

With the news of her election, it brought tears of happiness, and they flowed freely.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Mary Gray—I am sorry—Madam President. Actually, that has a special ring, President Hardy.

Mary Gray, keep working hard. Know that your Congressman is praying for your successful presidency and for your school. Your story is part of the American story.

Mr. Speaker, Mary Gray's community, her parents, and I are incredibly proud of her.

WARNING TO SCARLETT WILSON

(Ms. MACE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MACE. Mr. Speaker, when solicitors don't prosecute crimes, when judges and rogue magistrates let thugs out on the streets of America, cases like Iryna Zarutska happen, murders like Iryna Zarutska happen.

I want to pay special attention to a certain solicitor in South Carolina who is not doing her job, who is lying to South Carolinians, and that is Solicitor Scarlett Wilson of the Ninth Judicial Circuit.

Scarlett, I want you to know that I am watching. When you leak evidence, when you politicize rape, when you leak evidence of rape victims, and when you leak evidence of victims who are being stalked or who have been beaten, South Carolina is watching. I am watching. If you don't do your job to protect South Carolinians, there will be consequences.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF HUGH NIE

(Ms. ELFRETH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ELFRETH. Mr. Speaker, on May 30, Severna Park and Maryland's Third Congressional District lost one of our youngest members of our community, Hugh Nie. Hugh was not even 18 months old when he died of sudden, unexplained death in childhood, or SUDC.

Hugh's parents, Eddie and Jessica, who are here today, described him as joy personified. He loved going to the park, circle time at the library, and getting booped in the nose at bath time.

With his loved ones, Hugh read over 1,000 books and was a dear friend to our public library system. In Hugh's memory, our community is now building Hugh's Corner at the Severna Park Library.

Mr. Speaker, there are approximately 400 cases of SUDC in the U.S. every year. Without a known cause or form of prevention, the NIH research conducted on SUDC is critical and could be lifesaving.

I urge my colleagues to join in supporting full funding for the NIH's life-saving work so that not another family has to experience what the Nies have endured.

RECOGNIZING AMERICORPS SENIORS FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 60th anniversary of the AmeriCorps Seniors Foster Grandparent Program.

This is one of the oldest, most impactful senior service programs in the country. Since 1965, foster grandparents, who are volunteers aged 55 and older, have provided consistent support, mentorship, and care to children and youth.

Through this intergenerational service, they help young people thrive while strengthening communities.

Foster grandparents volunteer their time to help children through tutoring, mentoring, and sometimes providing classroom support to teachers. These grandparents have the ability to help young people in need learn independence, self-confidence, and social skills.

Mr. Speaker, many of us have fond memories of our own grandparents, and I am glad that for the past 60 years the foster grandparent program has helped connect seniors with young people to form these wonderful relationships.

HONORING SARAH KATZ

(Mr. MENENDEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of Sarah Katz, an empathetic, driven, and compassionate young woman, whose life was tragically cut short 3 years ago today.

A native of Jersey City and graduate of Elisabeth Irwin High School in New York, Sarah devoted her life to helping others, working with the American Heart Association and Children's Hospital of Philadelphia to raise awareness about heart health and the importance of CPR.

Sarah was admired by so many in our community, especially her classmates and mentors at the University of Pennsylvania.

Above all else, she was deeply loved by her family, her parents, Jill and Michael, and her sister, Dana. Amid unimaginable grief, her family turned to action, honoring Sarah's life by advocating for change.

It has been a privilege to join them in this effort, introducing the Sarah Katz Caffeine Safety Act to save lives and prevent more families from having to endure the pain that the Katz family has felt. Every step of the way, their love for Sarah has been at the forefront of their advocacy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join in this important effort and help drive change that will save lives. May Sarah's memory always be a blessing.

HONORING SENATOR FRED HARRIS

(Ms. STANSBURY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a grateful but sad heart to honor the life of U.S. Senator Fred Harris, a tireless champion for justice, democracy, and the people of New Mexico and Oklahoma.

Senator Harris fought for Native American and civil rights, returned sacred lands to our Tribes, and helped advance the Great Society programs that have lifted millions out of poverty.

His impact goes far beyond his time in the Senate. He created the Fred Harris fellowship that has brought hundreds of UNM students to Washington, D.C., to give them firsthand experience in public service. He was a mentor, an educator, a dear friend, and a hero to so many in our State and across the Nation.

While we grieve his passing, his legacy will live on in the countless people whose lives he has touched and who continue to fight for justice he dedicated his life to and the legacy this United States leaves behind.

□ 1220

STREAMLINING PROCUREMENT FOR EFFECTIVE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY AND NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 682 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 3838.

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

□ 1219

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3838) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2026 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, with Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Tuesday, September 9, 2025, amendments en bloc No. 4 printed in part A of House Report 119-255 offered by the gentleman from

Alabama (Mr. ROGERS) had been disposed of.

AMENDMENT NO. 13 OFFERED BY MR. NORMAN

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 13 printed in part A of House Report 199-255.

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of subtitle H of title V add the following new section:

SEC. 5. PROHIBITIONS ON PROVISION OF GENDER TRANSITION SERVICES THROUGH AN EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY MEMBER PROGRAM OF THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—No gender transition procedures, including surgery or medication, may be provided to a minor dependent child through an EFMP.

(b) REFERRALS.—No referral for procedures described in subsection (a) may be provided to a minor dependent child through an EFMP.

(c) REASSIGNMENT.—No change of duty station may be approved through an EFMP for the purpose of providing a minor dependent child with access to procedures described in subsection (a).

(d) EFMP DEFINED.—In this section, the term “EFMP” means the program referred to as the Exceptional Family Member Program under section 1781c(d)(4)(I) of title 10, United States Code.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 682, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. NORMAN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Chair, my amendment prohibits provisions of gender transition procedures including surgery or medication through the Exceptional Family Member Program.

The Exceptional Family Member Program provides resources to military families with special needs. This program is designed for military spouses, children, or other dependent family members who require ongoing medical or educational services, such as individuals with asthma, autism, chronic respiratory illnesses, intellectual disabilities, and much more.

Under the Biden administration, the Air Force suggested using the Exceptional Family Member Program for families who want to help their child transition. Democrats also introduced a bill to expand this program to include transgender dependence and specifically lists gender dysphoria as a qualifying medical need to be included in the program.

My amendment ensures that we reserve this valuable program for its original intent to help families with special needs by prohibiting the use of the program for the provision or referral for gender transition procedures such as gender surgery or medication.

The Exceptional Family Member Program, otherwise known as EFMP, should be used fully to support families with special needs and chronic ill-

nesses, not for gender transition procedures, as has been mentioned.

The program, as it was intended, specifically lists certain things for identifying families with special needs which includes the following: potentially life-threatening or chronic conditions, current or chronic mental health conditions, asthma or other respiratory-related diagnoses with chronic recurring symptoms, intellectual or developmental delays, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, chronic conditions that require adaptive equipment which assistive technology devices, or environmental or architectural considerations.

Allowing gender transitioning procedures through the EFMP goes against the very intention the program was designed for. It provides valuable resources for families who otherwise would not have the funds to do so. Gender transitioning is not covered under any of the criteria for identifying individuals eligible for the EFMP.

Mr. Chair, I ask for adoption of this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Chair, there are going to be five amendments now that are all targeting the transgender community. I want to make sure we understand a couple of really sort of broad themes and why these amendments are so problematic.

Number one is the transgender community has been targeted and discriminated against aggressively. If my colleagues troll through rightwing radio or online messaging, they are called freaks and weirdos. They are dehumanized on a very consistent basis in a way that has led to violence and discrimination against the transgender community.

On all five of these amendments—just put a little exclamation point on that—it encourages the dehumanization of transgender people in a way that is very, very dangerous. That is number one.

Number two is transgender people exist. That is just a fact. Gender dysphoria is a medical fact. No serious medical person disagrees on that point. It is not even debatable. There are a couple of things that are debatable.

What do we do about it? What treatments are appropriate, given the set of circumstances? Personally, I think it is wide open to have that conversation. What should the medical profession do?

Second, when there is a transgender woman or a transgender man, how does that work in terms of sports and a wide variety of different things with women's sports or men's sports? We can have a conversation about how to fit that in.

Acting like transgender people don't exist further contributes to their dehu-

manization and the discrimination against them. None of these amendments before us today are even remotely necessary. They are simply an effort to take advantage of a culture war, partisan issue to drive a wedge into this bill. Does it belong here?

On this particular amendment, for a servicemember who has a child experiencing gender dysphoria, what this amendment says is that child doesn't actually exist. That is not really happening.

How is it going to make a servicemember feel when they are trying to take care of their child? I have met with children who went through gender dysphoria and who credit the treatment they received for absolutely saving their lives.

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

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

Mr. Chair, do they sometimes make mistakes?

I always like to say, I have had three hip surgeries including two total hip replacements. I probably didn't need any of them. It was probably a mistake. I don't see anybody on the floor talking about banning hip replacements because occasionally one is done wrong. That happens.

This decision should be made by doctors and patients. It should not be made by Congressmen and legislators. This is restricting healthcare that could be incredibly necessary for young people and also for other family members. It is bigoted, discriminatory, and unnecessary. I hope this body will turn it down.

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

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Chair, all I would add to that is we have got an obligation to the American people to keep this country safe and to support our finest military men who are willing to risk it all in defense of America.

My friend on the opposite side of the aisle mentions hip surgery. I think that is entirely different than a sex change operation. That doesn't say the person doesn't have it. With regard to the military and the funding, that is not where the money should come from.

How about telling that child who has asthma that he has no treatment? How about telling that child with a mental impairment there is no money to do it and that we have to put the money toward somebody who is not sure about what sex they are?

It is just not a priority in the military. The funding should not be set aside for that. There is a set amount of dollars that have to go toward this valuable appropriations process, and it is not to determine what somebody's sex is. This needs to be decided in other places with their own money and at other times.

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

□ 1230

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, may I inquire as to the time remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Washington has 2½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from South Carolina has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I yield myself 1 minute for three quick points.

Number one, this does not restrict medical treatment for anybody else. It has nothing to do with this whatsoever.

Second of all, this doesn't just eliminate sex-change operations. This very specifically eliminates any treatment for gender dysphoria. A lot of times, that is mental health treatment. That is not surgery, and that is not drugs. That is a conversation about that issue. It eliminates it for everybody.

Third, yes, we need to put our servicemembers in the best position to focus on their mission and the fight. If you are a servicemember overseas, Mr. Chair, stationed and fighting, and you have a child who is experiencing gender dysphoria and told that your child, who is in a very dangerous situation, cannot get the healthcare that they need, that is not going to help that servicemember be the best possible fighter they can be for this country.

We should not be denying healthcare to the family members of our servicemembers that they need, and that is what this amendment does.

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

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Chair, let me just put some numbers to this. Over the course of 5 years, the Pentagon spent \$15 million—\$15 million—in treating 1,892 transgender troops, including \$11.5 million for psychotherapy and \$3.1 million for surgeries, according to the Department of Defense.

The price tag for individual gender-affirming surgical procedures and other medical treatments can range from \$8,000 to \$100,000. To compare hip surgery to a sex-change operation, it is two different worlds and two different thoughts that we just have a complete difference of opinion.

I think if you take a survey of any of the troops, Mr. Chair, who are serving this country, the vast majority would say that transgender surgeries have no place in the military.

The public to be borne with that price tag is, to be honest with you, Mr. Chair, incomprehensible.

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Again, Mr. Chair, we are not talking about sex-change operations. This is just another example of the profound ignorance surrounding treatment for gender dysphoria. We are talking about any treatment.

Mr. Chair, I yield the balance of my time to the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. TOKUDA).

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

Let's be clear: The Exceptional Family Member Program does not pay for medical care. Its purpose is simple: to ensure that military families are stationed where the medical and educational services they need are available.

This amendment misrepresents the mission, and it undermines it.

We ask our servicemembers to sacrifice so much for this country, in many cases, even their lives. As a mother, I would never ask them to sacrifice their child's well-being. That is not just offensive, that is cruel, and it is inhumane.

Gender-affirming care is healthcare. Denying it sends a harmful message to military families with transgender children that their needs, their dignity, who they are, and their very lives do not matter.

In addition, when we harm their families and when we harm their children, we undermine the very readiness we are so focused on as a military, the very people whom we rely on to be on the front lines, defending this Nation every day.

Our servicemembers put everything on the line, and we should do the same for them. Vote "no" on this amendment.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. NORMAN).

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

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 14 OFFERED BY MS. MACE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 14 printed in part A of House Report 119-255.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

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

SEC. 7. PROHIBITION ON COVERAGE OF GENDER-RELATED MEDICAL TREATMENT UNDER TRICARE.

(a) TRICARE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 55 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1076f the following new section:

"§ 1076g. TRICARE program: prohibition on coverage and furnishment gender-related medical treatment

"(a) PROHIBITION.—Except as provided by subsection (b), medical care under section 1076 of this title with respect to members of the armed forces and dependents of such members does not include gender-related medical treatment, and the Secretary of Defense may not furnish any such treatment.

"(b) EXCEPTIONS.—The prohibition in subsection (a) shall not apply to medical treatment provided for purposes of treating—

"(1) a disorder of sex development, diagnosed by a physician after such physician has determined through genetic or biochemical testing that such minor does not have normal sex chromosome structure, sex steroid hormone production, or sex steroid hormone action;

"(2) irresolvably ambiguous biological sex characteristics of such minor, including the presence of—

"(A) 46 XX chromosomes with virilization;

"(B) 46 XY chromosomes with undervirilization; or

"(C) both ovarian and testicular tissue; or

"(3) an infection, injury, disease, or disorder caused or exacerbated by gender-related medical treatment.

"(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) The term 'female' means an individual who naturally has, had, will have, or would have, but for a developmental or genetic anomaly or historical accident, the reproductive system that at some point produces, transports, and utilizes eggs for fertilization.

"(2) The term 'gender'—

"(A) means—

"(i) males, females, or the natural differences between males and females, unless such term is otherwise specified or used alone (rather than with or as an adjective modifying other words); and

"(ii) is a synonym for sex; and

"(B) does not mean gender identity, experienced gender, gender expression, or gender roles.

"(3) The term 'gender-related medical treatment' means—

"(A) with respect to a female individual, medical treatments provided for purposes of addressing the perception of such individual that the gender or sex of such individual is not female, including—

"(i) surgical procedures, including—

"(I) vaginectomy;

"(II) hysterectomy;

"(III) oophorectomy;

"(IV) reconstruction of the urethra;

"(V) metoidioplasty;

"(VI) phalloplasty;

"(VII) salpingo-oophorectomy;

"(VIII) scrotoplasty;

"(IX) implantation of erection or testicular prostheses;

"(X) subcutaneous mastectomy;

"(XI) vocal cord surgery;

"(XII) pectoral implants; and

"(XIII) penile transplantation;

"(ii) exogenous doses of testosterone or other androgens; and

"(iii) puberty blockers, including—

"(I) GnRH agonists; and

"(II) synthetic drugs that suppress the production of estrogen and progesterone or delay or suppress pubertal development in female individuals; and

"(B) with respect to a male individual, medical treatments provided for purposes of addressing the perception of such individual that the gender or sex of such individual is not male, including—

"(i) surgical procedures, including—

"(I) penectomy;

"(II) orchiectomy;

"(III) vaginoplasty;

"(IV) clitoroplasty;

"(V) vulvoplasty;

"(VI) augmentation mammoplasty;

"(VII) facial feminization surgery;

"(VIII) vocal cord surgery;

"(IX) chondrolaryngoplasty;

"(X) gluteal augmentation; and

"(XI) uterine transplantation;

"(ii) exogenous doses of estrogen; and

"(iii) puberty blockers, including—

"(I) GnRH agonists; and

"(II) synthetic drugs that suppress the production of testosterone or delay or suppress pubertal development in male individuals.

“(4) The term ‘male’ means an individual who naturally has, had, will have, or would have, but for a developmental or genetic anomaly or historical accident, the reproductive system that at some point produces, transports, and utilizes sperm for fertilization.

“(5) The term ‘sex’ means the biological determination as to whether an individual is male or female.

“(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to entitle an individual to medical care under this chapter for which they are not otherwise entitled to under this chapter.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Such chapter is further amended as follows:

(1) In section 1077(b), by adding at the end the following:

“(4) Treatment prohibited under section 1076g of this title with respect to members of the armed forces and dependents of such members.”.

(2) In section 1079(a)(20), by striking “that could result in sterilization”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 682, the gentlewoman from South Carolina (Ms. MACE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from South Carolina.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chairman, this is the second of five—only five, and I think there should be more—amendments regarding gender-affirming care, trannies, you name it.

Castration is not a mistake, by the way. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to say that castration is healthcare and there is nothing more dehumanizing than going after the trannies out there.

One recently shot two young schoolchildren in Minnesota. It is a mental illness, and it needs to stop. We can stop it in our military right now.

In last year's NDAA, we took the important step of banning TRICARE from covering medical interventions to treat gender dysphoria, which would result in the sterilization of children.

This is a strong statement by the Congress in opposition to the mutilation of kids. However, the language allows the Department of War to continue to perform an array of gender-affirming child abuse on military dependents and to continue to mutilate our servicemembers.

My amendment is simple. It would prohibit TRICARE, across the board, from covering or furnishing the chemical or surgical mutilation of our warfighters and their dependents under the guise of healthcare.

Our government should not be in the business of mutilating our fellow citizens, particularly our warfighters, with our tax dollars and with your tax dollars, Mr. Chair.

This does not serve to advance our national security. It serves only to advance a dangerous and radical ideology that the American people have soundly rejected. Not only have the American people rejected the chemical and surgical mutilation of their fellow citizens, but much of the science doesn't support it, as well.

The science of playing to the delusions of these individuals is not com-

passionate. It is cruel. Numerous studies have shown that not only do these cross-sex hormones dramatically increase the risk of infertility and sexual dysfunction, but they actually increase depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation among those for whom these medical procedures are performed.

The purpose of our military is to fight and to win wars. It is to create warfighters, killers, not to participate in the latest progressive fad.

Under the Biden administration, we diverted money away from readiness and lethality to promote extreme gender ideology and to fund sex changes in our military.

Under the Trump administration, we have finally recognized gender dysphoria for what it is, a mental illness which precludes military service.

Our armed services are not a laboratory to study the effects of irreversible surgeries or hormones. Our service does not exist to provide experimental treatments to those whose conditions should be disqualifying. These people are mentally ill and should not be serving in the United States military.

This amendment says clearly the purpose of our military is to defend the United States, not validate identity politics. It makes sure TRICARE serves the mission of protecting health, not undermining it.

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

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

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

First of all, I thank the maker of this amendment for making it clear what the problem is: “trannies,” “mentally ill,” and insulting transgender people. This is exactly what these amendments are about.

It is about a rightwing culture war to try to target the transgender community and make them something less than human. If you listen to those comments, Mr. Chair, you can get a feel for why that is a problem.

Number two, this amendment does not have anything to do with transgender people serving in the military. President Trump has already implemented that bigoted, discriminatory policy to drive them out of the military.

This is about healthcare for children experiencing gender dysphoria. What this amendment does is it bans that healthcare treatment for children experiencing gender dysphoria.

I made a series of arguments on the other amendment about why that is such a bad idea, but the bottom line is this is a legitimate problem. The studies have often shown that this is beneficial treatment that is now being denied by the United States Congress.

This is something that doctors and patients should decide. If we want to

offer an amendment saying, “Please look at this issue. Here are some studies on one side or the other,” and ask the medical community to reach conclusions, then that is one thing, but banning it doesn't make sense.

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

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chair, may I inquire as to the time remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from South Carolina has 2 minutes remaining.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chair, if not wanting to castrate kids is a rightwing culture war, then sign me up because this is not the kind of thing that should be happening to children or military dependents anywhere in our country.

Castrating kids is not healthcare either. We are talking about something very permanent. We don't allow our kids to be tattooed until they are adults. We don't allow them to drink or smoke or vote until they are adults. The gentleman is saying that it is okay to castrate a kid because of this weirdo, freak ideology.

Yes, these are weirdos. These are freaks. These are people who are mentally deranged and mentally ill. This should not be funded by American taxpayers.

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

□ 1240

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Current law bans sterilization, so that is just a lot of crap about what this is about. Current law bans what she is talking about. What is being banned here is any treatment for gender dysphoria, and that is completely wrong.

Mr. Chair, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. JACOBS).

Ms. JACOBS. Mr. Chair, as you all know, President Trump has already kicked out transgender troops from the military, despite the fact that they are willing and able to serve and despite the fact that it will cost billions of dollars and decades to recruit and train their replacements.

This proposed ban on medical care is unnecessary and redundant for our servicemembers because we know the goal here isn't actually about policy. It is a symbolic punishment. It is to send a false political message that trans healthcare is illegitimate, even though those of us who live in reality know that trans healthcare is safe, effective, and medically necessary. It is supported by every major medical association in the U.S., representing more than 1.3 million U.S. doctors.

Let's be clear by what we mean by gender-affirming care. We don't only mean surgery. Sometimes it is just using the correct pronouns. Sometimes it is mental health care. Sometimes it is hormone therapy. Yes, sometimes it is surgery.

This ban would also take away mental health care from the trans children of our servicemembers. We know that trans youth face significant mental

health challenges, not because they are trans to be clear, but because of the external factors they face like: social isolation, discrimination, lack of affirmation, the stress of not getting the care they need, and having to hear colleagues of mine say horrible things about them on the House floor.

Like any parent, if a servicemember's child can't get the care they need, they will be distracted from their mission.

Ultimately, this ban will hurt our military readiness and likely lead servicemembers to leave the military. This amendment isn't only bigoted; it is shortsighted and would hurt our national security. I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, may I inquire as to the time remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Washington has 2¼ minutes remaining.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I yield to the gentleman from Vermont (Ms. BALINT).

Ms. BALINT. Mr. Chair, I rise today in strong opposition to this amendment.

If passed, this amendment would immediately prohibit TRICARE coverage of mental health counseling for transgender young people. Let me repeat that. This amendment would take away mental health care services for transgender kids of servicemembers. That is what we are talking about.

This amendment is intentionally discriminatory and will result in higher rates of mental health issues and suicide for trans youth, kids who already experience higher rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide compared to their peers.

Republicans' all-out assault on healthcare right now has put these people into a state of constant fear and anxiety. Imagine that you are a servicemember, you are a parent, and you hear from a doctor that Congress has banned medically necessary care endorsed by every major medical association that would literally help save your child's life. All young people in this country should have access to the mental health care that they need, full stop.

Forcing servicemembers to choose between being able to provide healthcare for their family, for their kids, or serving their country does not make our military stronger, does not make our country safer, and it will not—no matter what the Member says, it will not make transgender people in this country disappear.

I urge my colleagues to vote “no.”

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from South Carolina (Ms. MACE).

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

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 15 OFFERED BY MS. MACE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 15 printed in part A of House Report 119-255.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title V, insert the following new section:

SEC. 5. PROHIBITION OF PARTICIPATION BY MEN IN WOMEN'S SPORTS AT THE SERVICE ACADEMIES.

(a) PROHIBITION.—The Superintendent of a Service Academy may not allow a cadet or midshipman who is male to participate in an athletic program or activity at such Service Academy that is designated exclusively for cadets or midshipmen who are female.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term “female” refers to an individual who naturally has, had, will have, or would have, but for a developmental or genetic anomaly or historical accident, the reproductive system that at some point produces, transports, and uses eggs for fertilization.

(2) The term “male” refers to an individual who naturally has, had, will have, or would have, but for a developmental or genetic anomaly or historical accident, the reproductive system that at some point produces, transports, and uses sperm for fertilization.

(3) The term “Service Academy” has the meaning given such term in section 347 of title 10, United States Code.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 682, the gentleman from South Carolina (Ms. MACE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chair, women have fought for decades to have equal opportunity in education and athletics. As the first woman to graduate from The Citadel, the Military College of South Carolina, no one understands that fight better than I do.

Unfortunately, these hard-earned rights women have fought for are now literally under assault. Misogyny disguised as acceptance has forced mediocre male athletes into women's locker rooms, forcing women to undress in front of them, robbing women of opportunities, and have left some women with lifelong scars.

My amendment would prohibit the superintendents of the service academies from allowing a cadet or midshipman who is male to participate in an athletic program or activity that is designed for females.

It is an indisputable fact there are significant physical, biological, I dare say science or scientific, differences between men and women. Biological men generally have greater muscle mass, bone density, cardiovascular capacity,

and physical strength than women do. This is very obvious.

Allowing men to compete in women's sports is patently unfair and robs women and girls of accomplishments and opportunities.

Over 900 medals in women's sports have been won by biological men, stolen from women who worked hard to earn them.

Women have fought hard to earn records that have been shattered by mediocre men, men pretending to be women, mentally ill men pretending to be women.

This is a travesty and discourages women from competing at all. This was the case last year when multiple college women's volleyball teams forfeited rather than face a team with a biological male athlete, rather than face a traumatic brain injury when the next man hit them in the face with a volleyball.

