but if we don't take this step, we will be further behind.

Now, the other thing I want to point out, too, is echoing what the chairman said about the Pacific Deterrence Initiative. We have identified \$2 billion that can be used—and we will focus upon how it is used—to create a new strategy. This is really the first time that we have stepped back and said: Let's set up a strategic posture that recognizes the true threats that China is now presenting to us in the Pacific. This is the first time we have done this.

What it does is it builds on our close relationships with key allies—Australia, Japan, South Korea. It does that by a series of steps—first, through command post exercises where we test our communications; second, real exercises. With these steps, we are building to a point where large-scale joint exercises involving not only our key allies but other partners become possible. That will set us up for the ability to deter China. When they see all of the nations of the Pacific that have worked with us closely and that are prepared to work with us, that will be a great deterrence. That is the goal of this effort. So any suggestion that China is happy about this bill is completely baseless.

Then finally, again, like the chairman, I must thank the staff, John Bonsell and Elizabeth King and the staff and all the Members. Again, my congratulations to the chairman for his great work.

I urge passage. Again, I think this is essential. As I said before, there are thousands of soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and coastguardsmen who are