There is nothing honorable about robbing women of opportunities, invading their privacy, and jeopardizing their safety in athletic competitions. Allowing biological men to participate in women's sports is incompatible with the values of our servicemembers, our service academies, and basic notions of fairness and good, old-fashioned common sense.

I urge all Members to support this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

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

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition today to this amendment and in defense of our Nation's servicemembers.

Our ranking member and the chairman have negotiated a bipartisan NDAA, which invests in military pay raises, quality of life, and many important aspects for military readiness. We should be focused on that in the National Defense Authorization Act, not another amendment bullying trans people.

If you ever needed proof that trans folks live rent free in the minds of my GOP colleagues, then look no further than this amendment because there are literally no known and out transgender people serving in our academies right now because of the transgender military ban.

So what is this amendment all about?

The GOP obsession with bullying trans people is weird. It is invasive. It is abusive. It is discriminatory, and it is dangerous to our military readiness.

I want to remind my colleagues that words have power. You are standing in one of the most powerful institutions not only in the United States but in the world, and my colleagues are using this platform to bully a population that is vulnerable here in the United States.

□ 1250

I have to say: If my colleagues across the aisle are so genuinely concerned about the well-being of women who are serving in the military and sexual violence, how about actually addressing that and the 45 percent of women who have reported that they have been sexually harassed just last year alone? Dare I say: If my Republican colleagues are concerned about sexual violence and deviance, how about they release the Epstein files? How about that?

This amendment reflects a sustained, targeted, villainization of the trans community and the LGBTQ+ community that continues day after day on this floor.

The trans community represents only about 1 percent of the population, as we understand it, but you wouldn't actually think that listening to this Chamber because they are spending time that we should be talking about military readiness and our national security to bully trans people at our service academies.

This has nothing to do with service to this great Nation or our national security. I say to my colleagues: Let's get back to work on behalf of the American people and defeat this disgusting and hateful amendment.

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

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to the time remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from South Carolina has 3 minutes remaining.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chair, imagine being a woman on the floor of the House of Representatives, screaming—I dare say screeching—into the microphone to put your daughter in danger or to have your daughter's scholarships, your daughter's skills, and your daughter's opportunities stolen from her because some guy—some mentally ill, deranged, weird freak of a man—thinks he is a woman because he can put on a skirt and wave his willy-nilly around in a locker room, that he somehow is equal to a woman and that he is going to take away her rights.

We fought for so long for rights as women. We didn't get the right to vote until, what, 1919 or 1920? In fact, in the State of South Carolina, we didn't elect our first Republican woman to the U.S. House of Representatives, to Congress, until 2020. I was sworn into office in January of 2021.

We have fought hard. There are so many opportunities for women. Yet we have never had a female President of the United States. I am not going to let some guy in a skirt come around to take opportunities away from our daughters, from future leaders, or a future President one day because somebody is mentally ill and thinks they can steal those opportunities away from your daughter.

It is not going to happen, not on my watch. We can start with the service academies and protecting these women who are going to fight valiantly, to

serve, and to protect our freedoms in our country, here and abroad, to make sure that opportunities are not stolen from them by the mentally ill.

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

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI).

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chair, I thank Representative STANSBURY for yielding.

Mr. Chair, I rise today in opposition to this amendment, which would ban transgender women from participating in women's sports but also lead to challenges on all women's bodies, making the military and academies less safe for any women to enlist, no matter who they are.

Military personnel already undergo in-depth medical exams, and this amendment would allow for women and trans people to be subjected to increased and invasive targeting and harassment.

Athletic associations and the service academies are better prepared to understand the sports that they regulate and how to provide both respect for transgender people and fairness in sports. These associations and academies should be addressing this issue, not politicians, especially politicians who do not understand that trans people are not men who put on skirts.

Republicans have already banned trans people from the military and the service academies via executive action. This amendment is just another backdoor attempt to discourage transgender people from enlisting in the future while making the military less safe for all women and embedding discrimination into law. This amendment is a classic example of politicians trying to insert themselves where they don't belong. I urge my colleagues to vote against this amendment.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to the time remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from South Carolina has 1 minute remaining.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chairman, I will address the topic of sexual violence, particularly with my female colleagues across the aisle.

I have authored dozens of bills related to sexual violence, and very few of my Democratic colleagues will sign up and cosponsor them in a bipartisan way. Why is that? Is it because I don't want men in women's spaces? Probably. Is it because I say the word "tranny"? Yes.

Democrats don't want to protect women except for when it makes good on their narrative. In fact, when I gave a harrowing speech for 1 hour on the floor of this House earlier this year on February 10, as I talked about my personal experiences with sexual violence, not a single female Democratic colleague spoke up in defense of women who are victims and survivors of sexual violence.

Mr. Chairman, I find it offensive, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Speaker, I remind us that we are here to talk about the National Defense Authorization Act and to stand with our servicemembers who proudly signed up to serve this great Nation. We will continue to stand with our servicemembers.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from South Carolina (Ms. MACE).

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

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 16 OFFERED BY MS. MACE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 16 printed in part A of House Report 119-255.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of subtitle J of title V, insert the following new section:

SEC. 5. PROHIBITIONS RELATING TO QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT SEX, GENDER, AND GENDER IDENTITY IN FORMS AND SURVEYS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

(a) PROHIBITION.—With respect to the collection of information conducted by or for the Secretary of Defense through a form or survey, the Secretary—

(1) may not—

(A) solicit or obtain any information regarding the gender identity of an individual; or

(B) provide an option to indicate that the sex or gender of an individual is something other than male or female; and

(2) shall reject a response other than male or female to a required question regarding sex or gender.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term "female" means an individual who naturally has, had, will have, or would have, but for a developmental or genetic anomaly or historical accident, the reproductive system that, at some point, produces, transports, and utilizes eggs for fertilization.

(2) The term "gender"—

(A) means male or female; and

(B) does not mean gender identity, experienced gender, gender expression, or gender roles.

(3) The term "gender identity" does not mean sex or gender.

(4) The term "male" means an individual who naturally has, had, will have, or would have, but for a developmental or genetic anomaly or historical accident, the reproductive system that, at some point, produces, transports, and utilizes sperm for fertilization.

(5) The term "sex" means the biological determination as to whether an individual is male or female.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 682, the gentlewoman

from South Carolina (Ms. MACE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from South Carolina.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chairman, this amendment is about one thing and one thing only: restoring biological truth, restoring biological reality, and restoring science.

For too long, my colleagues across the aisle have pushed the fiction which says that your gender is whatever you say it is and that you can change your mind at any time. You can be thinking. Thinking is like a gender option to some of these morons.

Under 4 long years of the Biden administration, they have enshrined this fiction in every facet of our government and demanded that we all play along with the lie that men can be women, women can be men, and people can be both, neither, either, other, or whatever. They could be a eunuch. It is so ridiculous.

Perhaps they even share the delusion that people can sexually identify as an attack helicopter because, apparently, that is also an option for some of these maniacs.

My amendment recognizes a simple fact: There are two genders. They are designated at birth, and they cannot be changed.

This is basic biology, Biology 101. It is not about feelings. It is not about ideology. It is not about politics. It is not about trying to make half of 1 percent of the population happy for the rest of us.

Under this amendment, the Secretary of War would be prohibited from collecting information for a form or survey related to gender identity. "Male" and "female" are the only two options that should be listed for questions about sex or gender, and the Secretary will be required to reject forms which list a sex or gender other than "male" or "female." We are going to bring back common sense to the Department of War.

Mr. Chairman, this ideology is not harmful. It is corrosive. It has undermined women and seeks to replace objective truths with subjective fiction. It has told us that we must reject the foundational truths that our society has held for thousands of years. This ideology has forced institutions to adopt terms like "birthing persons," "pronouns," which got us into this whole mess—"they," "them," "it"—as if language itself must be bent to their radicalized ideology.

□ 1300

They have taken what is obvious to every civilization in human history, that men are men and women are women, and turned it into a political controversy. I say, today: Enough is enough.

This amendment would restore common sense and the truth at the Department of War. I can't believe this is even a debate we need to have on the floor of the House.

Mr. Chair, you are going to hear opposition to science today from people who tell you to follow science. Women are biologically distinct from men, and we love it. Every single one of my colleagues knows this truth, even if they are too afraid to say it.

My colleagues across the aisle have stood silent for too long and allowed this ideology to erase women and hand over our hard-won victories to men. This amendment ensures the Department of War recognizes these biological realities.

This is more than about forms and paperwork. It is about whether we will defend women or whether we will erase them. It is about whether the strongest military on Earth will be grounded in reality or captured by ideology.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to stand with the truth, stand with women, and stand with our military, and vote in favor of this amendment.

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. KUSTOFF). The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chair, Americans understand that trans people do exist and that transgender servicemembers have served our country with distinction and honor for almost a decade. They were able to do this openly.

Yet, this amendment seeks to erase the existence of transgender people, whether they are servicemembers or DOD employees, by prohibiting the Secretary of Defense from collecting information about gender identity on any form or survey.

Let me be clear: Trans people do exist, and their experiences matter.

Nondiscrimination and inclusion are core American values. This amendment is about exclusion and erasure.

Collecting data on the experiences of transgender people at the Department of Defense is critical to addressing the challenges the community faces.

Every person who steps up to serve our Nation in uniform, including trans people, should be treated with the utmost respect. These servicemembers have continuously shown that they are fit, qualified, and willing to serve.

This amendment would create real obstacles for transgender people by requiring DOD systems to list the wrong gender for transgender people. Discrepancies between these systems and trans people's legal documents will cause a host of issues, including complicating background checks.

This administration is already forcing transgender servicemembers out of the military just because of who they are. The Americans I know honor everyone who has the courage to serve. They do not support kicking people out of the military, people we have invested time and millions of dollars in training into, just to score political points.

Trump's trans military ban is cruel and shameful. Now, Republicans want

to add insult to injury and try to erase trans servicemembers' existence with this amendment.

Enough is enough. I am proud to stand before this Chamber and support all of our servicemembers.

I will make it clear to every trans servicemember currently in the process of being forced out by this administration: My Democratic colleagues in Congress and I value your sacrifices and service to our Nation. We are, and will keep, fighting for you because you have put your life on the line for America. You deserve the same rights and treatment as every other servicemember.

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

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chair, may I inquire as to the time remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from South Carolina has 1½ minutes remaining.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chair, I will say that a form that you say whether you are male or female, how you were born, what God gave you, is not an obstacle. That just goes to show, the mere comment that filling out a form, am I male or female, that it is such a huge, ornate, objective obstacle, that it is adversarial, just goes to show you how mentally ill this ideology is, that filling out a form that is biologically pure, biologically true, would trigger you.

It goes to ask: Would it trigger them so much that they would go shoot up a military base? Maybe. We had a tranny shoot up a school, a Catholic school, a couple of weeks ago in Minnesota, killing two beautiful, young children.

They are mentally ill. These people should not be serving in our military. When they accuse us of erasing trans in the military, yes, if you are mentally ill, you don't have the right to serve. We need warfighters. We need men and women who are going to be strong on the front of our battle lines fighting terrorism.

Iran is on the march. China is nipping at our heels, as is Russia. We need men and women who, rather than worry about if I am a eunuch or this or that, an attack helicopter, or whatever gender dysphoria they have that day is—who are we going to make safe today? What freedom are we fighting for?

How we are going to make Americans safe here and abroad, that is the mission. Our national security is the mission for the United States military, and it will stay there with Donald Trump as President.

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chair, may I inquire as to the time remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SIMON), my colleague.

Ms. SIMON. Mr. Chair, for the folks who are watching, for the transgender

community, you are loved and respected for your resilience and for your breadth. Keep pushing.

Mr. Chair, I rise today in opposition to this amendment that would prohibit the Department of Defense from collecting data on gender identity.

Data is not just numbers. Data is a story and reflection of those lived realities of real people, and this amendment is to stop data collection. It is clear that it is an attempt to erase the existence of transgender servicemembers at the Department of Defense.

Without data collection, the Department of Defense cannot adequately address the challenges that lesbian, bisexual, and transgender servicemembers may face.

Transgender employees will have a difficult time filing equal employment opportunity complaints without accurate data. Employees will also have inconsistent records and incorrect gender markers in Department of Defense systems, making it harder to access health services.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. RANDALL).

Ms. RANDALL. Mr. Chair, I was going to say some nice things about rising in support of a bipartisan NDAA that supports housing, healthcare, and childcare, but I have sat here appalled at the language that we have heard on the House floor from the other side of the aisle.

I stand in strong opposition to the person from North Carolina's amendment. I have sat listening to her violent, dangerous, and dehumanizing vendetta against parents, children, and trans people trying to live their lives and trying to defend our country.

This is a pattern of the unhinged political war on trans people that this person from North Carolina, the Republican Party, and the President are waging.

Denying the ability of out trans folks to serve in our military isn't enough for these people. The person from North Carolina is trying to erase the existence of trans people from forms, from hallways, from our military, and choosing violence.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from South Carolina (Ms. MACE).

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

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

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

□ 1310

AMENDMENT NO. 17 OFFERED BY MS. MACE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 17 printed in part A of House Report 119-255.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title XXVIII, insert the following:

SEC. 28. PROHIBITION ON THE USE OF SINGLE-SEX FACILITIES ON MILITARY INSTALLATIONS THAT DO NOT CORRESPOND TO THE SEX OF AN INDIVIDUAL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person may, except as provided in subsection (b) or subsection (c), access or use a single-sex facility on a military installation that does not correspond to the sex of such person.

(b) EXCEPTION.—The prohibition in subsection (a) shall not apply with respect to—

(1) emergency medical personnel responding to a medical emergency; or

(2) law enforcement officers in active pursuit of a suspect, or as part of an active investigation.

(c) NATIONAL SECURITY WAIVER.—The Secretary of Defense may, on a case-by-case basis, waive the prohibition in subsection (a) if the Secretary determines the waiver is necessary to advance the national security interests of the United States.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term “female” means an individual who naturally has, had, will have, or would have, but for a developmental or genetic anomaly or historical accident, the reproductive system that at some point produces, transports, and utilizes eggs for fertilization.

(2) The term “male” means an individual who naturally has, had, will have, or would have, but for a developmental or genetic anomaly or historical accident, the reproductive system that at some point produces, transports, and utilizes sperm for fertilization.

(3) The term “military installation” has the meaning given such term in section 2801 of title 10, United States Code.

(4) The term “single-sex facility” means a space intended for the use of one biological sex (male or female), including a—

(A) restroom;

(B) locker room; or

(C) changing room.

(5) The term “sex” means the biological determination as to whether an individual is male or female.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 682, the gentlewoman from South Carolina (Ms. MACE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from South Carolina.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chair, my amendment is straightforward. It would ensure the use of sex-specific spaces such as bathrooms, locker rooms, and changing rooms on military installations are based on biological sex, not ideology. Women in uniform deserve dignity, privacy, and absolute safety.

Protecting women's spaces shouldn't be partisan. It should be common sense. However, under the Biden administration, the Federal Government decided to abandon common sense. It allowed men to enter women's spaces and violate their privacy and dignity.

Under President Trump, the government has restored basic biological truth: men are men, and women are women. I applaud the President for his commitment to protecting women, but a future administration could bring us right back to this insanity.

The Biden administration sacrificed the dignity and safety of women to appease radical gender, lunatic ideology. Our women in uniform shouldn't be forced to suffer indignities to appease the insane policies of the other side of the aisle, all the Democrats who support this nonsense.

Allowing delusional men to use women's restrooms, locker rooms, and changing rooms is an affront to women, and it is reckless.

In Virginia, a registered sex offender with more than a dozen convictions was allowed to use the women's changing room by claiming he was a woman. For 6 months, he exposed himself to women and kids. This is who the left is defending today, pedophiles and men that want to go in women's spaces and rape them, assault them, and expose themselves to little girls and our daughters.

In California, a 17-year-old girl was terrorized by the presence of a man in her locker room while she showered.

In Georgia, a 51-year-old man pretending to be a woman undressed in the women's restroom and exposed himself to shoppers.

In Virginia, a girl was sexually assaulted by a biological male in a woman's bathroom.

In Oklahoma, a young woman was beaten for daring to say she was uncomfortable sharing a bathroom with a man.

This is not theoretical. These aren't just random incidents. This is an epidemic. They are the natural, predictable consequence of policies that pretend biology doesn't matter. These are the policies of the left, policies of Democrats who say: Follow the science, except for women. We don't care about you. We hate you. We want to take everything away from you. We won't follow science on this one.

We have opened the door for predators to abuse women and girls. Our daughters are growing up with something we never had to distinguish when our generation was growing up. We are putting our daughters in imminent danger, in harm's way, and this has to stop.

Women shouldn't be forced to share their private spaces with men, and this amendment says we are going back to reality. Privacy and safety matters. Dignity matters. Women matter.

Mr. Chair, I encourage my colleagues to protect all women. I urge all Members to support this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

Trans people, including trans servicemembers, deserve the basic human dignity and common decency of safely using the restroom.

Besides that, let's take the gentlewoman's point at face value. She wants

to protect women. Great. So do I. Bathroom bans do not protect women.

The Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law even did a study on it, and there is zero evidence that allowing trans people to use the correct bathroom increases the risk to others. In fact, it is actually opposite. We have seen that cis women are harassed when people try to enforce or decree bathroom bans.

Earlier this year at a Buffalo Wild Wings in Minnesota, a server followed a teenage girl into the restroom and demanded she prove she was a girl. When the server didn't believe her, she unzipped her hoodie to show she had breasts. That is the actual reality of bathroom bans and even the idea of bathroom bans: harassment, discrimination, and body exams.

We don't need servicemembers acting like vigilantes to enforce this policy either by surveillance, profiling, or physical inspections. Our servicewomen go through enough. We shouldn't be inviting even more harassment. We don't need this amendment opening up the Pentagon and the entire U.S. Government to a massive lawsuit.

This isn't good policy. This doesn't protect women. This is based on misinformation, and I urge my colleagues to vote "no."

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

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chair, how much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from South Carolina has 2 minutes remaining.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Chair, it is ironic that my colleague says that women are harassed going into the bathroom. Well, that might be because nobody wants a transgender, tranny, person in the bathroom with them. No one wants biological men in women's spaces. And because this wacko ideology, not based in science, is now pervasive, we are teaching it in schools and we are forcing kids to use pronouns. We want to protect women because the left has gone so far. It is not just the left. This is mainstream Democrat policy, going after our girls.

You heard my colleague say there is no evidence, literally after I read evidence of incidents of trannies in private spaces assaulting women and underage girls, our daughters, kids.

They say no evidence exists. That is because Democrats will not show you or tell you or share with you the facts, but the average American, we see it every day now. It is everywhere and people are sick and tired of it. If they want this harassment to stop, then the trannies need to stop harassing the rest of America. This is not what the American people want. It is not what they voted for.

They say that our servicemembers, our servicewomen in uniform, go through enough. They are right. That is why we don't want this happening. That is why we want to protect them. In their most intimate moments in the

dressing room, no man should be watching them.

They talk about lawsuits. We don't want more lawsuits. I find it ironic because it is Democrats who sue States and sue Republican parties over congressional lines and apportionment and all those things that tie our U.S. elections up in lawsuits. It is their party, not ours. We are just fighting back. We are going to protect every woman and girl, every single daughter in the United States, but particularly for our servicemembers, our women in uniform. The Republican Party is the party of common sense. We are the party of normal. We are the party of women.

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

Ms. JACOBS. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ).

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Chair, Republicans have a series of amendments targeting trans people and the ability of servicemember parents to make decisions about healthcare for their children. All of these amendments, including this one, do not do anything to make us safer or to honor our commitment to the servicemen and -women who are willing to give their lives for this country.

These amendments are part of a culture war that is intended to make Americans angry, divided, and fearful. They want to rename it the Department of War because they are in a war against the idea that the American life is something that includes all of us, that we can all belong.

Their proposed facilities ban is a huge violation of privacy and would make all women and girls less safe. Will Republicans require menstrual monitoring, checking reproductive organs, as has happened, as my colleague pointed out? Girls and women who are tall, strong, and gender-nonconforming are already being questioned and yelled at. Republicans seem to always want to dictate from D.C. what we can do with our bodies, and that is not freedom.

I stand with all our servicemembers, including our trans servicemembers, who are willing to fight and die for our freedoms. I am going to fight for their freedom to be who they are, to fight for an America where we all belong. We should not be at war with each other. We all belong.

□ 1320

Ms. JACOBS. May I inquire as to how much time I have remaining.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. MORAN). The gentlewoman from California has 1½ minutes remaining.

Ms. JACOBS. Mr. Chair, I would just like to point out that I think it is very interesting that my colleague from South Carolina is so obsessed with the issue of trans people, using horrible slurs to talk about them, when many people in this body have received gender-affirming care. Filler is gender-affirming care. Boob jobs are gender-affirming care. Botox is gender-affirming care. Lots of my colleagues have received gender-affirming care. Let me be clear, I think everyone should have access to the gender-affirming care that they need, and I think we should respect everybody in this country.

Ms. MACE. Are you—

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from South Carolina is not recognized. The Committee will be in order. The gentlewoman and the gentleman will suspend. The Committee will be in order. The gentlewoman from South Carolina is not recognized.

Ms. JACOBS. The Committee is not in order.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from South Carolina (Ms. MACE).

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

Ms. JACOBS. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

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

The Acting CHAIR. For what purpose does the gentlewoman seek recognition?

Ms. JACOBS. I request her words be taken down.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from South Carolina was not recognized for debate.

There is no one that is recognized.

The Chair is prepared to move on and recognize the next amendment.

AMENDMENT NO. 18 OFFERED BY MR. MILLS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 18 printed in part A of House Report 119-255.

Mr. MILLS. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title X, insert the following:

SEC. 10. ELIMINATION OF DISCRETION OF MILITARY CHAIN OF COMMAND AND SENIOR CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP WITH RESPECT TO DISPLAY OF FLAGS.

Section 1052(d)(1)(N) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024 (Public Law 118-31; 10 U.S.C. 2661 note) is amended by striking subparagraph (N).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 682, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

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

Mr. Chair, this amendment, which passed in the House NDAA last year, would ensure that base commanders follow Federal law by ensuring that only approved flags are flown on military installations.

Patriotic Americans understand that the American flag is to be revered.

Anybody who has served understands the sacrifice that has been made to keep Old Glory flying.

On military bases, it is truly sacred. It is the symbolic altar of the Nation.

During morning and evening colors, all work ceases as troops salute her raising and lowering. In battle, our forces carry her, wearing them proudly on their sleeves. She serves as the final blanket for soldiers who come home, having given and paid the last full measure.

The 2024 NDAA rightly addressed this issue by codifying an appropriate list of approved flags that uphold the honor and dignity that our military is built on.

However, there is a glaring error. A caveat built into the list gives commanders the ability to fly any flag they deem appropriate. Since President Trump and Secretary Hegseth have taken office, the woke infiltration of our military, even its highest leaders, continues to be exposed.

The embarrassment of these flags is hard to grasp: drag shows on ships and military installations; base security training teaching guards that pro-life bumper stickers were indicators of possible terrorism; and taxpayer-funded gender transition and hormone treatments that kept soldiers nondeployable or nontrainable for years. The list goes on, but the point remains.

Even still, there are senior officials and officers that refuse to mount the portraits of President Trump and Secretary Hegseth on their chain of command due to insubordination. Believe me, these individuals will not last long in our Armed Forces.

I ask you: Do you think that commanders who approved and even encouraged all of this to happen would exist or hesitate before deeming a Pride or trans flag appropriate for the month of June? Of course not, and it would likely be their idea in the first place.

Finally, I want to emphasize the power of symbolism. Symbols serve as a representation of our values, priorities, and our identity.

When a company completes a grueling training hike and sees that flag flying over their garrison, it symbolizes home, and I promise you that last mile may feel like a sprint to get to that cloth.

When a platoon returns from a patrol and reenters the wire, she symbolizes safety.

Imagine what our enemies would think of our strength and resiliency if we ever allow flags flown contrary to the principles of America.

I promise you that as much as this stands as the military standard, it also serves as deterrence to our adversaries.

Mr. Chair, therefore, I invite my colleagues to vote "yes" on this important measure.

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

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

Mr. Chairman, I do not understand why my colleagues across the aisle are so triggered, triggered by a piece of cloth. Yet, here we are for the third year in a row voting to ban the Pride flag from spaces at the Department of Defense.

Nearly half of the House Republicans' fiscal year 2026 appropriation bills include bans on the Pride flag as well. I don't know what they think this flag does. The Pride flag did not make me gay, and it will not make DOD employees gay either.

What displaying a Pride flag does do, however, is send an important signal to LGBTQI+ people that they belong. Our Department of Defense, what does it exist for but to defend America, to defend all Americans, to defend the dignity, rights, and freedom of all Americans?

What the flag does do is send an important signal that LGBTQI+ people belong. Displaying Pride flags is a way for servicemembers and DOD civilian employees to show that they are committed to creating and affirming an inclusive environment for LGBTQI+ people or a way to celebrate their own identity. It does not indicate to exclude anybody else for what they may believe in.

At a time when the LGBTQI+ community is under attack, displaying a Pride flag is especially important. It is particularly offensive that Republicans are seeking to ban this flag at DOD, given that one of the earliest Pride flags was created by a former U.S. military officer, Gilbert Baker.

Mr. Chairman, I believe the American people are fair and they support inclusion. I think they view amendments like this one, dictating to Federal employees and troops what flags they can have at their workstations, as both ridiculous and extreme government overreach. We should be focused on strengthening our military readiness, not censoring the LGBTQI+ community and our allies.

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

Mr. MILLS. Mr. Chair, may I inquire as to how much time I have remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. MILLS. Mr. Chair, the only thing that was just said by our colleague across the road that I can actually agree with is inclusivity. What is more inclusive than the American flag, the flag we all honor as American patriots? The one thing that we know about the Pride flag is that it represents only one portion of those who serve. That is not called inclusivity, sir. That is called division. That is why for the first time since the previous administration took over, we have actually hit our recruitment numbers in every single branch. That is something you can't say when

it comes to the last administration's efforts.

So what I look at is this: the 1777 Flag Act. The fact that we actually stand for something that unifies us, not divides us. The fact is that we need to get back to meritocracy, not division through diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Mr. Chair, this is very simple. It is a patriotic stance. The very flag which stands behind you, that stands proud in this Capitol, is the same one that sits over Presidents, over our fallen soldiers, and over our military installations. That is not division. That is not recognition of others' sexual preferences. That is the actual acknowledgment of what we fight for day in and day out as Americans.

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

□ 1330

Mr. Chair, I would say in response to the gentleman that the Pride flag does not replace the American flag. It is flown at certain times of the year. It affirms a huge portion, a significant portion of our military.

Yes, I agree the American flag is inclusive. We can also show that we can include a minority that is often disparaged.

Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. DEXTER).

Ms. DEXTER. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to this cruel and callous amendment.

Mr. Chair, there are 20 days until the government shuts down. There are 8 legislative days. What are Republicans focused on? They are focused on flags, Pride flags.

Republicans are spending valuable floor time, time that could be used by the government to lower costs for working families.

The Acting CHAIR. For what purpose does the gentleman from Florida seek recognition?

Mr. MILLS. Mr. Chair, to identify the fact that that flag violates our House rules by flying any other flag but the American flag.

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair will remind Members that the Speaker's announced policy prohibits flag waving on the floor.

Ms. DEXTER. I am not waving it, Mr. Chair.

We are—

Mr. MILLS. Mr. Chair, simply not waving the flag represents—

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman will suspend.

The gentlewoman is recognized.

Ms. DEXTER. Mr. Chair, we are wasting valuable time trying to ban the display of Pride flags in any workplace or common area at the Department of Defense. This is time that could be used to fund the government or lower costs for working families.

This obsession with attacking, dehumanizing, and villainizing our LGBTQIA+ community is as sick as it is a waste of time.

Trump is using the same tired playbook authoritarian regimes have used throughout history. He is dehumanizing our most vulnerable to divide us and distract us from the fact of his failure to meaningfully improve the lives of the people he was elected to serve.

Mr. Chair, we see this for what it is, and we refuse to let them win. We will not erase the LGBTQIA+ community.

Mr. MILLS. Mr. Chair, I want to be very clear in this. They on the other side may think we can out-pronoun our enemies, and that will keep our adversaries at bay. We can “he,” “him,” “they,” “them,” “she,” “her” all day long. That is not what makes us strong as America.

It is the flag we wear, the training we have, and the meritocracy which should always exist. I will continue to fight for every member of our Armed Services and every single person to know that it is the American flag which will fly high and proud. We will defend her against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chair, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chair, let me just say that I don't understand why—to acknowledge and to allow a flag to be displayed in a workstation or to be flown during Pride month in certain areas—the other side believes that LGBTQ+ people are such a threat to recognize their service in the military.

We are a country of inclusion. We are the land of the free and the home of the brave. That should include all of us. There is no reason we should think that the fact that we had a policy of inclusion and that we had Pride flags at the Department of Defense was the reason why we were falling short of our recruitment goals. There was something else going on there.

This is all crazy talk, and that is why I think more and more Americans think it is the Republican Party that has gone too far with its very extreme views about LGBTQIA+ people and defense.

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

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

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

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

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

The Chair understands that amendment No. 19 will not be offered.

AMENDMENT NO. 20 OFFERED BY MS. GREENE OF GEORGIA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 20 printed in part A of House Report 119-255.

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chair, as the designee of Mr. DAVIDSON, I rise to speak in support of the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title II, add the following new section:

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS FOR CELL CULTURED MEAT.

None of the funds authorized to be appropriated by this Act or otherwise made available for fiscal year 2026 for the Department of Defense may be obligated or expended for the research, development, procurement, or promotion of cell cultured meat.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 682, the gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. GREENE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Georgia.

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I rise today on behalf of my friend and colleague, Congressman WARREN DAVIDSON from Ohio, who is a proud Army Ranger. I am offering his amendment to prohibit the Department of War from researching or procuring lab-grown meat.

This amendment prohibits the Department of War funding from being used on the research, production, advancement, or enhancement of cell-cultured meat which is fake meat. It is not even real meat.

Over the years, climate activists have tried to push experimental food alternatives on the American public. The latest product they are peddling to us is cell-cultured fake meat. What is worse is they have been trying to push this experimental product on our U.S. servicemembers like they are lab rats. This is all in an attempt to put America's ranchers and farmers out of business. Our great men and women in our military are not lab rats, Mr. Chair.

In 2024, the Department of Defense announced up to \$500 million in grant funding for the development of lab-grown meat products. In case anyone at home is wondering if this is real, yes, it was real, and it happened.

Last year, small farms and mom-and-pop operations across the country raised their voices in outrage against this ill-considered initiative. We won and got the DOD to back off on trying to put our farmers out of business while trying to feed our soldiers fake, poisonous garbage.

It is now time to codify this win into law, and it is important to do so with the fiscal year '26 NDAA. That is why this amendment is so important.

A product this experimental has many unresolved safety and environmental concerns. These products are not yet approved for retail sale in grocery stores. It should not be tested on our brave servicemembers who put their lives at stake for this country.

Mr. Chair, I urge the adoption of this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWNLEY. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BROWNLEY. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to amendment No. 20, which would place a blanket statutory ban on any DOD research, development, procurement, or promotion when it comes to cultivated cell-based meat.

Let's be clear. This isn't about whether the Pentagon is going to serve cultivated meat tomorrow. It is about whether we let our military continue doing what it has always done best, and that is preparing for the future.

Readiness has always been America's edge. Our military leads the world because we don't close doors. We open them. We evaluate every tool, every technology, and every option that might keep our servicemembers better supplied and better prepared for future missions. This amendment does just the opposite. It ties our hands. It says: Don't even consider it.

Meanwhile, China has already made cultivated meat a national priority in its 5-year plan. They are scaling up production, while countries like Singapore, Israel, Australia, and the U.K. are moving forward, as well.

If cultivated meat helps deliver cheaper, scaleable protein solutions worldwide, do we really want China setting the standards, dominating the intellectual property, and reaping the jobs this burgeoning industry creates?

Mr. Chair, I have spoken directly with senior DOD officials who have shared with me the potential benefits cultivated meat could bring to readiness. This includes from operating in harsh bases to sustaining missions where supply lines are contested or disrupted.

Keeping the option open for DOD research and evaluation ensures we remain competitive and ensures U.S. leadership in the broader protein biotech space that underpins global supply chains.

□ 1340

Voting “no” on this amendment preserves the military's discretion—let me say that again—preserves the military's discretion to explore technology that could strengthen readiness, create U.S. jobs, and help maintain our competitive edge.

This ban doesn't save money, and it doesn't improve readiness. All it does is close off technology others are racing to develop while handing China a free lane in a strategic biotech domain.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to vote “no” on this amendment to ensure DOD can test, validate, or reject technology on the merits, not because of shortsighted, anti-science ideology.

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

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chair, it is so interesting to listen to my

Democratic colleague across the aisle talk about China and how China made cultivated meat a national priority, and so we should, too. That is pretty shocking.

Don't forget, Mr. Chair, that the COVID virus was made in Wuhan, China, and released upon the world. Look at the consequences of that.

Never forget it was the Democrats who were all about forcing poisonous vaccines into people's bodies against their will. We saw the devastating impacts of that on many military members: myocarditis, nerve conditions, heart problems, heart attacks, and many reported issues not just on the military but the American people.

As a matter of fact, there are vaccine injuries and deaths that have not been investigated to this day.

Mr. Chair, now, Democrats want to continue to force our great men and women in the military to eat fake, lab-grown meat? That is repulsive and disgusting.

I can tell you right now, Mr. Chair, I, along with my Republican colleagues, want to feed our great men and women in the military ribeyes, those that are grown right here on good old USA farms.

I think our men and women in the military, in order to quote my colleague across the aisle, to have readiness, to be ready and prepared for war, they need to be as healthy and fit as possible.

I would argue that lab-grown, disgusting, fake meat is not going to make them ready. It is not going to make them healthy. It is not going to make them fit. It is not going to get them the best possible shape they can be in to go to war. God forbid they go to war. I don't want to see them go to war either.

They talk about this fake meat being a tool or an option to keep them better supplied. I think it is repulsive. I think it is an insult. I can't imagine anyone signing up for the military saying: I can't wait to eat a big old portion of nasty, lab-grown, fake meat.

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

Ms. BROWNLEY. Mr. Chair, I would just say that, yes, I want to be competitive with China's military and their readiness first and foremost.

Second, our DOD officials are talking about the future. They are not talking about today. They are talking about preparedness for the future.

Mr. Chair, if you want a ribeye steak, cultivated meats can create that, and I assure you it will be delicious. They will love it, and they will not know the difference. Our military will not know the difference.

Mr. Chair, if we take this even out of the military, this is about investing in a new industry in our country that both Democrats and Republicans support because it is an opportunity for us to move and lead this, as opposed to China, Singapore, Israel, or Australia, which are already leading in this.

We want to be competitive in the global marketplace. We want our military to be ready.

This is about the future. This is about research. This is about science saying it is either good or bad, but to move forward with the research so that we know what our options are for the future for our military, which might be deployed to an offshore island somewhere, where there is no access to food whatsoever except for what they can develop.

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

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chair, my Democratic colleague across the aisle just said that it is about the science. Where have we heard that one before? I think everyone in the country remembers the past few years of forced, mandated COVID vaccines.

When it becomes about the science and not about feeding our men and women in the military good, cultivated, real meat, then it is a serious problem.

Being competitive with China, according to the Democrats, means being just like China, a Communist country that America should never be like at all.

Mr. Chairman, I will finish with this: When Democrats are saying that they won't know the difference when they are being fed fake meat versus real meat and they will love it, I think that is the most terrifying thing we can hear.

Mr. Chairman, I urge the adoption of this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. GREENE).

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

Ms. BROWNLEY. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 21 OFFERED BY MR. AUSTIN SCOTT OF GEORGIA.

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 21 printed in part A of House Report 119-255.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title XIII, add the following:

SEC. 13. BALTIC SECURITY INITIATIVE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Pursuant to the authority provided in chapter 16 of title 10, United States Code, the Secretary of Defense shall establish and carry out an initiative, to be known as the "Baltic Security Initiative" (in this section referred to as the "Initiative"), for the purpose of deepening security cooperation with the military forces of the Baltic countries.

(b) RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING AUTHORITIES.—The Initiative required by subsection (a) shall be carried out pursuant to the authorities provided in title 10, United States Code.

(c) OBJECTIVES.—The objectives of the Initiative shall be—

(1) to achieve United States national security objectives by—

(A) deterring aggression by the Russian Federation; and

(B) implementing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's new Strategic Concept, which seeks to strengthen the alliance's deterrence and defense posture by denying potential adversaries any possible opportunities for aggression;

(2) to enhance regional planning and cooperation among the military forces of the Baltic countries, particularly with respect to long-term regional capability projects, including—

(A) long-range precision fire systems and capabilities;

(B) integrated air and missile defense;

(C) maritime domain awareness;

(D) land forces development, including stockpiling large caliber ammunition;

(E) command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance;

(F) special operations forces development;

(G) coordination with and security enhancements for Poland, which is a neighboring North Atlantic Treaty Organization ally; and

(H) other military capabilities, as determined by the Secretary of Defense; and

(3) with respect to the military forces of the Baltic countries, to improve cyber defenses and resilience to hybrid threats.

(d) STRATEGY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report setting forth a strategy for the Department of Defense to achieve the objectives described in subsection (b).

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—The strategy required by this subsection shall include a consideration of—

(A) security assistance programs for the Baltic countries authorized as of the date on which the strategy is submitted;

(B) the ongoing security threats to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's eastern flank posed by Russian aggression, including as a result of the Russian Federation's 2022 invasion of Ukraine with support from Belarus; and

(C) the ongoing security threats to the Baltic countries posed by the presence, coercive economic policies, and other malign activities of the People's Republic of China.

(e) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Defense should seek to require matching funds from each of the Baltic countries that participate in the Initiative in amounts commensurate with amounts provided by the Department of Defense for the Initiative.

(f) BALTIC COUNTRIES DEFINED.—In this section, the term "Baltic countries" means—

(1) Estonia;

(2) Latvia; and

(3) Lithuania.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 682, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Chair, first, I thank my friends, Mr.

PANETTA and Mr. CARBAJAL, from the Democratic Party for being sponsors of this amendment as well, making it bipartisan.

My amendment authorizes the Secretary of Defense to carry out a security assistance program known as the Baltic Security Initiative for the purpose of expanding security cooperation with the armed forces of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. This security assistance program has been in existence since the first Trump administration in fiscal year 2020.

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

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Chair, I thank Representative SCOTT for yielding.

Mr. Chair, in the spirit of bipartisanship, I rise to speak in support of my colleague from Georgia's amendment to authorize the Baltic Security Initiative.

This amendment comes up at a crucial time. Just last week, the administration announced the U.S. would be pulling out of all security assistance programs for Europe, including the BSI.

I have had the privilege of traveling to the Baltic. When we speak with the people there, it is not a question of if Russia will invade. It is a matter of when. Now is the time to stand firm in our support of these allied nations to deter Russian aggression.

What type of signal does cutting support send to the Kremlin? Cutting off the BSI is a massive gift to Putin.

Deterring a war between Russia and NATO is in our best national security interests.

Mr. Chair, I urge a "yes" vote.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TURNER).

Mr. TURNER of Ohio. Mr. Chairman, I thank Representative SCOTT for offering this amendment.

Mr. Chair, it is incredibly important to secure the funding for the Baltic Security Initiative. The Baltic Security Initiative has assisted the states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, which are important NATO allies. They have contributed well above the 2 percent NATO benchmark, have committed to reaching the 5 percent GDP of defense spending in the upcoming years, and are vulnerable NATO allies.

We are debating this amendment at a time when Russia's bombs have just fallen upon NATO ally Poland. It is important that we secure this funding.

The Baltic states have contributed about \$10 for every \$1 of U.S. funding that has gone into the Baltic Security Initiative.

Why this is important is that this is the U.S. portion of funding for training that has been the U.S. participation as part of Baltic exercises in the area that has ensured and been a part of deterrence to say to Russia: We will be there. We are part of the NATO alliance and are ensuring that the Baltic will be secured.

□ 1350

It has also been a statement against Russian aggression as we tried to secure and make a statement as they have been attacking with their murderous attacks against Ukraine, as we have also been trying to stand up and ensure that as they look to expand and threaten Poland that we will be there for them.

Mr. BELL. Mr. Chair, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment, though I am not opposed to it.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Missouri is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. BELL. Mr. Chair, we must continue to stand with our Baltic allies who remain on the front lines of Russian aggression. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are strong democratic partners that contribute significantly to NATO's collective defense.

What we saw last night is a reminder of why this amendment is critical. Vladimir Putin's aggression will not end with Ukraine. His goal is to reassert control over the former Soviet sphere, including NATO allies like the Baltic States.

Yet, what is concerning is the current administration has already announced plans to suspend key European security programs, including the Baltic Security Initiative. This is not peace through strength. It is weakness that plays directly into Putin's hands.

Turning our backs on NATO allies would embolden dictators and further undermine American credibility. Walking away would send a dangerous signal to Putin and Xi Jinping. We cannot strip away resources from allies confronting Russian aggression or leave a vacuum for our enemies to exploit.

Instead, we must reaffirm our commitment, strengthen our alliances, and provide the tools our partners need to deter aggression and defend democracy.

I am proud to cosponsor this bipartisan amendment. I am proud to stand with our Baltic allies and with Ukraine in the fight for freedom and global democracy.

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

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON).

Mr. BACON. Mr. Chair, I 100 percent support the Baltic Security Initiative. All three countries are our best friends. They embrace freedom, democracy, free markets, and the rule of law, and no one has embraced our values like these Baltic States.

These countries are on the front lines with Russia. They see the treachery of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and know very well they could be next.

Why don't the political appointees in the Pentagon see this? It is clear to most that this is the case.

Every family in the Baltics knows someone shot by the Soviets or sent to Siberia to die. They have had this experience. The Baltic people know the

harsh reality of living under the Russian thumb and know they could be next if Ukraine falls.

The Baltics lead the way on defense spending. They spend more on defense per GDP than the United States. They spend more on Ukraine per GDP than us.

This amendment is necessary because there are some appointees in the Pentagon who have embraced the foolish policy of decoupling from Europe and weakening our leadership in NATO. We have got to stand opposed to this. We need to use our Article I powers today and be counted for what we believe in.

What happens if we withdraw from the Baltics? No one will be more happy than Russia's Putin. Secondly, deterrence will be weakened, and war in Europe becomes more likely if we withdraw.

Strong support for the Baltic Security Initiative is a vote for deterrence. It is a vote to stand by our allies and to oppose a dictator who is invading his neighbors.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Chair, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia has 30 seconds remaining.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Chair, this is an extremely important program. It was originally done in fiscal year 2020 under the Trump administration. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania deserve our support. If you look at what happened last night with the Russian incursion of drones into Poland, I think it is now, more than ever, necessary that we make sure that these countries have what they need to defend themselves from Vladimir Putin's aggression.

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

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 22 OFFERED BY MS. GREENE OF GEORGIA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 22 printed in part 1 of House Report 119-255.

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title XIII, add the following:

SEC. 13. PROHIBITION ON ASSISTANCE TO UKRAINE.

None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for assistance to Ukraine.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 682, the gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. GREENE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Georgia.

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chair, my amendment prohibits the assistance to Ukraine in the NDAA.

This bill provides approximately \$700 million in funding for the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative over fiscal year 2026 and 2027 for training, equipment, lethal assistance, supplies and services, and intelligence support to the military and national security forces of Ukraine.

The administration has even raised strong objections against extending the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative and authorizing additional funding for it, yet somehow, the NDAA contains \$700 million.

The administration said—and this comes from a letter from the office of the OMB—the administration “strongly objects” to sections 1223 and 1227, as these provisions extend the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative and authorizes additional funding.

“Similarly, the administration objects to section 1224, which requires the creation of a depot-level maintenance plan in conjunction with the Ukrainian Government. Furthermore, the administration strongly objects to section 1228, which usurps the administration’s authority to dictate the terms of its intelligence support to the Ukrainian Government. These four provisions do not advance the administration’s objective to end the conflict in Ukraine.”

That is the key point. The administration wants to end the conflict in Ukraine. Ukraine is not a NATO member nation. We are not contractually bound to provide their protection.

Need I remind everyone here that we are \$37 trillion in debt—\$37 trillion. We should not have to be sending more American tax dollars over to defend Ukraine and the people of Ukraine when Ukrainians themselves are coming to our country and getting murdered on subway trains. Iryna Zarutska was brutally murdered by an American man as she was riding on a subway train, yet we are sending \$700 million more to Ukraine?

The American people would like that \$700 million spent here to keep people safe and stop senseless, insane murders.

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

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

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

This amendment would be very destructive to achieving peace in Ukraine. I agree with the gentleman; that should be the goal.

What has been clear for quite some time is that Putin will only stop his war when it is clear that he cannot achieve his objectives in Ukraine.

President Trump showing weakness on that issue, literally rolling out the red carpet for Putin, has only made the war worse. Ever since President Trump has tried to blame the war on

Zelenskyy and Ukraine, Putin has ramped up the war, launching more aggressive attacks than he ever has in the 3½ years of the war, and most recently, sending drones over Poland, as well.

Weakness invites aggression, and I know the proponent of this amendment has said this many, many times, but apparently she doesn’t recognize weakness when she sees it. That is what cutting off Ukraine does.

If you want to stop the war, back the 53-nation coalition that is supporting Ukraine and make it clear to Putin he is not going to win. That forces him to the peace table. Showing weakness, backing off, undermining the coalition only extends the war.

Please defeat this amendment.

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

□ 1400

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, the American people have war fatigue. They not only have war fatigue, but they are absolutely fed up. They are absolutely fed up with funding foreign wars and defending foreign nations’ borders while, here in America, many cities are completely unsafe, and senseless murders go on and on.

My amendment would reorient defense policies and priorities to America only by prohibiting all assistance to Ukraine. This lines up completely with what Trump’s administration has asked for. For some reason, Congress has decided that they want to keep funding the war and funding the killing in Ukraine.

To date, U.S. taxpayers have provided over \$175 billion in assistance to Ukraine, including direct military aid, funding for their government, and, essentially, funding for their entire economy. Mr. Chair, this was while American businesses were shut down during COVID lockdowns and our border was completely overrun.

Everyone needs to understand that it wasn’t Putin who was killing Americans, but it was the cartels killing Americans and insane murderers and criminals on our own city streets, in our own country. I remind everyone that the American people are broke, and the people in this room are responsible for that on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. Chairman, \$37 trillion in debt is no joke. I say that on behalf of my children’s generation, and they are all in their twenties. I want to know: How deep are we going to continue digging the grave to bury our children and our grandchildren? I will have no part of it. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chairman, sadly, the gentleman has had a big part in it. She just voted for a budget that would add \$4 trillion to the debt, so I don’t know that that is a particularly consistent position.

Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON).

Mr. BACON. Mr. Chairman, I stand 100 percent opposed to this amendment.

I am a Reagan and Eisenhower Republican and a post-World War II conservative. I believe in peace through strength, strong allies, and that we are the world’s leader in defense of freedom; and we do not cower to bullies.

Russia invaded Ukraine because it wants what they call Little Russia to be their vassal state. Ukrainians have suffered for decades and centuries under Russia. Four million Ukrainians were killed alone in the 1930s purposefully.

A Ukrainian victory is in our national security interests. A thriving Ukraine that is a democracy with free markets is in our national security interests. If Ukraine falls, then you can assume that Moldova, Georgia, and others will also fall. Russia will also threaten the Baltic countries. Our military aid is necessary and cost effective. If we lose here, it will cost a lot more.

I remind us that the Russians are bombing cities every single day, kidnapping kids, and murdering POWs. We have to stand on the right side of this issue. We are on the side of freedom.

It is not conservative to appease Putin, nor is it conservative to have a lack of moral clarity of who is at fault in this war. It is not a conservative position to embrace isolationism.

Mr. Chairman, I stand with two-thirds of America, and I oppose this amendment.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Washington has 2¾ minutes remaining.

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I will push back on what my Republican colleague just said.

Ukraine is not our national security interest. Our national debt is a matter of national security for United States of American citizens.

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY).

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to this amendment, which would have our Nation turn its back on the brave people of Ukraine in their greatest hour of need by cutting off all military assistance.

As we stand here today, Russia’s illegal invasion, which is now in its fourth year, is intensifying to the highest levels of the war, despite all of the oily, phony, happy talk coming from Vladimir Putin about seeking peace.

On Saturday, Russia launched the largest drone assault of the war, with 805 drones and 13 cruise missiles, killing 5 people and hitting the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. The Tuesday before, a glide bomb killed 23 Ukrainians. Just last night, Russian and Belarusian drones made 19 hits in sovereign Polish airspace, scrambling NATO F-35s and F-16s to fend off civilian casualties.

It was Ukraine's air force that alerted their neighbors in Poland to these blatantly illegal incursions, demonstrating Ukraine's commitment to protecting not only their own population but the rest of Europe.

If this amendment were to pass, it would cripple not only Ukraine's legal right to defend itself but also our NATO Treaty allies.

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I missed that part in my civics lessons and pretty much every single United States map I have ever seen where Ukraine is the 51st State. In fact, it is not.

It is shameful that, in the United States House of Representatives, more United States Members of Congress fight for money and fight for the defense of a foreign country than they actually fight for their own people.

I think Members of Congress should have to wear sponsors, like NASCAR race cars have to wear, for which country they represent and which industry that they are shilling for.

Mr. Chairman, I urge the adoption of my amendment. No more money to Ukraine. Let's end the war.

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, no more money for Ukraine will not end the war. This is absolutely in the interests of United States' national security.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TURNER).

Mr. TURNER of Ohio. Mr. Chairman, I oppose this amendment. Russia is murdering innocent civilians in Ukraine.

Our support to Ukraine opposes Russia's murderous aggression. Ukraine is fighting on the front lines against Russian aggression. Vladimir Putin is threatening NATO's eastern flank, including the Balkans. Russian drones have flown over Poland. It is unbelievable that, after Poland has been threatened, we are even debating this amendment today.

It has been warned that U.S. disengagement in Ukraine would fracture NATO unity, undermine deterrence, and invite broader conflict in Europe.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I am prepared to close.

Mr. Chairman, I agree with all of the arguments that were made. I think the most crucial point here is that the United States of America is the most economically powerful country in the history of the world. That has been the case since the end of World War II. A large part of that is because of our efforts to work with the rest of the world to maintain peace and security.

Sadly, it just doesn't end at our borders. Peace and security in the world is in the best interests of the American people, and we see the economic prosperity that we have enjoyed because of it. That is what Ukraine is about and why we should continue to support them.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Ms. GREENE).

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

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 23 OFFERED BY MS. GREENE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 23 printed in part A of House Report 119-255.

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

In section 4301, strike line 010 and the corresponding item "Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civil Aid".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 682, the gentleman from Georgia (Ms. GREENE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, my amendment strikes funding for overseas humanitarian disaster and civic aid programs.

My amendment strikes \$115 million in foreign aid funding to the overseas humanitarian disaster and civic aid programs of the Department of Defense—I am sorry, the War Department.

Mr. Chairman, the United States Government is not a charity, and the American people are some of the most generous people in the world, all by themselves, without the government taking their hard-earned tax dollars and sending it to wherever they want.

Mr. Chairman, this account funds three different programs. Humanitarian assistance helps nations with disaster preparedness, public health support, and basic infrastructure support. Humanitarian Mine Action Program provides assistance to nations to help them safely eliminate unexploded mines. Disaster relief supports disaster relief in foreign countries.

In 2023 and 2024, the Department provided support for responses in Haiti, Türkiye, northern Syria, Philippines, Libya, and Gaza.

□ 1410

While we are compassionate to people around the world suffering from national disasters and many other issues, think of our own national disasters and problems that we face here in our own homeland: Hurricane Helene, Hurricane Milton, Lahaina wildfires, L.A. wildfires, Texas flooding, and the opioid epidemic. The drinking water in northwest Georgia is also polluted with forever chemicals.

These are the issues that the American people care about. These are the issues that the American people pay their taxes for. Mr. Chair, \$115 million shouldn't be sent to go sit in an account somewhere ready to go pay money off to every foreign country and every foreign country's need.

We are \$37 trillion in debt, and I cannot believe that we can't cut spending here in this body that has created that debt.

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

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

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Chair, basically, what this amendment says, as the gentleman was saying, is that we are a compassionate nation. She is saying that she wishes we weren't, basically, and that we need to stop being a compassionate nation.

This is \$115 million. I will remind everybody that the budget bill that the gentleman and the sponsor of this amendment voted for added \$4 trillion to the debt. Why don't we start there?

There is a basic argument here: Why does the U.S. engage in foreign aid? There are four real arguments for that.

Number one, economics: Again, we are the most economically powerful nation in the world. We have the largest economy. We benefited the most. If we can help other countries generate economies, we have access to those markets. They will buy our stuff. It grows our economy. It has worked spectacularly well for 80 years.

Number two, disease and health: Sadly, those things don't know borders. Ebola and a variety of different other diseases can spread and come back here. If we work with the rest of the world to prevent it before it comes here, that is to our benefit.

The third is a matter of national security and safety. Mr. Chair, 9/11 happened because things were going wrong in other parts of the world, and they came here. It absolutely impacted people in the United States of America. The idea that this has no impact on our citizens doesn't matter. It just fails to recognize that it is not the 19th century anymore. It is a globally connected world that impacts us.

The last argument I would make, Make America Great Again: We are supposed to be the most compassionate nation. As we run around the world telling everybody how great we are, how much we are better than everybody else in the world, this amendment basically says: Screw you. We don't care.

We should be a great nation. We should be willing to set aside \$115 million in a \$14 trillion economy to help other parts of the world that are less fortunate than us. If we want to make that claim, then we ought to live up to it to at least this tiny little degree.

Mr. Chair, this is a heartless and uncompassionate amendment. Please defeat it.

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

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chair, we are \$37 trillion in debt. Fiscal year 2024 was the first year that the U.S. spent more on interest payments than on national defense. Spending on interest was more than all the money spent on veterans, education, and transportation combined. That is for America, not the rest of the world.

Interest costs will keep rising, crowding out other priorities, and not only burden future generations but cripple them.

Three hundred Americans die every single day from drug overdoses. In 2024, 17.6 veterans committed suicide every single day, and there were over 30,000 homeless veterans.

These are American problems. These are the issues we should be spending Americans' hard-earned tax dollars on instead of shoving them off and just saying we can't wait to give American money to the rest of the world for whatever they need. Yet, we kick Americans right in the face and say: No. No money for you.

According to the Department of Education, 85 percent of Black students lack proficiency in mathematics and reading skills. Forty percent of high schools in Baltimore did not have a single student score proficiently in math in 2023, not a single student. But we have to send another \$115 million for somebody else's flood or problem or issue because, God forbid, the government not jump in and send money to foreign countries.

This is a shame, and this is hurting America.

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. JACOBS).

Ms. JACOBS. Mr. Chair, the Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid account empowers the U.S. to be a global first responder, advancing our humanitarian goals and strategic interests at the same time.

This fund makes humanitarian responses possible that otherwise wouldn't be. It enables the quick delivery of food, water, shelter, medical supplies, and transportation during natural disasters or humanitarian crises in areas that are too hard for NGOs and other U.S. agencies to reach as quickly. That means more lives saved.

This account is also used to fund the removal of dangerous landmines and other unexploded ordnance that could harm civilians, something I know the amendment's sponsor has been vocal about in the past.

This fund helps showcase the U.S. military in a positive light, leading with our values and capabilities while strengthening partnerships and alliances.

For example, just a few years ago, OHDACA provided critical humani-

tarian assistance to Afghan Special Immigrant Visa applicants after the collapse of the Afghan Government.

Compared to the rest of the defense budget, OHDACA's budget is modest, but its impact is huge. It yields massive returns in lives saved, crises stabilized, and partnerships strengthened.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to reject this amendment.

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chair, \$115 million is a lot of money, especially when our interest is bigger than our own military budget. We have a serious crisis right now, and it is our national debt.

The American people have been through unbelievable crises: hurricanes, wildfires, every kind of natural disaster you can imagine, but also disasters caused by our own government. Yet, the people in this room are tone deaf, absolutely tone deaf.

If it were up to my Democratic colleagues, they would just keep digging the hole of debt and sending all the hard-earned money here in America overseas for every single issue there is.

I will reiterate: Americans donate more money to worldwide charities than any other country on Earth. If Americans want to be able to check a box on their IRS tax return that says, "Here is some extra money I want to send over for humanitarian aid," by God, let them do it, but they shouldn't be forced to do it at gunpoint, and this body should not force them to do that.

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Chair, there are two aspects. One is a budget debate, and it is fascinating. We are having this passionate debate about \$115 million, and we didn't, apparently, have that debate when we passed the budget resolution that the sponsor of this amendment voted for that added \$4 trillion to the debt.

All those passionate speeches about the debt, the deficit, and its impacts are absolutely real, but how can you ignore that and vote for the \$4 trillion debt and be all passionate about \$115 million?

Also, it is not true that we do nothing for the American people. It is somewhere around a \$6.5 trillion budget. This is \$115 million. Let's not act like we are not funding those other priorities. We are funding those other priorities.

The second piece of this is, does this benefit the United States of America to spend this money to help the rest of the world deal with disasters? As I explained earlier, it 100 percent does.

Would it make sense for us, as the gentlewoman has suggested we are doing, to fund every single crisis all around the world? No, it wouldn't, and we don't.

We spend \$115 million to try to help the rest of the world with public health disasters and natural disasters, which does benefit us.

All the arguments about the debt and the deficit, please don't take those seriously from a group of people who just voted for increasing the debt by \$4 trillion. This is \$115 million that is absolutely in the best interest of the United States of America. It will help us.

Mr. Chair, please defeat this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. GREENE).

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

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

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

□ 1420

AMENDMENT NO. 24 OFFERED BY MS. GREENE OF GEORGIA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 24 printed in part A of House Report 119-255.

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 793, beginning line 8, strike section 1313.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 682, the gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. GREENE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Georgia.

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chair, my amendment strikes the funding for Taiwan Security Cooperation Initiative.

This amendment would strike \$1 billion in military assistance to Taiwan. This funding will be used to provide a wide variety of assistance, including planes, drones, missile defense, munitions, and more. However, this is an increase of \$700 million from the fiscal year '25 NDAA, which authorized only \$300 million, so this is quite a jump in funding.

The entire defense budget of Taiwan is less than \$20 billion. We have given Taiwan over \$2 billion in funding and munitions over the last 2 years. Increasing foreign aid to Taiwan will only increase their reliance on the U.S. Increasing funding by \$700 million to \$1 billion, when the interest on our own debt is over our entire military budget, is America last.

The United States is \$37 trillion in debt, and in fiscal year '24, the government spent over \$1.8 trillion more than it took in. The interest alone on our debt has exceeded \$1 trillion. We can't afford to fund other countries' militaries and secure other countries' borders.

Before we start worrying about Taiwan's borders or Ukraine's borders, we

should focus on deporting every single illegal alien who invaded our borders, broke our laws, raped our women and children, and murdered our people.

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

Ms. TOKUDA. Mr. Chair, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Hawaii is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. TOKUDA. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to this amendment striking funding for the Taiwan Security Cooperation Initiative.

Coming from Hawaii, on the front lines of the Indo-Pacific, I know firsthand how critically important it is to keep our ties in this region strong.

The Taiwan Security Cooperation Initiative is not just another line item. It is a vital provision that enables Taiwan to maintain its self-defense capabilities and sends a clear message to both Taipei and Beijing that the United States is serious about deterrence. It keeps us out of that war that the sponsor of this amendment is so concerned about. Cutting this funding would only invite Beijing to push harder, not pull back.

We say we want to be tough on China, yet here we are entertaining whether to cut one of the clearest demonstrations of our strength and resolve. The fact that this amendment has even been made in order undermines us. Just giving this amendment airtime sows seeds of doubt in Taiwan as to our support and further emboldens Beijing. This is not, by any means, a serious amendment.

In this very same bill that we are debating, we are considering bipartisan provisions that strengthen our defense relations with Taiwan, expanding DOD's annual readiness assessments, even Republican-led amendments to invite Taiwan into RIMPAC and bolster its energy security. These are the kinds of amendments that are aligned with the United States' interests. These are the kinds of amendments that foster deterrence, not instigate and facilitate Chinese propaganda, as this one would.

When we question our support for Taiwan outright, as this amendment does, onlookers will wonder what else are we willing to walk back on? Who else will we abandon on the line? That is not the message we should be sending. This amendment is nothing more than a political stunt that should never have seen the light of day. Beijing is watching, my friends. Passing this amendment is a win for China. Do not be fooled.

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

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I think everyone has to be honest in here and admit to the fact that our United States military has a strong presence in the Indo-Pacific. The United States is not backing down to China. However, we shouldn't have to fund Taiwan's security and military at \$1 billion.

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

Ms. TOKUDA. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. McCORMICK).

Mr. McCORMICK. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to Ms. GREENE's amendment to eliminate funding for the Taiwan Security Cooperation Initiative.

I know that my colleague is trying to save money and put America first, and I respect that, but defunding support to Taiwan that was requested by the Trump administration has consequences that would do exactly the opposite of what I believe the gentlewoman is trying to achieve.

Peace through strength saves money, saves lives, and puts American interests first. President Trump recognized that, which is why he requested Congress double the funding for this program to preserve peace in a critically important region.

Trade in the Indo-Pacific accounts for about 40 percent of the world's GDP. Around 21 percent of the global trade passes through the Taiwan Straits, including 40 percent of the world's container fleet. The Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company produces 90 percent of the world's AI chips, which are crucial to the American economy.

A war in this region would be a global catastrophe. Our Taiwanese allies are already awaiting overdue delivery of American military supplies.

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

Ms. TOKUDA. Mr. Chair, may I inquire as to how much time I have remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman has 2 minutes remaining.

Ms. TOKUDA. Mr. Chair, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. McCORMICK. Mr. Chair, they are waiting for supplies they have already paid for. This amendment sends the wrong signal at the worst time. A withdrawal of our support would defeat Trump's initiatives to shore up this critically important part of the world, save us money, save us ultimate deficit spending in defense of a region that we need to critically supply.

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chair, not only have I introduced amendments to defund Ukraine, defund \$115 million in humanitarian assistance for foreign countries, defund \$1 billion from Taiwan, I have also introduced amendments to defund money to Israel, Syria, Iraq, and the border security for Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, and Pakistan, but those amendments were not made in order, so I didn't get to debate those today.

The reason why I introduced those amendments is because I believe our funding for our United States military should be for our country only because it is the defense of our country only that should matter, and that is what matters to the American people.

They are absolutely fed up. Every single one of my colleagues can go back home to their districts and face their constituents, and their constituents will tell them: We are sick of the foreign wars. We are sick of the foreign aid. That is a matter of fact.

I will tell you why. It is because the American Dream has become unattainable today. The median age of first-time home buyers is 38 years old, compared to 29 in the 1980s. The cost of college tuition has increased by about 130 percent in the past two decades. Graduates leave with massive amounts of debt and are unable to find jobs. The youth unemployment rate is at 10.8 percent. The average health insurance premium for a family has risen by 22 percent since 2018 and 47 percent since 2013.

This is an America last Congress, and this is every single Congress. As we debate these bills, it is always about sending more money to more foreign countries for their foreign causes because every foreign country has a plea and a request and a reason to ask America to write them checks.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TOKUDA. Madam Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ROGERS).

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Chair, in recent years, China has increased the size, scope, and complexity of its drills around Taiwan. As Admiral Paparo has said: These are not exercises. They are rehearsals for a forced reunification.

President Trump understands that supporting Taiwan's self-defense now is the surest way to deter CCP aggression. I agree. That is why the President and the Pentagon requested \$1 billion for the Taiwan Security Cooperation Initiative in FY26. This bill fully funds President Trump's budget request. To do otherwise would put peace and security in Taiwan at risk. Therefore, I oppose this amendment and urge my colleagues to vote "no."

□ 1430

Ms. TOKUDA. Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Madam Chair, the issue here is it is always about another country, and it is always America last. We are \$37 trillion in debt. I can tell you right now there is becoming a big difference between how young Americans feel versus how older Americans feel. This body is absolutely tone deaf when it comes to spending and priorities.

When young Americans today are hopeless for the future, don't believe that they will be able to afford to buy a home, can't afford the cost of living, but yet here in Congress the debate goes on and on about how much more money we should send to more foreign countries around the world, the United States Congress is absolutely losing the support of the American people. That goes for both political parties.

Madam Chair, I urge the support of my amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. TOKUDA. Madam Speaker, we have heard strong voices from both sides of the aisle that this is a bad, reckless, dangerous amendment. Every dollar and day we spend supporting Taiwan is another day we keep our servicemembers, our children, and our grandchildren out of war. This is about putting Americans first.

It is a very simple decision. I ask my colleagues to vote "no."

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

The Acting CHAIR (Ms. VAN DUYN). The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. GREENE).

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

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 25 OFFERED BY MR. MCCORMICK

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 25 printed in part A of House Report 119-255.

Mr. MCCORMICK. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 853, beginning line 8, strike "is amended by striking subsection (c)." and insert the following: "is amended—"

(1) in subsection (a), by striking "does not" and all that follows through the end and inserting the following: "does not—"

"(1) rate or rank news or information sources for the factual accuracy of their content;

"(2) provide ratings or opinions on news or information sources regarding misinformation, bias, adherence to journalistic standards, or ethics; or

"(3) acquire or use any service that provides any ratings, rankings, or opinions described in paragraph (1) or (2) from any other person."; and

(2) by striking subsection (c).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 682, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. MCCORMICK) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. MCCORMICK. Madam Chair, I rise and offer my amendment No. 25 to H.R. 3838, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2026.

My amendment expands on language already in law, in this bill, and in the Senate NDAA to combat the indirect censorship of conservative news outlets in the Department of War.

Section 1555 of the fiscal year 2024 NDAA required that the DOD, when contracting with organizations that place military recruitment advertisements, must certify that an organiza-

tion does not place advertisements based on political bias or the determination that a media outlet spreads so-called misinformation.

The language is necessary because the DOD, or now the Department of War, has contracted with organizations such as NewsGuard and the Global Disinformation Index.

According to the Media Research Center, the average NewsGuard score for the left and lean-left outlets was a green shield rating of 91 of 100, while the average rating for the right and lean-right outlets was a low of 66 of 100.

A Global Disinformation Index report on the online news lists the 10 riskiest online news outlets as the New York Post, The Federalist, The Blaze, The Daily Wire, Newsmax, One America News Network, The American Spectator, The American Conservative, Reason Magazine, and RealClear Politics. They are all conservative.

Left-leaning sites like ProPublica.com, NPR.org, NewYorkTimes.com, WashingtonPost.com, BuzzFeedNews.com, and HuffingtonPost.com were among the 10 lowest risk online news sites.

We should not be excluding large swaths of Americans simply because they watch or read conservative news, especially when considering that recruiting is hard enough without excluding this demographic.

My amendment adds language to clarify the standards on what exact bias looks like, as well as by striking the 1-year sunset included in subsection (c).

This language is already in the Senate NDAA. I thank Senator TUBERVILLE for his leadership in pushing this forward. I ask for my colleagues' support on amendment No. 25.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Chair, I yield myself 2 minutes.

We have dealt with this issue on a number of levels. It is already in the underlying bill. This expands it to any organization that is deemed to be engaging in fact-checking. Basically what this amendment has done—and it is in law from last year; now we are making it permanent and expanding it—is basically if you are an organization that checks for factual accuracy, we don't want to do business with you, which is just a remarkable statement in terms of how we approach this. I think we should want people to check facts.

For example, it is not the Department of War. It is the Department of Defense. It is in the statute. It is the law. The President can say whatever he wants to say, but the law still says it is the Department of Defense. If he wants to put into the law that he is going to change that, that is fine; but it is factually inaccurate to say that it is the Department of War.

Yes, the statistics seem to show that rightwing news agencies score lower on

factual accuracy. There are two reasons possible for why that happens. One is the bias that the gentleman, the maker of the amendment, says. The other is that they are more likely to be factually inaccurate, which seems to be the more likely outcome.

I also want to make clear, we are not excluding anything. In fact, this amendment is what excludes things. If you are an organization that checks facts, we are going to exclude you from who we are going to do business with.

I would just let out a heavy sigh at this moment about how do you engage in that sort of conversation? If you want to take a close look at this and say: The way you are checking for factual accuracy, we think it is wrong. We don't think you are being fair. We don't think you are doing this right. Okay. Fine.

Now we are just going to say: Don't look. Don't check. Don't think about it. It is your truth.

We are going to go with—the leftwing version of this is: Your truth is as much truth as anybody else's. The rightwing version of this is: We are going with alternative facts.

I still want to live in the factual universe. If you join me in that cause, let's defeat this amendment.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCORMICK. Madam Chair, I find it rather distracting that my peer on the other side of the aisle thinks that one person controls the truth. That, by and large, he thinks that conservative media is lying and that liberal media is telling the truth.

The fact of the matter is, during the Biden administration when all of this came to be, where we start fact-checking, recruiting went down miserably. We had a recruiting problem we have never seen in America since the Vietnam war. We had a problem getting the Army up to par. The only service that made their recruiting goals was the United States Marine Corps. I would like to say it is because of their amazing commercials, but I am sure it is far more than that.

What we know is they have a job to do. We are hurting the recruitment efforts by taking out a demographic based on your idea of what is accurate and truthful, rather than doing your job of bringing people into the military to make sure that we are sustaining a lethal force moving forward. That is our goal. That is as American as you get, and it is not a partisan issue.

Trying to figure out which news agency should be advertised on, based on your idea of what the truth is, is really a side-note argument that should be kept in this room, not on the political front in front of the future soldiers, marines, sailors, and airmen that we need to sustain our force.

□ 1440

Madam Chair, I would say, since we instituted this bill last year: Guess what? Maybe it is because we have a

new President or maybe it is because we can now advertise to the people who are most likely to join our Armed Services.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Chair, I would make a couple of quick points.

Madam Chair, first of all, I am not remotely saying the left is right and the right is wrong or anything like that. This amendment says we are not going to even examine the question. That is the problem I have. I fully admit the left is wrong frequently. I think we ought to factually check that. Here, we are saying don't factually check that.

While we are on the subject of facts, COVID played a little bit of a role in our recruitment problem. I don't think anyone who is being fair about analysis would dispute that. Again, here we hear: Oh, no, it wasn't COVID. It was the fact that, where we advertised, we didn't place it here.

Madam Chair, come on. COVID is what impacted our recruitment, which is why I think we should allow people to check facts. It is not that the left is always right. They are frequently not. Believe me. I live those arguments back home in my district, and I argue the other side of it. I just think we should at least try and figure it out.

Madam Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CISNEROS).

Mr. CISNEROS. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman for recognizing me. This highly partisan amendment would prevent DOD from contracting with entities that perform fact-checking for recruitment purposes.

Explain to me how we are enhancing national security, deterring our adversaries, and, most importantly, increasing servicemember quality-of-life needs by going after a contract.

In my previous role, I oversaw recruiting for the military services. Never did one of them ever come to me stating they couldn't recruit because of this tool.

As the gentleman said, it had to do with COVID. It was because the services weren't putting money into their recruiting budgets. That is why recruiting went down.

It is amendments like this that not only put our national security at risk but make this bipartisan process crumble before us in the House.

Madam Chair, do you know who loves to feed this information through sites that don't fact-check? Russia, Iran, the People's Republic of China, and other adversaries do.

Republican leadership has continued to fail the American people by making this bipartisan bill a rightwing culture war process. When we should be debating the administration deploying Active-Duty servicemembers on U.S. citizens in our cities or managing the de-

structive mess Hegseth and Trump have turned the Pentagon into, we are dealing with this nonsense.

Madam Chair, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this amendment.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Chair, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Washington has 30 seconds remaining. The gentleman from Georgia has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. MCCORMICK. Madam Chair, I love the fact the other side just said that it is factual that COVID is the reason we couldn't recruit.

When I came into Congress, we had the President of the United States say we can take off masks, that the pandemic is over. For the first 2 years of my service here in Congress, the pandemic was over. Yet we could not recruit.

Therefore, I want to point out that the gentleman literally put misinformation in his argument, which proves my point. Should I censor him from being able to present his case right here in front of the American people? No, I would say not. He is allowed to give us misinformation like he just did.

COVID was over. We couldn't recruit. Then we changed the law. We changed the President. We have mass recruiting efforts being reinforced. It was down-right misinformation just to say that COVID didn't allow us to recruit. We have seen that in recent history.

The pandemic has been over for 2 years now. It didn't change until we had a new President and new laws. That was misinformation. To my point, they interpret their misinformation. I interpret mine.

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Chair, actually he made my point. He just fact-checked me. Good for him. I disagree, which I will get to in a second, but he fact-checked me.

What their amendment does is it doesn't allow that. It just allows it to hang out there. They can't fact-check it.

The facts are recruitment picked up a year before Trump came back in office. We all know this. Recruitment improved for a long time. There was a bit of a lag in time, yes, until 2022 and 2023. They caught up with the lag. Recruitment improved for a year before Trump showed up in office. It continues to do well.

I would say that that argues it was, in fact, COVID that drove it. I would love to have that discussion. I would love to have people check out facts and have a debate and not cut off all fact-checking.

Madam Chair, I ask my colleagues to please oppose this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

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

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

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

The Chair understands that amendment No. 26 will not be offered.

AMENDMENT NO. 29 OFFERED BY MR. BIGGS OF ARIZONA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 29 printed in part A of House Report 119-225.

Mr. BIGGS of Arizona. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title XVII, add the following new section:

SEC. 17. EXCLUSIONS FROM ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT OF 1973 WITH RESPECT TO MILITARY INSTITUTIONS AND FOR DEFENSE-RELATED OPERATIONS.

(a) EXCLUSION OF MILITARY INSTITUTIONS AS CRITICAL HABITAT.—Section 4(a)(3)(B) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1533(a)(3)(B)) is amended to read as follows:

“(i) The Secretary shall not designate as critical habitat—

“(I) any military installation or a State-owned National Guard installation, or any portion thereof, as such terms are defined in section 100 of the Sikes Act (16 U.S.C. 670); or

“(II) any other lands, waters, or geographical area not described in subclause (I) that is otherwise designated for use by the Secretary of Defense including by any contractor of the Department of Defense, if the Secretary of Defense determines in writing and submitted to the Secretary of the Interior that such area is necessary for military training, weapons testing, or any other reason determined appropriate by such Secretary of Defense.

“(ii) The Secretary of Defense shall not be required to consult with the Secretary of the Interior, under section 7(a)(2) of this Act with respect to agency action, regardless of whether the area described in clause (i) is subject to an integrated natural resources management plan prepared under section 101 of the Sikes Act (16 U.S.C. 670a).”.

(b) EXCLUSION FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE-RELATED OPERATIONS.—Section 10 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1539) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(k) EXCLUSION FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE-RELATED OPERATIONS.—

“(1) EXCLUSIONS.—The prohibitions under section 9 shall not apply with respect to—

“(A) the taking of any endangered species or threatened species, or the importation or exportation of any such species taken as prohibited by such section, by military personnel engaged in a national defense-related operation;

“(B) damaging or destroying any threatened or endangered species, or removing, cutting, digging up, damaging, or destroying any such species, by military personnel engaged in a national defense-related operation; or

“(C) an injury to or mortality of a threatened or endangered species that results from, but is not the purpose of, a national defense-related operation, regardless of whether the operation is conducted on a military installation or other area described in section 4(a)(3)(B)(i).

“(2) DEFINITIONS.—For the purposes of this subsection—

“(A) the term ‘national defense-related operation’ means—

“(i) research, development, testing, and evaluation of military munitions, other ordnance, and weapons systems;

“(ii) the training of members of the Armed Forces in the use and handling of military munitions, other ordnance, and weapons systems;

“(iii) general training and military preparedness; or

“(iv) any action or duty that the Secretary of Defense deems necessary to support the Department of Defense in its mission; and

“(B) the term ‘military personnel’ means—

“(i) a member of the Armed Forces; and

“(ii) a civilian employee or contractor (including a subcontractor at any tier) of the—

“(I) Department of Defense (including a nonappropriated fund instrumentality of the Department); or

“(II) any other Federal agency, or any provisional authority, to the extent such employment relates to supporting the mission of the Department of Defense overseas.”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 682, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. BIGGS of Arizona. Madam Chair, our brave servicemen and service-women stand ready to defend this Nation against any threat; but they cannot prepare for tomorrow's battles if today's training grounds are shackled by outdated and overreaching regulations.

The Endangered Species Act, once intended as a shield for vulnerable wildlife, has morphed into a weapon wielded by radical activists and unelected bureaucrats that cripple our military's readiness and drain billions from our defense budget.

Madam Chair, consider this. The War Department manages nearly 27 million acres of land, waters, and airspace, which are vital for testing cutting-edge technologies, honing combat skills, and ensuring our Forces remain the world's finest.

Yet as many as 550 threatened or endangered species call these areas home, which triggers endless ESA restrictions that hamstring essential training and operations.

At Fort Huachuca in Arizona, for example, the Sonoran tiger salamanders' designated critical wetland habitat requires strict protection measures. That means environmental reviews and limits on land use, construction, and water management. All those delay vital infrastructure projects and constrain training exercises during breeding seasons.

On top of that, Fort Huachuca must carry out ongoing monitoring, predator control, and habitat management, all under ESA guidelines, which impose onerous constraints on our ability to train and be ready for our warriors. The same could be said about the Barry M. Goldwater Range, also in Arizona.

It is not just Arizona. This happens to Guam, as well, for instance. Guam's military installations face extreme challenges related to ESA from the

invasive brown tree snake, which has devastated native wildlife and forced costly and elaborate mitigation programs.

On Guam, the military must deploy snake-proof fencing, trap-and-bait programs, and train detection dogs to prevent brown tree snake incursions on military equipment and cargo, significantly complicating logistics, readiness, and training activities.

This forces the Department of War to divert funds to wildlife management, while mission-critical activities grind to a halt.

Activist groups exploit the ESA through relentless litigation and red tape, imposing critical habitat designations that do precious little to recover species but everything to block land use and weaken our defenses. They are a direct assault on our national security.

After more than 50 years since its enactment in 1973, the ESA's track record is abysmal. Fewer than 2 percent of listed species have been delisted. That isn't a success story. That is proof of a flawed perpetual regulatory machine that prioritizes special interest agendas over sound science and our soldiers' needs.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1450

Ms. ELFRETH. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ELFRETH. Madam Chair, House Natural Resources Committee Democrats strongly oppose Biggs amendment No. 29, which seeks to weaken the Department of Defense's work to preserve habitats crucial for military readiness and recovering vulnerable species.

The DOD covers millions of acres, spanning a vast array of natural habitats and providing that realistic backdrop for training and testing. Healthy and well-managed natural ecosystems play an essential role in maintaining the readiness of our military troops, an advantage that is unique to the U.S. military.

The military has even used ESA-listed wildlife to add complexity to training exercises, treating them as sensitive infrastructure to avoid as they would for schools or hospitals in another environment.

This amendment not only erodes this longstanding work, but it also doesn't reflect what the DOD actually needs. The DOD has not now or ever before requested this language.

Madam Chair, I strongly urge my colleagues to reject this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BIGGS of Arizona. Madam Chair, let me reiterate: Activist groups exploit the ESA through relentless litigation and red tape, curtailing and preventing full training and preparation by our military.

This amendment is nonnegotiable. It draws a clear line: Military and National Guard lands cannot be arbitrarily designated as critical habitat if the Department of War deems them essential for national defense.

I want to take the same argument that was used on the last bill when Mr. CISNEROS of California said, good grief, our adversaries don't care about this question of censorship. I am telling you, Madam Chair, our adversaries don't care about this question of the environment and the ESA.

It exempts our personnel from ESA prohibitions during defense-related operations. That is what is happening, even if incidental harm occurs, because in the heat of preparation for real-world threats, we cannot afford to pause for paperwork.

The ESA was not meant to become a tool for endless lawsuits, environmental extremism, or regulatory overreach that jeopardizes our ability to deter adversaries.

Madam Chair, now is the moment for bold action and clarity. National defense must eclipse this misguided focus on the ESA. The ESA has only delisted 2 percent of the hundreds and thousands of species that it has listed.

We cannot handcuff America's military. Our enemies are not waiting for environmental impact studies. They are advancing relentlessly.

If we vote against this, we are choosing endangered species over war preparedness and defending this country. This is essential, and it is a lifeline for security.

Madam Chair, I urge my colleagues to stand up for our troops and pass the measure today, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ELFRETH. Madam Chair, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER).

Mr. BEYER. Madam Chair, as co-chair of the Congressional Endangered Species Caucus, I rise today in opposition to this amendment.

I can't believe that we are here again considering this unpopular amendment. It was brutally defeated last year, and it was crushed the year before, both times with bipartisan support.

The Endangered Species Act has wide popularity, but our current biodiversity outlook has really worsened. Our scientific community continues to scream from the rooftops that biodiversity shrinking is a danger to humanity.

In the meantime, our national defense is in no way endangered by saving endangered species. Amazingly, this is basically an attack on the Endangered Species Act that the Department of Defense has never asked for. It is a solution in search of a problem.

The Department of Defense already has a robust collaboration with the Department of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service. They do management plans everywhere.

Military lands are already excluded from designation as a critical habitat

when there are management plans in place for listed species. Wholesale exempting the Department of Defense and its many contractors from compliance with the ESA puts our Nation's national legacy at needless risk.

To date, as the Member from Arizona has mentioned, 99 percent of the species listed under the ESA have been saved from disappearing forever, making this one of the most successful pieces of legislation in American history.

Actions to protect these species do not hinder national security, and managing endangered species in balance with our mission is something the Department of Defense already does very well.

Madam Chair, I urge my colleagues, once more, to reject this unwanted and unnecessary amendment.

Ms. ELFRETH. Madam Chair, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Maryland has 2½ minutes remaining.

Ms. ELFRETH. Madam Chair, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. TOKUDA).

Ms. TOKUDA. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to this amendment, which would create broad exemptions from the Endangered Species Act on military and National Guard lands. In Hawaii, this would be akin to a taking.

The idea that protecting endangered species and maintaining readiness are mutually exclusive is simply false. Across the country, including in Hawaii, the Department of Defense has shown it can partner with conservation experts and local communities to safeguard fragile ecosystems while still meeting its mission.

We should be doing more to hold the Department of Defense accountable and strengthening these efforts, not giving it a blank check to disregard environmental laws whenever it claims national security.

In Hawaii, where trust around military land use is damaged, quite frankly, and lease negotiations are ongoing, accountability is not optional. A backdoor taking of our lands is 100 percent unacceptable.

Allowing this amendment to pass would set a dangerous precedent, undo decades of progress, and erode community trust. Protecting our environment and ensuring national defense are not opposing goals. They are shared responsibilities that we must uphold together.

Madam Chair, I strongly urge my colleagues to reject this amendment.

Ms. ELFRETH. Madam Chair, I will close by reiterating that the Department of Defense has not now nor ever before requested this language. Over 20 of my Republican colleagues recognize this very real truth, having voted against this exact language and understanding that responsible conservation and strong national defense go hand in hand.

Madam Chair, I urge my colleagues to reject this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

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

Ms. ELFRETH. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

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

The Chair understands that amendment No. 31 will not be offered.

The Chair understands that amendment No. 32 will not be offered.

AMENDMENT NO. 33 OFFERED BY MR. ROUZER

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 33 printed in part A of House Report 119-255.

Mr. ROUZER. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title XVII, add the following:

SEC. 1724. LUMBEE TRIBE OF NORTH CAROLINA.

The Act of June 7, 1956 (70 Stat. 254, chapter 375), is amended—

(1) by striking section 2;

(2) in the first sentence of the first section, by striking “That the Indians” and inserting the following:

“**SEC. 3. DESIGNATION OF LUMBEE INDIANS.**

“The Indians—”;

(3) in the preamble—

(A) by inserting before the first undesignated clause the following:

“**SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

“Congress finds that—”;

(B) by designating the undesignated clauses as paragraphs (1) through (4), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(C) by striking “Whereas” each place it appears;

(D) by striking “and” after the semicolon at the end of each of paragraphs (1) and (2) (as so designated); and

(E) in paragraph (4) (as so designated), by striking “: Now, therefore,” and inserting a period;

(4) by moving the enacting clause so as to appear before section 1 (as so designated);

(5) by striking the last sentence of section 3 (as designated by paragraph (2));

(6) by inserting before section 3 (as designated by paragraph (2)) the following:

“**SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

“In this Act, the term ‘Secretary’ means the Secretary of the Interior.”; and

(7) by adding at the end the following:

“**SEC. 4. FEDERAL RECOGNITION.**

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Federal recognition is extended to the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina (as designated as petitioner number 65 by the Office of Federal Acknowledgment).

“(b) APPLICABILITY OF LAWS.—All laws and regulations of the United States of general application to Indians and Indian tribes shall apply to the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina and its members.

“**SEC. 5. ELIGIBILITY FOR FEDERAL SERVICES.**

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina and its members shall be eligible for all services and benefits provided by the Federal Government to federally recognized Indian tribes.

“(b) SERVICE AREA.—For the purpose of the delivery of Federal services and benefits described in subsection (a), those members of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina residing in Robeson, Cumberland, Hoke, and Scotland counties in North Carolina shall be deemed to be residing on or near an Indian reservation.

“(c) DETERMINATION OF NEEDS.—On verification by the Secretary of a tribal roll under subsection (d), the Secretary and the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall—

“(1) develop, in consultation with the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, a determination of needs to provide the services for which members of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina are eligible; and

“(2) after the tribal roll is verified, each submit to Congress a written statement of those needs.

“(d) TRIBAL ROLL.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—For purpose of the delivery of Federal services and benefits described in subsection (a), the tribal roll in effect on the date of enactment of this section shall, subject to verification by the Secretary, define the service population of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina.

“(2) VERIFICATION LIMITATION AND DEADLINE.—The verification by the Secretary under paragraph (1) shall—

“(A) be limited to confirming documentary proof of compliance with the membership criteria set out in the constitution of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina adopted on November 16, 2001; and

“(B) be completed not later than 2 years after the submission of a digitized roll by the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina to the Secretary.

“**SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION TO TAKE LAND INTO TRUST.**

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary is hereby authorized to take land into trust for the benefit of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina.

“(b) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN LAND.—An application to take into trust land located within Robeson County, North Carolina, under this section shall be treated by the Secretary as an ‘on reservation’ trust acquisition under part 151 of title 25, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation).

“**SEC. 7. JURISDICTION OF STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA.**

“(a) IN GENERAL.—With respect to land located within the State of North Carolina that is owned by, or held in trust by the United States for the benefit of, the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, or any dependent Indian community of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, the State of North Carolina shall exercise jurisdiction over—

“(1) all criminal offenses that are committed; and

“(2) all civil actions that arise.

“(b) TRANSFER OF JURISDICTION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to section 403 of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (25 U.S.C. 1323), and subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary may accept on behalf of the United States, after consulting with the Attorney General of the United States, any transfer by the State of North Carolina to the United States of any portion of the jurisdiction of the State of North Carolina described in subsection (a) over Indian country occupied by the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina pursuant to an agreement between the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina and the State of North Carolina.

“(2) RESTRICTION.—A transfer of jurisdiction described in paragraph (1) may not take effect until 2 years after the effective date of the agreement described in that paragraph.

“(c) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section affects the application of section 109 of the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 1919).”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 682, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ROUZER) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. ROUZER. Madam Chair, I rise in support of my amendment to include the Lumbee Fairness Act in the bill before us today, providing the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina the full Federal recognition they have been unfairly denied for decades.

Throughout recorded history, the Lumbee Tribe, comprised of nearly 60,000 members, has called southeastern North Carolina home. Despite their long history and cohesive culture, the Lumbee have never had access to the same Federal benefits enjoyed by every other federally recognized Tribes.

During what is referred to as the termination era, Congress passed the Lumbee Act of 1956 recognizing the Tribe yet denying them the Federal rights and protections afforded to other federally recognized Tribes.

Beginning in 1978, the Federal Government began rectifying the damage done during this era. Since then, Congress has stepped in, reversed its previous actions, and recognized 23 Tribes through legislation reestablishing their relationship with the Federal Government.

Legislation to rectify this for the Lumbee Tribe has been introduced in Congress more than 30 times with broad bipartisan support. In the past two Congresses, in fact, the House passed this legislation under suspension, most recently on December 17, 2024.

Outside of Congress, the Lumbee Fairness Act has the support of 236 Tribes across the country that have repeatedly cited the unfair treatment of the Tribe under the 1956 Lumbee Act.

Today, Congress can take a major step forward to end the unfair and unjust treatment of the Lumbee Tribe once and for all.

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

□ 1500

Mr. SMITH of Washington. I claim the time in opposition, though I am not opposed.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. HERN of Oklahoma). Without objection, the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes. There was no objection.

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

Mr. ROUZER. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HARRIS).

Mr. HARRIS of North Carolina. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

For far too long, the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina has been wrongfully denied full Federal recognition, but today is a chance to make it right.

With over 55,000 individuals, the Lumbee people are a core part of my district and the great State of North Carolina. I am honored to be their advocate in Washington.

I know firsthand that they are salt-of-the-earth, hardworking patriots who deserve access to Federal services like their Tribal counterparts.

We must take legislative action to fix this problem and amend the 1956 law that currently prohibits this access.

Last Congress, Members across the aisle, as has already been mentioned, overwhelmingly voted to restore these rights to the Lumbee Tribe, but there wasn't time for the bill to clear the Senate. Today is our opportunity to get this crucial issue finally across the finish line. A vote today for the Lumbee people will fix a historic injustice, and I urge support of this amendment.

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

Mr. ROUZER. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCDOWELL).

Mr. MCDOWELL. Mr. Chair, my home State of North Carolina has recognized the Lumbee Tribe since 1885, yet for more than 135 years, their fight for full Federal recognition has been blocked by red tape and indifference.

In 1956, Congress acknowledged the Lumbee Tribe but cruelly denied them the services and the benefits afforded to other federally recognized Tribes. That mistake has never been corrected, but finally Congress has the opportunity to right its wrong.

The Lumbees are more than 55,000 strong, making them the largest Tribe east of the Mississippi. They have defended this Nation in uniform. They have contributed to our economy and preserved a proud heritage that strengthens our State and our country.

Today, this House has an opportunity to finally deliver justice for the “People of the Dark Water” of North Carolina. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote “yes.”

Mr. ROUZER. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MOORE).

Mr. MOORE of North Carolina. Mr. Chair, we are not here today to recognize the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina. The Lumbee Tribe was already recognized by the United States Congress in 1956.

We are, however, here today to right a wrong, to end the termination era of Indian policy, and to take the Lumbee out of the legal limbo that they have been in for almost 70 years. It is the job of this Congress to right the wrongs of the past.

During the early 1900s, the Lumbee had numerous Indian agents sent by the U.S. Government go to the homelands, study them, collect data, and de-

termine if they are, in fact, Indian. Each time the Indian agents returned to the District of Columbia, they reported back that these were indeed Indian people. They were Indian people who had survived disease, warfare, and colonization.

I know the Lumbee personally. They are a resilient, strong, and proud people. The Lumbee have served this country in every branch of the military. They contribute to our society. The Lumbee have a strong faith in God. They are good friends who value education, hard work, and community.

I am proud to stand with the Lumbee and urge this body to vote today to end a decades-long wrong.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ROUZER).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 34 OFFERED BY MR. MEEKS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 34 printed in part A of House Report 119-255.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title XVII, add the following:

SEC. 17. REPEAL OF AUTHORIZATIONS FOR USE OF MILITARY FORCE RELATING TO IRAQ.

The following are hereby repealed:

(1) Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102-1; 105 Stat. 3; 50 U.S.C. 1541 note) is hereby repealed.

(2) The Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (Public Law 107-243; 116 Stat. 1498; 50 U.S.C. 1541 note) is hereby repealed.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 682, the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

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

Mr. Chair, I rise in strong support of my amendment to the NDAA, which would finally repeal both the 2002 and the 1991 Authorizations for Use of Military Force, or AUMFs. These AUMFs are long obsolete.

By remaining on the books, these AUMFs only risk abuse by administrations of either party to sanction military force that Congress has not considered or approved.

It is time for Congress to reclaim its constitutional authority over matters of war and peace, its Article I war powers, by removing these open-ended AUMFs once and for all.

I am thankful to my colleagues who have worked to pass these repeals, having nearly passed both Chambers in the 117th and 118th Congress. I am particularly thankful to Representatives ROY

and MASSIE, along with many cosponsors who have joined this bipartisan effort.

This amendment is going to pass because a clear majority of this House agree it is time to close these chapters of endless wars. I am prepared to fight in conference to get this over the finish line.

It is time to once and for all end these forever wars.

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

Mr. MAST. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

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

Mr. MAST. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to this amendment I am going to say for procedural reasons, but there are procedures that are important here. The ranking member should know this.

As members of the Foreign Affairs Committee, we have sole jurisdiction over powers of war. What goes on abroad with war is not flippant activity. It affects the lives of soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen that are stationed abroad in Europe, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. While I agree with a lot of the comments that the ranking member just made about reasons to say there should be sunsets on AUMF—and I didn't hear everything that my colleague Mr. MEEKS said, but I am sure undoubtedly we have agreement on why there should be sunsets on these things—it cannot be done without bringing in the CENTCOM commander and this commander and this commander and this commander and saying: What are your thoughts on this? What effects does this have on our ability to react or deploy? What effects does this have on those downrange in counterterrorism operations as we speak? What needs to be put back in place in order for us to not be afoul of something that we are doing right now?

These are questions that were not asked, and the answers were not given. This goes beyond just our generals in the Pentagon. It goes to our Secretaries. It goes to others. They are absolutely questions that I am committed to asking and questions that I am committed to finding the answers to and in a timely way. I consider it to be vitally important.

Again, we have, I think, probably large agreement on reasons to sunset things, but it should not be done in the absence of doing something of this gravity in the proper way.

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

□ 1510

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Chair, in response to the chairman, I will say that we asked those questions in the 117th and the 118th Congress. We continually ask the same questions. We have gotten the answers, and I think it is time to move on and to get this done.

Mr. Chair, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY).

Mr. ROY. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from New York. I am proud to work with him and others of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and to stand for a simple proposition that, 23 years after this Chamber authorized force, at a time when most of the Members who did so aren't even here, at a time when numerous facts have changed, after Saddam Hussein was captured in 2003 and was executed in 2006, when troops were withdrawn and the hostilities were over in 2011, and then we went back in—regarding ISIS—and then out by 2021, that we should not be operating under a 23-year-old authorization of the use of military force. We can do better than that.

We are not touching 2001. We are touching 2002 and 1991. Come on. Mr. Chair, we don't need to have Congress effectively, modern day, declaring war and leaving it in place for one-quarter of a freakin' century or, in this case, 34 years since 1991.

We can do better. If we want to actually authorize force, we should deliberate, vote, and authorize force, but Article I has to mean something. Please support this amendment to end an endless authorization of force.

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

Ms. JACOBS. Mr. Chairman, these AUMFs were literally voted on when I was 2 years old and 13 years old, respectively, and now I am old enough to be a Member of Congress.

Let's be clear. Presidents from both parties have abused these AUMFs, and my generation is tired of these endless, forever wars. We know that President Trump will exploit, bend, and break any law. The courts have even said it. That is why this body should leave no ambiguity, no wiggle room, and no daylight about our congressional intent and congressional authority. Congress has the sole constitutional right to declare war, not President Trump or any other President.

Yet, we have already seen this President take unauthorized military strikes in places like Yemen, Somalia, Syria, and Iraq. Earlier this year, he launched strikes on Iran without congressional authorization. Right now, he is weighing military strikes on cartels in Venezuela and hasn't sought congressional authorization.

This body should not sit idly by while the President makes a mockery of our Constitution and our laws. We—only we—have the power to declare war. I urge my colleagues to pass our bipartisan amendment and repeal these outdated AUMFs.

The Acting CHAIR. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York has ¾ minutes remaining.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLS).

Mr. MILLS. Mr. Chairman, as my colleagues have pointed out, it is very simple. Article I, Section 8, Clauses 11 through 13, are the war powers of Congress, granted to us and given to us. It states very clearly: "Congress shall have the power to declare war, grant letters of marque and reprisal, and make rules concerning captures on land and water."

Yet, the key thing is that Congress shall have power, not abdicating our roles and responsibilities and not continuing endless wars that spend trillions of dollars and thousands of American lives. We need to bring the power back to Congress to ensure that it is not being abused by anyone within the executive authority, regardless of who is in the actual seat.

This is very simple, Mr. Chairman. We have abdicated and abdicated to where the Article I section of the Constitution no longer has its intended powers and purposes that it initially had. We must get that back, and I support this.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS).

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

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 253 OFFERED BY MR. ROSE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 253 printed in part A of House Report 119-255.

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title X, add the following new section:

SEC. 10. REPORT ON RED FLAGS MISSED IN FRAUD SCHEME PERPETRATED BY JANET YAMANAKA MELLO.

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report on the fraud scheme perpetrated by Janet Yamanaka Mello, a civilian employee of the Department of the Army, who was indicted and pleaded guilty to stealing over \$100,000,000 in 4-H Military Partnership Grant program funds.

(b) CONTENTS OF REPORT.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include each of the following:

(1) A description of the breakdown in the supervision of Mello, including any failures of management or oversight that contributed to the ability of Mello to carry out the fraud scheme undetected.

(2) A description of the breakdown in accountability with respect to the loss of the stolen funds, including any failures to ensure that such funds were actually being spent for the purposes for which such funds were intended.

(3) A description of the failure to ensure that financial program managers, such as Mello, are not able to funnel Government funds to themselves or their own entities.

(4) An identification of any other red flags or warning signs that were missed or ignored by employees of the Department of Defense, including any instances of whistleblower retaliation or suppression of concerns.

(5) An assessment of the policies and procedures of the Department of Defense and Department of the Army, as of the date of the enactment of this Act, designed to prevent employees from perpetrating similar fraud schemes in the future.

(6) Recommendations for improvements to the policies, procedures, and oversight of the Department of Defense and Department of the Army to prevent employees from perpetrating similar fraud schemes in the future.

(7) A description of any disciplinary or administrative actions taken against any individuals or entities found to have contributed to the ability of Mello to carry out the fraud scheme.

(8) A description of any changes made, or planned to be made, to the financial management and oversight processes of the Department of Defense and the Department of the Army as a result of the fraud scheme perpetrated by Mello.

(9) An assessment of the effects of the fraud scheme perpetrated by Mello on the programs and operations of the Department of Defense and the Department of the Army.

(10) Any other information the Secretary of Defense determines relevant to understanding the fraud scheme perpetrated by Mello and preventing employees from perpetrating similar fraud schemes in the future.

(c) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The Secretary of Defense shall make the report required under subsection (a) publicly available on an appropriate website of the Department of Defense.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 682, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROSE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

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

Mr. Chair, I rise in support of my amendment to H.R. 3838, Streamlining Procurement for Effective Execution of Delivery and the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2026.

My amendment is intended to address the Janet Mello fraud case, the Army civilian who was indicted and pleaded guilty to stealing over \$100 million that were intended for the 4-H Military Partnership Grant Program.

The 4-H Military Partnership Grant Program serves 4-H clubs that are in many military installation youth centers. These programs include 4-H positive youth development programming, engaging in hands-on learning in day and overnight summer camps, including military team adventure camps.

We, as a nation, ask so much of our military families. Frequent moves can be especially difficult for children. However, the 4-H Military Partnership

Grant Program can serve as a lifeline to military families by providing continuity, as it is often the case that a family can move from one installation to another and maintain active participation in 4-H programs because they are located at so many military installations.

Janet Mello ruthlessly plundered more than \$100 million from this program meant to support the children of our military heroes. This calculated betrayal was not only a staggering act of theft but a cruel assault on the very families who sacrifice the most for our Nation's freedom. By draining critical resources, she robbed military children of the opportunities and security promised through 4-H.

The American people deserve answers, and they deserve to know how such a monumental fraud was allowed to fester in the shadows for so long. My amendment requires a report on how this fraud was missed, what red flags were ignored, and what fixes are needed to prevent this from ever happening again.

The House passed my amendment last Congress. Unfortunately, it was not included in the final bill. I am proud to reintroduce this amendment again this Congress with slightly adjusted reporting requirements.

I also note for my colleagues that my office sought and received technical assistance on this amendment from the Office of the Secretary of Defense Comptroller.

Mr. Chairman, I include in the RECORD a press release from the Department of Justice describing this fraud in greater detail.

[From US Attorney's Office, Western District of Texas, July 23, 2024]

FORMER ARMY CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE SENTENCED TO 15 YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON FOR \$100 MILLION FRAUD SCHEME

SAN ANTONIO—Janet Yamanaka Mello, the civilian Army employee who stole over \$108 million from a grant program designed to provide services to military dependents and their families was sentenced today to 180 months in prison for five counts of mail fraud and five counts of filing a false tax return.

According to court documents, Janet Yamanaka Mello, 57, worked as a financial program manager for the U.S. Army, Installation Management Command—G9 (Morale, Welfare and Recreation) Child and Youth Services (CYS) at Fort Sam Houston. In or around December 2016 through at least August 29, 2023, Mello formed a business she called Child Health and Youth Lifelong Development (CHYLD). The sole purpose of CHYLD was to receive grant funds from the 4-H Military Partnership Grant program, which Mello fraudulently secured by way of her position as a CYS financial program manager.

Once Mello received a grant check, she deposited the check into her bank account, spending the money on clothing, jewelry, vehicles and real estate. Court documents indicate that Mello repeated the process 49 times during a six-year period, requesting approximately \$117,000,000 in payments, and receiving approximately \$108,917,749.

Subsequently, Mello failed to accurately report her income for tax years 2017, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022, omitting millions of dol-

lars in income fraudulently received through CHYLD.

"Janet Mello betrayed the trust of the government agency she served and repeatedly lied in an effort to enrich herself," said U.S. Attorney Jaime Esparza for the Western District of Texas. "Rather than \$109 million in federal funds going to the care of military children throughout the world, she selfishly stole that money to buy extravagant houses, more than 80 vehicles and over 1,500 pieces of jewelry. Her actions reflect exactly the opposite of what it means to serve your country, and my office will continue to work tirelessly to prosecute those who illegally seek personal gain at the expense of their fellow citizens."

"Corruption and fraud in U.S. Army programs jeopardize the safety and security of our Soldiers and their families. When discovered, fraudulent activities by Army employees will not be tolerated, and those involved will be brought to justice," said Special Agent in Charge Maria Thomas for the Department of the Army Criminal Investigation Division, Central Texas Field Office. "The Army community, and the public, can rest assured that we remain committed to aggressively pursuing anyone that uses government programs for their own personal gain."

"Mello's penchant for extravagance is what brought her down. We identified that her reported income was well below the lavish lifestyle she lived. As we uncovered the details, the criminal scheme grew, the dollar amount grew, and the reach of her spending grew," said Acting Special Agent in Charge Lucy Tan of IRS Criminal Investigation's Houston Field Office. "Financial crimes have victims, and this one took opportunities away from the children and families of our military men and women."

CI and Army CID investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Justin Simmons, Antonio Franco, Kristy Callahan, Todd Keagle, and Steven Seward prosecuted the case.

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment, even though I am not opposed to it.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I have no opposition to the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Chair, in closing, I thank Congressman FULCHER for cosponsoring this amendment, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting accountability by ensuring that we get answers to how this fraud was able to steal from military families and taxpayers undetected from 2016 through 2023.

Mr. Chair, I urge Members to vote "yes" on my amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

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

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

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

□ 1520

AMENDMENTS EN BLOC NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. ROGERS OF ALABAMA

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Chair, pursuant to House Resolution 682, I offer amendments en bloc.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendments en bloc.

Amendments en bloc No. 5 consisting of amendment Nos. 26, 31, 32, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, and 298 printed in part A of House Report 119-255, offered by Mr. ROGERS of Alabama:

AMENDMENT NO. 26 OFFERED BY MR. MOOLENAAR OF MICHIGAN

At the end of title XVII, add the following new subtitle:

Subtitle C—SAFE Research Act

SEC. 1731. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the “Securing American Funding and Expertise from Adversarial Research Exploitation Act of 2025” or the “SAFE Research Act”.

SEC. 1732. PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN FEDERAL AWARDS.

(a) GOVERNMENT-WIDE PROHIBITION.—Except as provided in subsection (c), no research agency may provide a covered award to support research and development activities by a covered individual if the covered individual or the covered individual’s research collaborator(s) is affiliated with a hostile foreign entity—

(1) as of the date of application for the award; or

(2) at any time in the period of five years preceding the date of application for the award unless such affiliation was terminated on or before the date that is 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) DOD-SPECIFIC PROHIBITION.—Except as provided in subsection (c), none of the funds authorized to be appropriated or otherwise made available for any fiscal year for the Department of Defense may be provided to an institution of higher education that maintains a covered partnership with a hostile foreign entity.

(c) NATIONAL SECURITY WAIVER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of a research agency, or an official designated by such agency head at or above the level of an Assistant Secretary (or the equivalent), may waive the prohibitions under subsections (a) and (b) on a case-by-case basis if the head of the agency or the designated official concerned determines that such waiver is in the national security interests of the United States.

(2) CONGRESSIONAL NOTICE.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which an award is made by a research agency with respect to which a waiver is made under paragraph (1), the head of the agency or the designated official concerned shall submit to Congress notice of such waiver and a written justification for such waiver.

SEC. 1733. DISCLOSURES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In any application for a covered award from a research agency, a covered individual shall disclose, with respect to the period of five years preceding the date of such application, the following with respect to the covered individual:

(1) All covered research collaborators who are located in or have an affiliation with an institution located in a foreign adversary country.

(2) Any funding, gift, property (including intellectual property), resources, or award received from an individual or entity located in a foreign adversary country.

(3) Any conference participation, professorship, talent program participation, or other academic, research, or corporate affiliation with an entity located in a foreign adversary country.

(4) Any travel to a foreign adversary country.

(5) For each item disclosed under paragraphs (1) through (4)—

(A) the foreign adversary country associated with that item, and any affiliated individuals or entities;

(B) the total value of any benefits received by the covered individual from such country, individuals, or entities whether monetary or non-monetary; and

(C) details pertaining to the item disclosed, including—

(i) the nature of the actions performed or association entered into by the covered individual;

(ii) any terms, conditions, and benefits associated with such item; and

(iii) such other relevant information as the head of the research agency determines appropriate.

(6) An explanation of any instance in which the covered individual requested permission to share information with a hostile foreign entity or research collaborator affiliated with such an entity pursuant to section 1734(b), including a description of any information proposed to be shared and the results of such request.

(b) USE OF DISCLOSED INFORMATION.—The research agency that receives disclosures under subsection (a)—

(1) shall use the information disclosed to ensure compliance with the prohibitions under sections 1732 and 1734; and

(2) may use such information to analyze potential research security, national security, or economic security risks and the assessment of such risks may be used as factor in determining the allocation of relevant grants, contracts, and other awards.

(b) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAW.—The disclosures required under subsection (a) are in addition to any disclosures that may otherwise be required under section 223 of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (42 U.S.C. 6605).

SEC. 1734. CONCURRENT AND POST-AWARD RESTRICTIONS.

(a) CONCURRENT AWARD RESTRICTIONS.—As a condition of receiving a covered award, a covered individual may not maintain an affiliation with a hostile foreign entity or a covered research collaborator affiliated with such an entity for the duration of the award period.

(b) POST-AWARD RESTRICTIONS.—As a condition of receiving a covered award, during the five year period following the conclusion of the award period—

(1) a covered individual may not share with a hostile foreign entity or a covered research collaborator affiliated with such an entity any nonpublished results, expertise, or intellectual property arising from or related to the covered award unless—

(A) the covered individual submits to the research agency that made the award a request for permission to share such information with such an entity or collaborator; and

(B) such request is approved, in writing, by the head of the research agency or an official designated by such agency head at or above

the level of an Assistant Secretary (or the equivalent); and

(2) on an annual basis during such five year period, the institution to which the covered award was made shall submit to the research agency that made the award an annual certification, signed by an authorized official of the institution, attesting that neither the institution nor any covered individual has shared with a hostile foreign entity or a covered research collaborator affiliated with such an entity any nonpublished results, expertise, or intellectual property arising from or related to the award, except as expressly approved under paragraph (1)(B).

SEC. 1735. DEFINITIONS.

In this subtitle:

(1) The term “affiliation” means any affiliation, partnership, agreement, other research or teaching relationship (including guest or visiting professorships), or similar transaction.

(2) The term “covered award” means support provided to a covered individual affiliated with an institution of higher education by a research agency to carry out research and development activities within any science, technology, engineering, or mathematics field, which may include support in the form of a grant, contract, cooperative agreement, or other such transaction. The term does not include—

(A) a grant, contract, agreement or other transaction for the procurement of goods or services to meet the administrative needs of a research agency; or

(B) an award made under the Small Business Innovation Research Program or the Small Business Technology Transfer Program (as those terms are defined in section 9(e) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(e))).

(3) The term “covered individual” has the meaning given that term in section 223(d) of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (42 U.S.C. 6605), as interpreted in accordance with the guidance of the National Science and Technology Council titled “Guidance for Implementing National Security Presidential Memorandum 33 (NSPM-33) on National Security Strategy for United States Government-Supported Research and Development”, dated January 2022, or any successor guidance.

(4) The term “covered partnership” means an agreement between an institution of higher education and a hostile foreign entity that involves—

(A) the provision of educational services;

(B) collaboration related to scientific or technical research;

(C) any agreement related to the research, development, sale, licensing, or other arrangement involving university-developed, owned, or controlled research, venture, intellectual property (including any assignment or license of a granted patent, trademark, or copyright not listed in the Commerce Control List under Supplement No. 1 to part 774 of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations), or other asset;

(D) access to university assets, such as research, data, models, software, or facilities; or

(E) direct support or coordination by foreign adversary country-linked entities of student groups, language or cultural centers, or other on-campus entities (including Confucius Institutes and Chinese Student and Scholars Associations).

(5) The term “covered research collaborator” means a person located in or affiliated with an entity located in or organized under the laws of a foreign adversary country with whom the covered individual has, in the five years preceding the date of application for a covered award—

(A) conducted joint research;
 (B) co-authored publications;
 (C) collaborated on grants or other awards;
 or
 (D) formally advised as a graduate student or post-doctoral fellow.

(6) The term “foreign adversary country” means a covered nation as defined in section 4872(f) of title 10, United States Code, and includes any special administrative region or territory under the control of such a nation.

(7) The term “hostile foreign entity” means an entity, or any subsidiary or affiliate of an entity that is located in or organized under the laws of a foreign adversary country, and that—

(A) is included on—

(i) the Non-SDN Chinese Military-Industrial Complex Companies List maintained by the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the Department of the Treasury;

(ii) the list of specially designated nationals and blocked persons maintained by the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the Department of the Treasury (commonly known as the “SDN list”);

(iii) the annual list published in the Federal Register by the Department of Defense of Chinese military companies operating in the United States pursuant to section 1260H of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (10 U.S.C. 113 note);

(iv) the most recently updated list developed pursuant to 1286(c)(9) of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (Public Law 115-32; 10 U.S.C. 4001 note);

(v) the UFLPA Entity List maintained by the Department of Homeland Security pursuant to the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (Public Law 117-78);

(vi) the Military End-User List maintained by the Department of Commerce and set forth in Supplement No. 7 to part 744 of the Export Administration Regulations;

(vii) the Entity List maintained by the Bureau of Industry and Security of the Department of Commerce and set forth in Supplement No. 4 to part 744 of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations;

(viii) the Denied Persons List maintained by the Department of Commerce and described in section 764.3(a)(2) of the Export Administration Regulations;

(ix) the Debarred Parties List maintained by the Directorate of Defense Trade Controls of the Department of State;

(x) the list of telecommunications companies of the People’s Republic of China designated under section 889 of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (Public Law 115-232; 41 U.S.C. note prec. 3901) as posing national security risks to the United States;

(xi) the list of semiconductor companies of the People’s Republic of China and affiliates designated under section 5949 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (Public Law 117-263; 41 USC 4713 note) as posing national security risks to the United States; or

(xii) the list maintained by the Federal Communications Commission of equipment and services covered by section 2 of the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act of 2019 (commonly referred to as the FCC Covered List);

(B) is an entity that—

(i) is owned, controlled, directed by, or subject to the jurisdiction or influence of a government of a foreign adversary country; and

(ii) performs or supports functions involving—

(I) national defense or military modernization, including the development, application, or integration of civilian capabilities for military, paramilitary, or security purposes;

(II) intelligence, surveillance, or cyber operations, including activities intended to collect, exploit, disrupt, or influence information systems or communications infrastructure;

(III) the development, production, testing, or proliferation of weapons systems, critical technologies, or dual-use items, as defined under applicable United States law or regulation;

(IV) foreign malign influence or interference, involving subversive, undeclared, coercive, or criminal activities, which may include propaganda, censorship, information manipulation, or efforts to influence academic, political, or civic institutions, whether conducted directly by foreign governments, state-linked entities, or through affiliated non-state actors, or their proxies;

(V) human rights abuses or similarly unethical practices, such as the use of forced labor, repression of ethnic or religious groups, or violations of international human rights standards;

(VI) illicit technology transfer efforts that threaten United States research integrity or economic competitiveness; or

(VII) academic, scientific, or technical collaboration that materially contributes to or supports any of the functions described in subclauses (I) through (VI); or

(C) participates in a foreign talent recruitment program as that term is defined by the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy pursuant to section 10631(c) of the Research and Development, Competition, and Innovation Act (division B of Public Law 117-167; 42 U.S.C. 19231)) from a foreign adversary country or has participated in such a program at any time in the period of 10 years preceding the date of application for a covered award.

(8) The term “institution of higher education” has the meaning given that term in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002).

(9) The term “research agency” means any Federal agency with an annual extramural research expenditure.

AMENDMENT NO. 31 OFFERED BY MR. GRIFFITH OF VIRGINIA

At the end of subtitle C of title X, insert the following new section:

SEC. 10. LIMITATION ON AUTHORITY OF ARMED FORCES TO DETAIN CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES.

Section 1021(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (Public Law 112-81; 10 U.S.C. 801 note) is amended, in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting “, other than a citizen of the United States,” after “any person”.

AMENDMENT NO. 32 OFFERED BY MR. MESSMER OF INDIANA

At the appropriate place in subtitle F of title VIII, insert the following:

SEC. 8. MODIFICATIONS TO DEFENSE INDUSTRIAL BASE FUND.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4817 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsections:

“(g) ELIGIBLE USES OF AUTHORITIES.—(1) The Secretary may use the authorities provided by this section with respect to upstream, mid-stream, and downstream supply chains, including material, material production, components, subassemblies, and finished products, testing and qualification, infrastructure, facility construction and improvement, and equipment needed directly for the following:

“(A) Castings and forgings.

“(B) Kinetic capabilities, including sensors, targeting systems, and delivery platforms.

“(C) Microelectronics.

“(D) Machine tools, including but not limited to subtractive, additive, convergent,

stamping, forging, abrasives, metrology, and other production equipment.

“(E) Critical minerals, materials, and chemicals.

“(F) Workforce for the defense industrial base.

“(G) Advanced manufacturing capacity, including echelon manufacturing forward in the Indo-Pacific Command theater.

“(H) Unmanned vehicles, including sub-surface, surface, land, air one-way, attritables, and launch and recovery platforms.

“(I) Manned aircraft.

“(J) Ground systems.

“(K) Power sources.

“(L) Ship and submarine, including assembly and automation technologies and capabilities, new or modernized infrastructure for new construction or maintenance and sustainment and battle damage repair.

“(M) Other materiel solutions required to support Indo-Pacific Command operational plans as required.

“(N) Defense space systems.

“(2) The Secretary may not use the authorities provided by this section for any activity in a covered country.

“(3) The Secretary may not use the authorities provided by this section for a purpose not described in paragraph (1) unless, not less than 30 days before doing so, the Secretary—

“(A) determines that—

“(i) the use of the authority for that purpose is essential to the national security interests of the United States; and

“(ii) without the use of the authority for that purpose, United States industry cannot reasonably be expected to provide the capability needed in a timely manner; and

“(B) submits to the congressional defense committees a report on the determination that includes appropriate explanatory material.

“(h) GRANTS AND OTHER INCENTIVES FOR DOMESTIC INDUSTRIAL BASE CAPABILITIES.—To create, maintain, protect, expand, or restore domestic industrial base capabilities essential for the national security interests of the United States, the Secretary may make provision for—

“(1) use of contracts, grants, or other transaction authorities, including cooperative agreements;

“(2) incentives for the private sector to develop capabilities in areas of national security interest;

“(3) during the 5-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this subsection, making awards to third party entities to support investments in small- and medium-sized entities working in areas of national security interest, including debt and equity investments, that would benefit missions of the Department of Defense; and

“(4) subsidies to offset market manipulation or ensure allied and domestic viability of grants made from other market uncertainties.

“(i) DEFENSE INDUSTRIAL BASE PURCHASE COMMITMENT PROGRAM.—(1) To create, maintain, protect, expand, or restore industrial base capabilities essential for the national security interests of the United States, the Secretary may make provision for purchase commitments for—

“(A) Federal Government use or resale of an industrial resource or a critical technology item;

“(B) the encouragement of exploration, development, and mining of strategic and critical materials;

“(C) development of other materials and components;

“(D) the development of production capabilities; and

“(E) the increased use of emerging technologies in defense program applications and the rapid transition of emerging technologies—

“(i) from Federal Government-sponsored research and development to commercial applications; and

“(ii) from commercial research and development to national defense applications.

“(2)(A) Except as provided by subparagraph (B), purchase commitments under paragraph (1) may be made without regard to the limitations of existing law (other than section 1341 of title 31), for such quantities, and on such terms and conditions, including advance payments, and for such periods, but not extending beyond a date that is not more than 10 years from the date on which such purchase was initially made, as the Secretary deems necessary.

“(B) Purchases commitments under paragraph (1) involving higher than established ceiling prices (or if no such established ceiling prices exist, currently prevailing market prices) or that result in an anticipated loss on resale shall not be made, unless it is determined that supply of the materials could not be effectively increased or provisioned at lower prices or on terms more favorable to the Federal Government, or that such purchases are necessary to assure the availability to the United States of overseas supplies.

“(3)(A) The Secretary may take the actions described in subparagraph (B), if the Secretary finds that—

“(i) under generally fair and equitable ceiling prices, for any raw or nonprocessed material or component, there will result a decrease in supplies from high-cost sources of such material and that the continuation of such supplies is necessary to carry out the objectives of this section; or

“(ii) an increase in cost of transportation is temporary in character and threatens to impair maximum production or supply in any area at stable prices of any materials.

“(B) Upon a finding under subparagraph (A), the Secretary may make provision for subsidy payments on any such produced material from other than covered countries, in such amounts and in such manner (including purchase commitments of such material or component and its resale at a loss, and on such terms and conditions, as the Secretary determines to be necessary to ensure that supplies from such high-cost sources are continued, or that maximum production or supply in such area at stable prices of such materials is maintained, as the case may be.

“(4) If the Secretary determines that such action will aid the national security interests of the United States, the Secretary is authorized—

“(A) to procure and install additional equipment, facilities, processes or improvements to plants, factories, and other industrial facilities owned by the Federal Government;

“(B) to procure and install equipment including owned by the Federal Government in plants, factories, and other industrial facilities owned by private persons;

“(C) to provide for constructing new facilities, the modification, or expansion of privately owned facilities, including the modification or improvement of production processes, when taking actions under this subsection or subsection (h);

“(D) to sell or otherwise transfer equipment owned by the Federal Government and installed under this subsection to the owners of such plants, factories, or other industrial facilities;

“(E) to construct facilities for the purposes described in section subsection (g)(1); and

“(F) to apply contracts, grants, or other transactions authorities.

“(5)(A) Metals, minerals, materials, and components acquired pursuant to this subsection which, in the judgment of the Secretary, are excess to the needs of programs under this section, shall be transferred to the National Defense Stockpile established by the Strategic and Critical Materials Stock Piling Act (50 U.S.C. 98 et seq.), or other national reserves if available, when the Secretary deems such action to be in the public interest.

“(B) Transfers made pursuant to this paragraph shall be made without charge against or reimbursement from funds appropriated for the purposes of the Strategic and Critical Materials Stock Piling Act (50 U.S.C. 98 et seq.), or other national reserves if available, except that costs incident to such transfer, other than acquisition costs, shall be paid or reimbursed from such funds.

“(6) When, in the judgment of the Secretary, it will aid the national security interests of the United States, the Secretary may make provision for the development and qualification of substitutes for strategic and critical materials, components, critical technology items, and other industrial resources.

“(j) STRENGTHENING DOMESTIC PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY.—(1) The Secretary may provide appropriate incentives to develop, maintain, modernize, restore, and expand the productive capacities of sources for strategic and critical materials, components, critical technology items, and industrial resources essential for the execution of the national security strategy of the United States.

“(2)(A) The Secretary shall take appropriate actions to ensure that strategic and critical materials, components, critical technology items, and industrial resources are available from reliable sources when needed to meet defense requirements during peacetime, graduated mobilization, and national emergency.

“(B) For purposes of this paragraph, appropriate action may include—

“(i) restricting contract solicitations to reliable sources;

“(ii) stockpiling or placing into reserve strategic and critical materials, components, and critical technology items;

“(iii) planning for necessary long-lead times for acquiring such materials, components, and items; or

“(iv) developing and qualifying substitutes for such materials, components, and items.

“(k) FUNDING.—Subsections (g), (h), (i), and (j) may only be carried out using amounts appropriated on or after the date of the enactment of this subsection.

“(1) ANNUAL REPORT.—(1) Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2026, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the congressional defense committee a report evaluating investments made and any other activities carried out using amounts in the Fund during the year preceding submission of the report.

“(2) Each report required by paragraph (1) shall include—

“(A) measures of effectiveness of the investments and activities described in that paragraph in meeting the needs of the Department of Defense and the defense industrial base;

“(B) an evaluation of the return on investment of all ongoing investments from the Fund; and

“(C) a description of efforts to coordinate activities carried out using amounts in the Fund with activities to support the defense industrial base carried out under other authorities.

“(3) In preparing a report required by paragraph (1), the Secretary shall take into ac-

count the advice of the defense industry and such other individuals as the Secretary considers relevant.

“(m) COORDINATION WITH OTHER DEFENSE INDUSTRIAL BASE ACTIVITIES.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2026, the Secretary shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report detailing how activities carried out under this section will be coordinated with—

“(1) activities carried out using amounts in the Defense Production Act Fund under section 304 of the Defense Production Act of 1950 (50 U.S.C. 4534);

“(2) activities of the Office of Strategic Capital; and

“(3) any other efforts designed to enhance the defense industrial base.

“(n) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) The term ‘chokepoint’ means a situation in which—

“(A) components of the munitions supply chains, including all elements of the munitions supply chain such as chemicals, casings, or other materials, are produced by only one reliable source; or

“(B) the increased production of a component would significantly increase total output of munitions.

“(2) The term ‘covered country’ means—

“(A) the Russian Federation;

“(B) the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea;

“(C) the Islamic Republic of Iran; and

“(D) the People’s Republic of China.

“(3) The term ‘reliable source’ means a citizen or business entity organized under the laws of—

“(A) the United States or any territory or possession of the United States;

“(B) a country of the national technology and industrial base, as defined in section 4801; or

“(C) a qualifying country, as defined in section 225.003 of the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement or any successor document.

“(5) The term ‘strategic and critical materials’ has the meaning given that term in section 12(1) of the Strategic and Critical Materials Stock Piling Act (50 U.S.C. 98h-3(1)).”

(b) MODIFICATIONS TO THE OFFICE OF STRATEGIC CAPITAL.—Section 149 of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (3)(A)(ii)(1)(bb), by inserting “or with regard to loans that include an equity feature, the Director reasonably believes the rate of return on the portfolio of such loans will exceed the rate of return on investment of a loan at the yield on marketable securities of a similar maturity to the maturity of the loan on the date of execution of the loan agreement” before the period at the end;

(B) in paragraph (3), by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(D)(i) The Director may support an eligible investment selected pursuant to this subsection with funds, or use other mechanisms for the purpose of purchasing, and may make and fund commitments to purchase, invest in, make pledges in respect of, or otherwise acquire, equity of the eligible entity, receiving support for the eligible investment, or any of its parent or subsidiary companies, including as a limited partner or other investor in investment funds, upon such terms and conditions as the Director may determine.

“(ii) The Director shall develop criteria, taking into consideration the national security and economic interests of the United States, pursuant to which the Director may hold, sell, or otherwise liquidate support for an investment described under clause (i).

“(iii) Solely for the purposes of purchasing equity securities under this subparagraph, the Director shall be treated as a qualified purchaser (as defined in section 2(a)(51) of the Investment Company Act of 1940 (15 U.S.C. 80a-2(a)(51))) and as an accredited investor under section 2 of the Securities Act of 1933 (15 U.S.C. 77d).”; and

(C) in paragraph (8), by striking “after” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting the following: “after the formal approval of the use of any capital assistance under this subsection.”; and

(2) by amending subsection (f)(1) to read as follows:

“(1) The term ‘capital assistance’ means a loan, loan guarantee, or technical assistance, or the purchase of or investment in equity, (including options, warrants, or other financing in a security with subordination or non-amortization characteristics as the Director determines to be substantially similar to equity financing).”.

AMENDMENT NO. 254 OFFERED BY MS. SCHOLTEN
OF MICHIGAN

At the appropriate place in subtitle G of title VIII, insert the following:

SEC. 8. STUDY ON CERTAIN CONTRACTS AND AWARDS TO SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS.

(a) **STUDY REQUIRED.**—The Secretary of Defense, acting through the Office of Small Business Programs, shall carry out a study to review contracts awarded with a value at or below the simplified acquisition threshold (as defined in section 3015 of title 10, United States Code) to determine if the Department of Defense is ensuring full consideration and application of requirements relating to small business concerns (as defined in section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632)).

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the House of Representatives and the Senate, the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate a report on the results of the study required by this section. Such report shall include—

(1) the total dollar amount of contracts awarded with a value at or below the simplified acquisition threshold during the five-year period preceding the date of the report, including the percentage of such contracts and the aggregate dollar amount of such contracts awarded to small business concerns;

(2) an overview of the types of contracts with a value at or below the simplified acquisition threshold, and description of the products or services, that were not awarded to small business concerns;

(3) an overview of the reasons why a contract with a value at or below the simplified acquisition threshold may not be set aside for small business concerns;

(4) any trends, themes, or patterns of contracts with a value at or below the simplified acquisition threshold that were awarded to entities that are not small business concerns when such a contract should have been subject to a requirement to be set aside for small business concerns; and

(5) recommendations for changes to statute, regulation, policy, or guidance that would ensure full consideration and application of requirement to set aside contracts for small business concerns, particularly contracts with a value at or below the simplified acquisition threshold.

AMENDMENT NO. 255 OFFERED BY MR.
SCHWEIKERT OF ARIZONA

At the end of subtitle A of title X, insert the following:

SEC. 10. USE OF TECHNOLOGY USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO FACILITATE AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026.

(a) **USE OF AI TECHNOLOGY FOR AUDITS.**—The Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Navy, and the Secretary of the Air Force shall encourage, to the greatest extent practicable, the use of technology that uses artificial intelligence or machine learning for the purpose of facilitating audits of the financial statements of the Department of Defense.

(b) **IMPLEMENTATION OF AI TECHNOLOGY FOR AUDITS.**—The Director of the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Office of the Department, in coordination with the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering and the Inspector General of the Department, shall oversee the adoption of artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies in support of financial management and enterprise business operations.

AMENDMENT NO. 256 OFFERED BY MR.
SCHWEIKERT OF ARIZONA

Page 98, after line 3, insert the following new subsection (and redesignate the succeeding subsections accordingly):

(c) **AI INVENTORY SYSTEM.**—In conjunction with the activities required under this section, the Secretary of Defense may develop and implement an artificial intelligence capability to create up-to-date and accurate records of the weapons inventory of the Department of Defense.

AMENDMENT NO. 257 OFFERED BY MR. SCOTT OF
VIRGINIA

At the appropriate place in subtitle F of title XXVIII, insert the following:

SEC. 28. REPORT ON INTERAGENCY REGIONAL COORDINATOR FOR RESILIENCE PILOT PROJECT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the status of the implementation of the Interagency Regional Coordinator for Resilience pilot project established under section 2872 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (10 U.S.C. 2864 note).

(b) **CONTENT.**—The report submitted under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) For each established Interagency Regional Coordinator—

(A) which community that supports a military installation was selected for a Coordinator and the reasoning for selecting such community; and

(B) a description of the ongoing work of the Coordinator.

(2) For any Interagency Regional Coordinator position required under the pilot program but not yet established, a plan to establish such position.

AMENDMENT NO. 258 OFFERED BY MR. AUSTIN
SCOTT OF GEORGIA

At the end of subtitle B of title X, insert the following new section:

SEC. 10. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING NAMING AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER AFTER THE UNITED STATES.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress finds the following:

(1) The first USS United States was one of the original six frigates authorized by the Naval Act of 1794, launched in 1797. It saw action in the Quasi-War with France and the War of 1812.

(2) In addition to the frigate, there was a proposed Civil War ironclad that never got built, and the aircraft carrier USS United States (CVA-58) was canceled in 1949.

(b) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of the Navy

should name an aircraft carrier USS United States.

AMENDMENT NO. 259 OFFERED BY MR. AUSTIN
SCOTT OF GEORGIA

At the end of subtitle B of title V, insert the following new section:

SEC. 5. ASSISTANCE FOR CERTAIN YOUTH AND CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS.

Section 508(d) of title 32, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (14) as paragraph (17); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (13) the following:

“(14) The Young Marines.

“(15) The Naval Sea Cadet Corps.

“(16) The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.”.

AMENDMENT NO. 260 OFFERED BY MR. AUSTIN
SCOTT OF GEORGIA

At the end of subtitle B of title IX, add the following new section:

SEC. 9. ELIGIBILITY OF CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU FOR APPOINTMENT AS CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF.

Section 152(b)(1)(B) of title 10, United States Code, as amended by section 911 of this title, is further amended by striking “or the Commandant of the Coast Guard” and inserting “the Commandant of the Coast Guard, or the Chief of the National Guard Bureau”.

AMENDMENT NO. 261 OFFERED BY MR. AUSTIN
SCOTT OF GEORGIA

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

SEC. 8. ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHEDULE V FOR VETERAN EMPLOYMENT AND PHILANTHROPY REPORTING BY DEFENSE CONTRACTORS AND GRANTEES.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Secretary of Defense shall develop and implement a standardized disclosure schedule, to be known as Schedule V, to be included in all applicable contracts, subcontracts, and grant award deeds as specified in this section. These disclosures by contract, subcontract, and grant award deeds will contribute to critical long-term recruitment and retention of the Armed Forces.

(b) **APPLICABILITY.**—Schedule V shall be required as a condition of award for—

(1) any contract or subcontract with an annual value exceeding \$5,000,000 with the Department of Defense or any organizations receiving a contract or subcontract with an annual revenue of \$1,000,000,000 or more; or

(2) any Department of Defense Federal grant to an institution of higher education or research entity in excess of \$10,000,000 annually.

(c) **DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS.**—Entities subject to subsection (b) shall, on an annual basis, publicly disclose the following:

(1) Veteran employment and retention date, including—

(A) the number of United States military veterans hired annually for the previous 3 years;

(B) the number of those veterans retained 12 and 24 months after hire; and

(C) a summary of the company’s United States military veteran retention initiatives, if any.

(2) Philanthropic and community investment, including—

(A) disclosure of a corporate philanthropy program;

(B) the total amount of philanthropic giving in the previous fiscal year;

(C) the amount and percentage of such giving dedicated to military and veteran-related causes; and

(D) any volunteer hours towards veteran or military causes.

(3) EXECUTIVE ENGAGEMENT.—A narrative response describing the direct involvement of the company's Chief Executive Officer and Board of Directors in reviewing and supporting efforts related to paragraphs (1) and (2).

(d) SUBCONTRACTING AND INDIRECT VENDORS.—The Secretary shall ensure Schedule V requirements apply, to the greatest extent practicable, to indirect suppliers and subcontractors at a value of \$5,000,000 or above or annual revenue of \$1,000,000,000 or more.

(e) PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY.—The disclosures required under subsection (c) shall be submitted to the relevant contracting or grant officer and made publicly available through the Federal Procurement Data System or another centralized government database designated by the Administrator of General Services.

(f) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary shall issue regulations to implement this section not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act. These regulations may include exemptions for small businesses and provisions for pilot implementation prior to full enforcement.

AMENDMENT NO. 262 OFFERED BY MR. AUSTIN
SCOTT OF GEORGIA

Page 167, line 19, strike "USS Constitution Museum" and insert "USS Constitution Naval History and Heritage Command, Detachment Boston".

Page 167, after line 24, insert the following new paragraph:

"(11) The Hampton Roads Naval Museum.".

Page 168, line 1, strike "(11)" and insert "(12)".

Page 168, line 7, strike "(10)" and insert "(11)".

AMENDMENT NO. 263 OFFERED BY MR. AUSTIN

SCOTT OF GEORGIA

At the end of subtitle D of title VIII, insert the following new section:

SEC. 8. STRATEGY TO ELIMINATE SOURCING OF COMPUTER DISPLAYS FROM CERTAIN NATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall develop and implement a strategy to eliminate the reliance of the Department of Defense on any covered nation to acquire computer displays by January 1, 7 2030.

(b) STRATEGY REQUIREMENTS.—The strategy required by subsection (a) shall—

(1) identify the current requirements of the Department of Defense for computer displays and estimate the projected requirements of the Department for computer displays through the year 2040;

(2) identify the sources of computer displays used to meet the current requirements of the Department described in paragraph (1), including any sources of computer displays produced in a covered nation; and

(3) identify actions to be taken by the Secretary of Defense to ensure the defense industrial base is able to meet the needs of the Department for computer displays without any reliance on a covered nation not later January 1, 2030.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall begin implementing the strategy required by subsection (a).

(d) BRIEFING AND REPORT.—

(1) BRIEFING.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a briefing on the strategy required by subsection (a), including an identification of any changes to funding or policy required to eliminate the reliance of the Department of Defense on any covered nation to acquire computer displays by January 1, 2030.

(2) INTERIM REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than March 15, 2027, the Secretary

of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the progress of the implementation of the strategy required by subsection (a), including an identification of any risk to the ability of the Secretary to eliminate the reliance of the Department of Defense on any covered nation to acquire computer displays by January 1, 2030.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term "covered nation" means—
(A) the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea;

(B) the People's Republic of China;

(C) the Russian Federation;

(D) the Republic of Belarus; and

(E) the Islamic Republic of Iran.

(2) The term "computer display" means a device that receives a digital output from a computer and visually displays that output as an electronic image.

AMENDMENT NO. 264 OFFERED BY MR. AUSTIN
SCOTT OF GEORGIA

At the appropriate place in subtitle F of title XXVIII, insert the following new section:

SEC. 28. ESTABLISHMENT OF AIR FORCE AND SPACE FORCE MUSEUM SYSTEM.

Chapter 979 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§ 9784. Establishment of Air Force and Space Force Museum System

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Air Force shall support a system of official Air Force and Space Force museums within the Department of the Air Force. Such system shall include the National Museum of the United States Air Force and may contain other museums honoring individual installations, units, and branches, as designated by the Secretary of the Air Force, that meet criteria established under subsection (b).

"(b) CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION.—The Secretary of the Air Force shall establish criteria for designating museums of subsection (a) for inclusion in the Air Force and Space Force museum system. Such criteria shall include—

"(1) historical significance to Air Force and Space Force operations, technology, or personnel;

"(2) public accessibility and educational outreach programs; and

"(3) alignment with the mission of the Air Force and Space Force to preserve the heritage of the Air Force and Space Force.

"(c) CRITERIA FOR CLOSURE.—The Secretary of the Air Force shall establish criteria for closing museums within the Air Force and Space Force museum system. If the Secretary decides to close a museum in such system, the Secretary shall submit to Congress, not later than 90 days before the date on which the museum closes, notice that includes—

"(1) a plan for the preservation, storage, or alternate display of historical collections contained in the museum;

"(2) how any issues relating to museum personnel will be resolved;

"(3) an identification of any efforts to maintain museum operations through public-private partnerships; and

"(4) an analysis of the cost to transport, consolidate, and preserve the historical collections contained in the museum.

"(d) FUNDING AND SUPPORT.—Consistent with applicable law, the Secretary may enter into partnerships, including with nonprofit organizations, to enhance the financial sustainability and public engagement of the museums in the Air Force and Space Force museum system."

AMENDMENT NO. 265 OFFERED BY MR. AUSTIN
SCOTT OF GEORGIA

At the appropriate place in subtitle E of title VIII, insert the following:

SEC. 8. PROHIBITION ON PROCUREMENT OF CERTAIN ORGANIC LIGHT EMITTING DIODE DISPLAY TECHNOLOGIES.

Chapter 363 of title 10, United States Code, as amended by section 863 of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§ 4667. Prohibition on procurement of certain organic light emitting diode display technologies

"(a) IN GENERAL.—Effective June 30, 2027, the Secretary of Defense may not enter into, renew, or extend a contract or other agreement for the procurement of—

"(1) OLED display technologies that are fabricated in a foreign adversary, by a foreign adversary entity, or by a covered OLED display technologies company; or

"(2) goods or services that include any OLED display technologies that are fabricated in a foreign adversary, by a foreign adversary entity, or by a covered OLED display technologies company.

"(b) WAIVER.—(1) The Secretary of Defense may waive the prohibition under subsection (a) if Secretary determines that goods or services that include OLED display technology that conforms to the requirements of this section are not available in the quality and quantity required.

"(2) The Secretary of Defense shall submit to Congress a report describing waivers granted in accordance with this subsection not later than February 15 of the calendar year following the year the waiver was granted. Such report shall include a description of the product or service subject to the waiver, and a brief summary of the rationale for each waiver.

"(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) The term 'covered OLED display technologies company' means—

"(A) any entity, or a subsidiary, affiliate, or licensee of such entity that produces, develops, or provides OLED display technologies and that is—

"(i) included on the Consolidated Screening List maintained by the International Trade Administration of the Department of Commerce; or

"(ii) identified in the list of Chinese military companies operating in the United States published in the Federal Register by the Department of Defense pursuant to section 1260H of the William H. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (10 U.S.C. 113 note); or

"(B) an entity that produces, develops, or provides OLED display technologies and that is subject to unmitigated foreign ownership, control, or influence by a covered foreign country, as determined by the Secretary of Defense in accordance with the National Industrial Security Program (or any successor to such program).

"(2) The term 'fabricate'—

"(A) means the process of manufacturing display technologies through techniques including material deposition, lithography, etching, and encapsulation, or flexible substrates or silicon wafers to enable image generation; and

"(B) does not include the final assembly and integration of individual display cells cut from large substrates into complete display modules for integration into set products, where such assembly and integration focuses primarily on tasks such as integrated circuit bondings, flexible printed circuit attachment, touch sensor integration, and cover glass lamination (known as the 'module process').

"(3) The term 'foreign adversary' means a country specified in section 4872(f) of title 10, United States Code.

"(4) The term 'foreign adversary entity' means—

“(A) a foreign adversary;

“(B) a person domiciled in, headquartered in, that maintains a principal place of business in, or is organized under the laws of a foreign adversary; and

“(C) a person owned, directed, or controlled by an entity described in subparagraph (A) or (B).

“(5) The term ‘OLED display technologies’ means an electronic visual output device that renders images, text, or video by modulating light emissions through technologies (such as organic light emitting diodes or microdot arrays) and is composed of an active matrix (including thin-film transistors) or passive matrix that controls pixel operation, light emission or modulation layer, driver electronics to convert input signals into pixel control instructions, and interface mechanisms that may include touchscreen layers, refresh rate controllers, or color calibration.”.

AMENDMENT NO. 266 OFFERED BY MR. SELF OF TEXAS

At the end of subtitle A of title XI of division A, insert the following:

SEC. 11. DOD PREVAILING RATE EMPLOYEE PAY INCREASE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on the first day of the first pay period beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, the rate of pay for any employee of the Department of Defense who is a prevailing rate employee (as that term is defined in section 5342(a)(2)(A) of title 5, United States Code) shall be increased by the percentage allowed by operation of section 737 of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024, as extended by division A of the American Relief Act, 2025..

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit a report to the congressional defense committees on actions taken to resolve delays in increasing the rates of pay for such employees, the status of the Department of Defense Wage Committee, and any recommendations for preventing future interruptions to wage increases for such employees.

AMENDMENT NO. 267 OFFERED BY MR. SELF OF TEXAS

At the end of subtitle E of title X, insert the following:

SEC. 10. RESPONSIBLE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR LOGISTICS, INTELLIGENCE, MAINTENANCE, CYBER DEFENSE, AND OTHER MISSION AREAS.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the adoption of artificial intelligence (“AI”) is critical to United States defense readiness and competitiveness; and

(2) the Secretary of Defense should expand pilot programs and fielding of AI-enabled systems that enhance decision-making, reduce costs, and improve warfighter effectiveness.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall, not later than the end of the 6-month period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, and every 6 months thereafter, issue a report to the congressional defense committees on current and planned AI integration efforts, including barriers to implementation and recommendations for accelerating adoption.

(2) SUNSET.—Paragraph (1) shall cease to have any force or effect after the end of the 5-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 268 OFFERED BY MS. SHERRILL OF NEW JERSEY

At the end of subtitle B of title II, add the following new section:

SEC. 2. LIMITATION ON AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS FOR REALIGNMENT OF THE RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST, AND EVALUATION FUNCTION FOR ARMY AMMUNITION.

(a) LIMITATION.—None of the funds authorized to be appropriated by this Act or otherwise made available for fiscal year 2026 for the Department of Defense may be obligated or expended to realign the research, development, test, and evaluation function for Army ammunition away from the current Joint Program Executive Office Armaments and Ammunition or Joint Capabilities Portfolio Executive Ammunition construct until a period of 180 days has elapsed following the date on which the report required under subsection (b) is submitted to the congressional defense committees.

(b) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than November 1, 2026, the Secretary of the Army shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report that includes the following with respect to the proposed realignment of functions described in subsection (a):

(1) An explanation of whether Army personnel, including contractors, would be required to relocate to a new location and if so an estimate of how many personnel would relocate and to what locations.

(2) An explanation of whether the Army expects to build new facilities and infrastructure at new locations to accomplish the research, development, test, and evaluation function for Army ammunition and, if so, identification of—

(A) what new facilities and infrastructure would have to be constructed; and

(B) where such facilities and infrastructure would be constructed.

(3) A detailed estimate of the costs of relocating personnel and equipment and constructing new facilities and infrastructure.

(4) A detailed explanation of the efficiencies, if any, that the Army expects to realize by realigning the research, development, test, and evaluation function for Army ammunition to Capabilities Portfolio Executive Fires.

(5) In consultation with the with the Secretary of the Navy and the Secretary of the Air Force, a determination as to whether realigning the research, development, test, and evaluation function for Army ammunition to Capabilities Portfolio Executive Fires will hinder or impede the joint construct that Joint Program Executive Office Armaments and Ammunition has traditionally maintained with the Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force.

AMENDMENT NO. 269 OFFERED BY MR. SHREVE OF INDIANA

At the end of subtitle F of title X, add the following new section:

SEC. 10. DEFENSE CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION INTERAGENCY REVIEW.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) Defense critical infrastructure, encompassing cyber and physical assets, is essential to national security and military readiness but faces growing threats from adversaries.

(2) Effective interagency coordination is vital to protect this infrastructure.

(3) The Department of Defense plays a key role in safeguarding critical infrastructure, but its efforts must align with broader Federal and private sector initiatives.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that strengthening interagency coordination, and coordination between the administration and the private sector is critical to securing defense-related infrastructure against emerging threats.

(c) INTERAGENCY REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Director of National Intelligence, and heads of other relevant departments or agencies of the Federal Government, shall conduct a comprehensive review of interagency coordination mechanisms for the protection of defense critical infrastructure.

(2) REVIEW COMPONENTS.—The review under paragraph (1) shall, at a minimum—

(A) assess the effectiveness of existing frameworks for information sharing, threat response, and risk mitigation among departments or agencies of the Federal Government, State and local governments, and private sector partners;

(B) identify gaps and inefficiencies in interagency efforts to safeguard cyber and physical infrastructure critical to national security;

(C) evaluate the integration of the Defense Information Assurance Program established by section 2224 of title 10, United States Code, with broader critical infrastructure protection initiatives;

(D) evaluate mission assurance cybersecurity priorities and determine whether the existing list of critical cyber missions, capabilities, functions, systems, and supporting assets is comprehensive;

(E) include any updates to guidance on replacing the Defense Infrastructure Sector Lead Agent and reevaluate the sectors it includes as part of defense critical infrastructure; and

(F) provide recommendations for improving collaboration, reducing bureaucratic obstacles, and enhancing the resilience of defense-related infrastructure.

(d) REVIEW OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Secretary of Defense shall concurrently assess the implementation by the Department of the following responsibilities:

(1) Ensuring proper classification and safeguarding of critical infrastructure security information from public disclosure pursuant to section 130e of title 10, United States Code.

(2) Assessing the role of the Department in ensuring the reliability and security of infrastructure vital to defense and national security pursuant to section 1016 of the USA PATRIOT Act (42 U.S.C. 5195c).

(3) Ensuring Department of Defense compliance with information protection standards under the Critical Infrastructure Information Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 671 et seq.) and part 29 of title 6, Code of Federal Regulations.

(4) Assessing Department of Defense oversight of cybersecurity requirements for contractors handling covered defense information pursuant to sections 252.204–7012 of the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement.

(e) RECOMMENDATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit a report to the congressional defense committees, detailing—

(A) findings of the interagency coordination review;

(B) recommendations to enhance Department of Defense-led critical infrastructure protection efforts;

(C) proposed policy or regulatory changes to improve national defense infrastructure security and cyber resilience; and

(D) recommendations for legislative or regulatory action, if necessary, to strengthen interagency cooperation and Department of Defense implementation of critical infrastructure protection mandates.

(2) FORM.—The report under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in an unclassified form but may contain a classified annex.

(f) REPORT BY THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the Secretary submits the report under subsection (e), the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the Department of Defense's implementation of the review under subsection (c) and an assessment of the recommendations under subsection (e).

(2) FORM.—The report under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in an unclassified form but may contain a classified annex.

AMENDMENT NO. 270 OFFERED BY MR. SHREVE OF INDIANA

Page 927, after line 16, insert the following new section:

SEC. 17. STRATEGY TO COUNTER IRANIAN AND HEZBOLLAH INFLUENCE OPERATIONS IN LATIN AMERICA.

(a) STRATEGY REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of State and the Director of National Intelligence, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a comprehensive strategy to counter Iran's and Hezbollah's propaganda, religious networks, and influence operations in Latin America.

(b) CONTENTS OF THE STRATEGY.—The strategy required under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) Measures to address the proliferation of Iranian cultural centers in Latin America that promote Iranian ideology, including diplomatic efforts to limit their operations, sanctions on affiliated entities, and public diplomacy to expose their activities.

(2) Actions to restrict the travel and activities of Iranian emissaries, including diplomats, cultural attaches, and other agents who facilitate propaganda, radicalization, and terror-supporting networks in Latin America, through visa denials, sanctions, or other travel restrictions.

(3) Initiatives to strengthen the capacity of U.S. intelligence agencies to identify, monitor, and disrupt Iran's and Hezbollah's networks, including their cooperation academic institutions and non-governmental organizations in Latin America.

(4) A framework for taking actions, similar to those implemented against Al-Manar and Press TV, to disrupt Iran's HispanTV and Hezbollah's Al Mayadeen Espanol platforms, including sanctions, designations, and cooperation with regional partners to limit their broadcasting reach and digital presence.

(5) A plan to address Iran's Al Mustafa International University network and its affiliated entities, including their designations as foreign terrorist organizations or specially designated global terrorists, as appropriate, due to their role in radicalization and recruitment for Iran's ideological and terrorist objectives.

(c) FORM.—The strategy required in subsection (a) shall be transmitted in unclassified form and may include a classified annex.

(d) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this section, the term "appropriate congressional committees" means—

(1) the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives;

(2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives;

(3) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(4) the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives; and

(5) the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate.

AMENDMENT NO. 271 OFFERED BY MR. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY

Add at the end of subtitle E of title X the following:

SEC. 10. GAO REVIEW AND REPORT ON BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS EXPERIMENTS ON AND IN RELATION TO TICKS, TICK-BORNE DISEASE.

(a) REVIEW.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a review of research conducted during the period beginning on January 1, 1945, and ending on December 31, 1972, by the Department of Defense, including by the Department of Defense in consultation with the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Agriculture, or any other Federal agency on—

(1) the use of ticks as hosts or delivery mechanisms for biological warfare agents, including experiments involving Spirochaetales and Rickettsiales; and

(2) any efforts to improve the effectiveness and viability of Spirochaetales and Rickettsiales as biological weapons through combination with other diseases or viruses.

(b) LOCATION OF RESEARCH.—In conducting the review under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall review research conducted at facilities located inside United States and facilities located outside the United States, including laboratories and field work locations.

(c) INFORMATION TO BE REVIEWED.—

(1) CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.—In conducting the review under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall review any relevant classified information.

(2) DOCUMENTS FOR REVIEW.—In conducting the review under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall review, among other sources, the following documents:

(A) Technical Reports related to The Summary of Major Events and Problems, US Army Chemical Corps, FY 1951 – FY1969.

(B) Site Holding: CB DT DW 48158 Title: Virus and Rickettsia Waste Disposal Study. Technical Report No. 103, January 1969. Corp Author Name: FORT DETRICK FREDERICK MD Report Number: SMUFD-TR-103 Publish Date: 19690101.

(C) Site Holding: CB DT DW 60538 Title: A Plaque Assay System for Several Species of Rickettsia. Corp Author Name: FORT DETRICK FREDERICK MD Report Number: SMUFD-TM-538 Publish Date: 19690601.

(D) Site Holding: CB DW 531493 Title: Progress Report for Ecology and Epidemiology and Biological Field Test Technology, Third Quarter FY 1967. Corp Author Name: ARMY DUGWAY PROVING GROUND UT Publish Date: 19670508.

(d) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report that includes the following:

(A) The scope of any research described in subsection (a).

(B) Whether any ticks used in such research were released outside of any facility (including any ticks that were released unintentionally).

(C) Whether any records related to such research were destroyed, and whether such destruction was intentional or unintentional.

(2) FORM OF REPORT.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

AMENDMENT NO. 272 OFFERED BY MR. SORESENSEN OF ILLINOIS

Add at the end of title XXVIII, add the following:

SEC. 28. EXTENSION OF DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY PILOT PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF ONLINE REAL ESTATE INVENTORY TOOL.

Section 2866(h) of the Military Construction Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (division B of Public Law 116-283; 10 U.S.C. 7771 note prec.) is amended by striking "September 30, 2026" and inserting "September 30, 2030".

AMENDMENT NO. 273 OFFERED BY MR. STAUBER OF MINNESOTA

At the end of subtitle A of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 12. MODIFICATION OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM.

Section 341(e)(1)(A) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end before the semicolon the following: "; including costs incurred with respect to activities beginning in one fiscal year and ending not later than the end of the first fiscal year thereafter".

AMENDMENT NO. 274 OFFERED BY MR. STAUBER OF MINNESOTA

At the end of subtitle B of title V, insert the following new section:

SEC. 5. FEASIBILITY STUDY REGARDING FUNERAL HONORS DUTY.

(a) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Under Secretary of Memorial Affairs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, shall conduct a feasibility study to—

(1) determine how the Secretary can provide funeral honors details under section 1491 of title 10, United States Code, without negatively affecting the ability of the National Guard Bureau to fulfil operational and mission requirements;

(2) identify policies and practices that could prevent lapses in such provision; and

(3) identify ways to fully compensate veterans service organizations for expenses incurred in assisting the Secretary provide funeral honors details.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after completion, the Secretary shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report containing the results of the study under this section.

AMENDMENT NO. 275 OFFERED BY MR. STAUBER OF MINNESOTA

At the end of subtitle D of title I, add the following new section:

SEC. 1. PLAN FOR RECAPITALIZATION AND MODERNIZATION OF THE FIGHTER FLEET OF THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Air Force, in consultation with the Director of the Air National Guard, shall develop a plan for the recapitalization and modernization of the fighter fleet of the Air National Guard.

(b) ELEMENT.—The plan required under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) measures to sustain and recapitalize the fighter fleet of the Air National Guard, including each of the 25 Air National Guard fighter aircraft squadrons;

(2) a timeline for the recapitalization of such fighter fleet, disaggregated by fighter aircraft squadron and fiscal year;

(3) the estimated costs of the proposed recapitalization plan; and

(4) an explanation of the expected impact of the plan on operational and personnel readiness.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than July 1, 2026, the Secretary of the Air Force shall submit to the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives a report on the plan developed under subsection (a).

AMENDMENT NO. 276 OFFERED BY MR. STAUBER OF MINNESOTA

At the end of subtitle D of title VIII, insert the following new section:

SEC. 8. CRITICAL AND RARE EARTH MINERAL SUPPLY CHAIN STUDY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Industrial Base Resilience, in coordination with the Secretary of the Interior, Secretary of Energy, and the Director of the United States Geological Survey, shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services and Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report on the feasibility of reshoring domestic critical and rare earth mineral mining and production.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) an identification of the strategic and critical materials used by the Department of Defense;

(2) an assessment of the reliability of the domestic supply chains for critical and rare earth minerals and the reliance for such critical and rare earth minerals on sources that are located in People's Republic of China or related to or subject to the control of People's Republic of China or the Chinese Communist Party;

(3) an identification of the domestic and international sources for the strategic and critical materials identified under paragraph (1);

(4) an identification of domestic locations with existing commercial manufacturing interest that are verified as containing large supplies of strategic and critical materials identified under paragraph (1);

(5) a strategy to reshore critical and rare earth mineral production to the United States; and

(6) a plan to implement the strategy required by paragraph (5), including a timeline for such implementation.

(c) STRATEGIC AND CRITICAL MATERIALS DEFINED.—In this section, the term “strategic and critical materials” has the meaning given such term in section 12 of the Strategic and Critical Materials Stock Piling Act (50 U.S.C. 98h-3).

AMENDMENT NO. 277 OFFERED BY MS. STEFANK OF NEW YORK

Page 925, line 18, insert “or cameras” after “systems”.

Page 925, line 23, insert “or cameras” after “systems”.

Page 926, line 6, insert “or in the 5150–5850 MHz band, governed by part 15 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations),” before “that is designed”.

Page 926, line 7, insert “licensed,” after “manufactured.”.

AMENDMENT NO. 278 OFFERED BY MS. STEFANK OF NEW YORK

At the end of subtitle B of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 12. U.S.-ISRAEL DEFENSE INDUSTRIAL BASE HARMONIZATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Under Secretary for Acquisition and Sustainment, shall convene the U.S.-Israel Defense Industrial Base Working Group to study the potential for defense industrial base integration between the United States and Israel, including the possibility of inclusion into the national technology and industrial base (as defined in section 4801 of title 10, United States Code).

(b) PROTECTION OF SENSITIVE INFORMATION.—Any activity carried out pursuant to the authority provided by subsection (a) shall be conducted in a manner that appropriately protects sensitive information and the national security interests of the United States and Israel.

AMENDMENT NO. 279 OFFERED BY MR. STEUBE OF FLORIDA

At the end of subtitle D of title X, add the following new section:

SEC. 10. CEREMONIAL HORSES ADOPTION PROGRAM OF THE ARMY.

Section 2583(c) of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “A military animal” and inserting, “Except as provided in paragraph (3), a military animal”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) If the Secretary of the Army determines that an adoption or transfer of a horse used in any ceremonial horse program of the Army is justified under subsection (a), the Secretary shall follow the recommended priority order in paragraph (1) except that the Secretary shall give first priority to making the horse available for transfer to a State, local, municipal, or Tribal law enforcement agency capable of humanely caring for the horse (including by demonstrating the capability to adequately care, house, and train the horse).”.

AMENDMENT NO. 280 OFFERED BY MR. STEUBE OF FLORIDA

At the end of subtitle C of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 12. EXTENSION AND MODIFICATION OF ANNUAL REPORT ON MILITARY POWER OF IRAN.

(a) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—Subsection (b) of section 1245 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (10 U.S.C. 113 note) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (B), (C), (D), and (E) as subparagraphs (D), (E), (F) and (G), respectively;

(B) by adding after subparagraph (A) the following subparagraphs:

“(B) the evolving use of terrorism in Iran’s security strategy, be it direct or indirect via proxy;

“(C) evolving thresholds for the use of direct and attributable force by Iran;”.

(C) in subparagraph (F), by striking “and” at the end;

(D) in subparagraph (G), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(E) by adding after subparagraph (G) the following subparagraph:

“(H) how Iran believes an integrated American, Arab, and Israeli regional security architecture focused on intelligence sharing, air and missile defense, and maritime security would create challenges for Iranian grand strategy, security strategy, and military strategy.”;

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (C) and (D) as subparagraphs (D) and (E), respectively;

(B) in subparagraph (D), by striking “; and” at the end; and

(C) by adding after subparagraph (B) the following subparagraph:

“(C) a summary of Iran’s procurement of advanced conventional capabilities from Russia and the impact of these procurements on Iran’s military capabilities, Israel’s Qualitative Military Edge, and Iran’s conventional forces as assessed under subparagraph (B);”;

(3) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (C), by inserting “any Iraqi Shia militia operating under the auspices of the ‘Islamic Resistance,’” after “the Badr Organization,”;

(B) in subparagraph (E), by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting “, including United States forces in Iraq, Syria, Jordan, and the Red Sea;”.

(C) in subparagraph (I)(ii), by striking “and activities; and” and inserting “, assets, and critical infrastructure; and”;

(D) in subparagraph (J), by striking “ability to manipulate the information environment both domestically and against the interests of the United States and its allies; and” and inserting “information warfare efforts designed to oppress the Iranian people and undermine the United States, its allies, and its interests;”

(C) in subparagraph (K), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(D) by adding at the end the following subparagraph:

“(L) an assessment of the military power of Iranian proxies and partners, including Hezbollah, Hamas, Palestine Islamic Jihad, Ansar Allah, and Iraqi and Syrian proxies.”;

(4) in paragraph (4)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “nuclear weapons capabilities and developments” and inserting “nuclear weapons-related advances, including growth of atomic infrastructure, fissile material inventories and purity, and weaponization-related activities”;

(B) by redesignating subparagraphs (G) as subparagraph (I);

(C) in subparagraph (F), by striking “to the Middle East and Europe; and” and inserting “globally;”;

(D) by adding after subparagraph (F) the following subparagraphs:

“(G) a detailed analysis of the domestic and foreign supply chains supporting Iran’s drone program;

“(H) a detailed assessment of the domestic production capacity by Iran’s proxies in the Middle East of long-range strike capabilities, to include mortars, IRAMs, rockets, drones, cruise missiles, and ballistic missiles; and”;

(5) in paragraph (5), by striking “nuclear development, ballistic missiles, and chemical, biological, and advanced conventional weapons, weapon systems, and delivery vehicles” and inserting “nuclear weapons, missiles and drones, and chemical, biological, and advanced conventional weapons and their delivery vehicles”; and

(6) in paragraph (8)—

(A) by striking “or any foreign terrorist organization.” and inserting “the Badr Organization, any other foreign terrorist organization, or any special designated global terrorist.”;

(B) by striking “the Bashar al-Assad regime,” and inserting “the Russian Federation, elements of the former Bashar al-Assad regime.”; and

(C) by inserting “Ansarallah,” after “Hamas.”.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—Subsection (c) of such section is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting “regardless of whether they are surface-to-surface or anti-ship missiles.”; and

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting “regardless of whether they are surface-to-surface or anti-ship missiles.”.

(c) TERMINATION.—Subsection (d) of such section is amended by striking “December 31, 2026” and inserting “December 31, 2030”.

AMENDMENT NO. 281 OFFERED BY MR. STEUBE OF FLORIDA

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

SEC. 7. PLAN AND REPORT BY DEFENSE HEALTH AGENCY RELATING TO CHIROPRACTIC CLINICS AT MILITARY INSTALLATIONS.

(a) PLAN.—The Director of the Defense Health Agency shall develop a plan to—

(1) reopen any clinic at a military installation if, before the date of the enactment of this Act, such clinic—

- (A) offered chiropractic services; and
(B) was closed; and

(2) pay chiropractors stationed at military installations under the General Schedule.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than March 31, 2026, the Director of the Defense Health Agency shall submit to the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate a report on the plan developed under subsection (a).

AMENDMENT NO. 282 OFFERED BY MR. STEUBE OF FLORIDA

At the appropriate place in subtitle E of title XVI, insert the following:

SEC. 16 . SENSE OF CONGRESS WITH RESPECT TO ARROW INTERCEPTOR PRODUCTION CAPACITY AND INVENTORY.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) it is in the national security interest of the United States to help allies and partners of the United States, including Israel, strengthen—

(A) the air and missile defense capability of such allies and partners; and

(B) the capacity of such allies and partners against common threats;

(2) such efforts help deter and defeat aggression that threatens—

(A) allies;

(B) forward-positioned members of the Armed Forces; and

(C) Americans residing in allied countries; and

(3) increased partner air and missile defense capacity also reduces demand on the Armed Forces.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than the first March 1 following the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on cooperation between the United States and Israel with respect to increased production capacity and inventory of the Arrow interceptor. Such report shall include:

(1) An assessment of Israel's Arrow missile defense system capacity as of the date of the enactment of this section, including launchers and interceptors.

(2) An assessment of the current supply base for such system and how such supply base can be strengthened.

(3) A detailed summary of the steps the Department of Defense is taking in cooperation with industry and the State of Israel to increase Arrow missile defense production capacity and inventory.

(4) An identification of any challenges or obstacles encountered and current plans to address such challenges or obstacles.

(5) Specific authorities or appropriations that Congress could provide to expedite and expand efforts to increase Arrow missile defense system production capacity and the number of deployed systems and interceptors.

(6) An assessment of what additional steps would be required to establish a fully redundant Arrow production capacity in the United States.

(c) FORM.—The report described in this section shall be submitted in unclassified form but may contain a classified annex.

AMENDMENT NO. 283 OFFERED BY MR. STEUBE OF FLORIDA

At the end of subtitle B of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 12 . REPORT ON U.S.-ISRAEL MILITARY EXERCISES.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) conducting regular military exercises of increasing complexity with the State of Israel that involve air, sea, ground, space, and cyberspace forces supports the national security interests of the United States;

(2) these military exercises should include other regional partners as well when feasible; and

(3) these military exercises strengthen the readiness of U.S. forces and those of our partners, bolster their ability to operate together, reinforce deterrence, and support regional security.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for a period not to exceed 3 years, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report that includes the following:

(1) A list of Department of Defense exercises that included Israel over the previous 12 months.

(2) A detailed description of—

(A) the capabilities and missions rehearsed in each exercise;

(B) how each exercise rehearsed new or more challenging combat capabilities and scenarios;

(C) how each exercise improved the readiness and capabilities of participating militaries and strengthened their ability to operate together; and

(D) the resources that would be needed to conduct more frequent and beneficial U.S.-Israel military exercises.

(3) A plan to increase the complexity of exercises and invite other regional partners to participate.

(c) FORM.—The report required by subsection (b) shall be in written form and transmitted in an unclassified manner and may contain a classified annex.

AMENDMENT NO. 284 OFFERED BY MR. STRONG OF ALABAMA

At the end of subtitle B of title III, insert the following new section:

SEC. 3 . REVISING THE PROHIBITION ON CONTRACTS FOR PERFORMANCE OF FIREFIGHTING OR SECURITY-GUARD FUNCTIONS.

Section 2465 of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (4), by inserting “or security-guard” after “firefighting” each place such term appears; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) An installation access control security guard contract to be carried out at an installation with less than 300 permanently assigned enlisted members in grades below E-7 and entitled to basic pay.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) INAPPLICABILITY DURING WAR OR NATIONAL EMERGENCY.—The provisions of this section shall not apply during war or during a period of war or national emergency declared by the President or an Act of Congress.”.

AMENDMENT NO. 285 OFFERED BY MR. SUBRAMANYAM OF VIRGINIA

At the end of subtitle E of title III, insert the following new section:

SEC. 3 . REPORT ON USE OF ULTRA-SHORT TAKEOFF AND LANDING AIRCRAFT FOR LAST MILE LOGISTICS AND DISASTER RESPONSE OPERATIONS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, in coordination with the Commander of United States Special Operations Command, shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and House of Representatives a report on the integration potential and value of ultra-short takeoff and landing aircraft. The report required under this section shall include—

(1) an assessment of the comparative cost efficiencies and operational advantages provided by ultra-short takeoff and landing aircraft in contested logistics and disaster response scenarios;

(2) identification of critical capability gaps in last-mile or last-tactical-mile logistics where such aircraft could serve as a force multiplier;

(3) an evaluation of specific mission sets and end users across the Indo-Pacific theater that could benefit from the deployment of such aircraft, especially mission sets related to homeland disaster response, humanitarian relief, wildfire suppression, or emergency resupply;

(4) options and timelines to accelerate the development, testing, and integration of such aircraft into U.S. Air Force and U.S. Special Operations Command capability portfolios; and

(5) an assessment of current testing and development, the development of operational concept development (CONOPS), and Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP) formulation for ultra-short takeoff and landing aircraft.

AMENDMENT NO. 286 OFFERED BY MS. TENNEY OF NEW YORK

At the end of subtitle B of title VIII, insert the following new section:

SEC. 8 . AMENDMENT TO REQUIREMENT FOR DOMESTIC STAINLESS STEEL FLATWARE AND DINNERWARE.

Section 842 of the Servicemember Quality of Life Improvement and National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025 (Public Law 118-159; 10 U.S.C. 4862 note) is amended by striking subsection (c).

AMENDMENT NO. 287 OFFERED BY MR. TURNER OF OHIO

At the end of subtitle E of title X, insert the following:

SEC. 10 . ASSESSMENT OF INTEGRATION OF JOINT COMBATANT COMMANDER EXERCISE TEAM INTO LARGE SCALE EXERCISES OF UNITED STATES INDO-PACIFIC COMMAND.

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Act, the Commander of the United States Indo-Pacific Command shall submit to the congressional defense committees an assessment of the ways in which a standing Joint and Combatant Commander Exercise Team supported by experienced former members of the Armed Forces could be integrated into Department of Defense concepts of operations in support of coalition, joint, and combatant commander large scale exercises.

AMENDMENT NO. 288 OFFERED BY MR. TURNER OF OHIO

At the end of subtitle E of title X, insert the following:

SEC. 10 . REPORT ON DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT OF THE NAVAL AUTONOMOUS DATA COLLECTION SYSTEM.

Not later than April 15, 2026, the Secretary of the Navy shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the development and deployment of the Naval Autonomous Data Collection System. Such report shall include information about the progress of establishing the program, projected benchmarks for fiscal year 2027, and any impediments to meeting these goals.

AMENDMENT NO. 289 OFFERED BY MR. TURNER OF OHIO

At the end of subtitle H of title VIII, insert the following new section:

SEC. 8 . CYBERSECURITY REGULATORY PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than June 1, 2026, the Chief Information Officer of the Department of Defense, in coordination with the Chief Information Officer of each military department, shall submit to the congressional defense committees a plan to reduce the cybersecurity regulatory burden on the Defense Industrial Base.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The plan required by subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a process for assessing future proposed cybersecurity contractual requirements for duplication;

(2) a process for coordinating and centralizing approved cybersecurity requirements; and

(3) a coordination mechanism with industry to characterize the industry position on any new cybersecurity contractual requirements, to include a cost-estimate, a cost-benefit analysis, and an assessment as to whether the control is considered duplicative to existing security controls.

AMENDMENT NO. 290 OFFERED BY MR. VAN ORDEN OF WISCONSIN

At the end of subtitle B of title XIII, add the following:

SEC. 13. SUPPORT FOR TAIWAN TO IMPROVE THE RESILIENCE AND SECURITY OF ITS ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE.

The President should take such actions as may be necessary to—

(1) consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act (22 U.S.C. 3301 et seq.), support efforts to strengthen Taiwan's ability to withstand any potential blockade or embargo, in whole or in part, including by exploring opportunities for training and support to the Taiwan Navy with respect to convoy operations involving liquefied natural gas; and

(2) ensure Taiwan is eligible for energy security and diversification efforts undertaken by the United States pursuant to section 2004 of the European Energy Security and Diversification Act of 2019, including by providing Taiwan with access to same liquefied natural gas programs as European countries.

AMENDMENT NO. 291 OFFERED BY MR. VAN ORDEN OF WISCONSIN

At the end of subtitle E of title X, add the following new section:

SEC. 10. REPORT ON OPTIONS FOR ESTABLISHING A DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR ADDRESSING RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND READINESS CHALLENGES.

(a) **REPORT REQUIRED.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on options for establishing a digital engagement framework for the purpose of addressing recruitment, retention, and readiness challenges facing the Armed Forces by—

(1) leveraging community-driven digital platforms available to members of the Armed Forces and the family members and caregivers of such members;

(2) improving the use and awareness of benefits or services available under the Transition Assistance Program and other programs of the Department of Defense; and

(3) positioning service in the Armed Forces as a premier pathway for achieving full human potential.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The report under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) With respect to any benefit, service, or program of the Department for members of the Armed Forces (including members of the Armed Forces participating in the Transition Assistance Program), or family members or caregivers of such members, the following:

(A) an assessment of digital engagement capabilities, including—

(i) survey design, implementation, or analysis capabilities to identify any such benefit, service, or program that is underused by such individuals;

(ii) internal marketing capabilities to promote such benefits, services, or programs;

(iii) strategic content development highlighting available opportunities with respect to such benefits, services, or programs;

(iv) collaborative networks with subject matter experts relating to the subject mat-

ter of such benefits, services, or programs; and

(v) advanced data management capabilities (including geolocation, demographic, and segment analytics) to ensure targeted outreach connects such individuals with such benefits, services, or programs;

(B) an identification of any such capabilities that have a demonstrated history of high user engagement, involve real-time responsiveness features, and provide resource-agnostic connectivity to any such benefit, service, or program; and

(C) an evaluation of how comprehensive community management across digital platforms that are geographically diverse but interconnected can improve the use and awareness of such benefits, services, or programs, by such individuals.

(2) An assessment of potential partnerships with nonprofit organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that the Secretary determines have a demonstrated history of—

(A) managing large-scale digital communities serving the individuals specified in paragraph (1), including across multiple time zones; and

(B) funding health and wellness initiatives for such individuals and improving retention in health care services and reduced rates of relapse among such individuals.

(3) Recommendations by the Secretary for the potential establishment of one or more pilot programs to test digital engagement solutions for the purpose specified in paragraph (1), measure the effects of such solutions with respect to the challenges specified in such paragraph, and evaluate the cost-effectiveness of such solutions, including recommendations on—

(A) potential actions under the pilot program to stress-test digital platforms under mobilization surge conditions to simulate the rapid onboarding of large numbers of members of the Armed Forces and family members of such members during contingency operations; and

(B) the potential use of funds appropriated to the Department or other funding mechanisms available to the Department to carry out such pilot program.

AMENDMENT NO. 292 OFFERED BY MR. WEBSTER OF FLORIDA

Subtitle G of title VI is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

SEC. 6. REPORT ON MILITARY CAMPING AND RECREATIONAL PARK PROGRAM.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than March 1, 2027, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report describing how each military department administers military camping and recreational parks to ensure such parks are equally accessible to all persons authorized to use such parks.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The report required under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A list of military camping and recreational vehicle parks that includes the location of each park and an identification of the military department that administers such park.

(2) An estimate of the average number of members of the Armed Forces and veterans who use each facility in a year, disaggregated by members of an active component, members of a reserve component, and veterans.

(3) A list of such parks that allow users to stay more than 30 days during any 90-day period.

(4) A list of such parks that allow users to live at a park full-time.

(5) An explanation of the differences between the policies that apply to such parks

and the policies that apply to other morale, welfare, and recreation facilities of the Department of Defense that do not allow persons to stay more than 30 days.

(6) A description of any additional authorities or resources the Secretary determines are necessary to increase capacity and to ensure such parks are equally accessible to all persons authorized to use such parks.

AMENDMENT NO. 293 OFFERED BY MR. WHITESIDES OF CALIFORNIA

At the end of subtitle C of title III, insert the following:

SEC. 3. AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY CENTERS TO ENHANCE WORKFORCE TRAINING IN CERTAIN CRITICAL SKILLS.

(a) **AUTHORITY.**—The Secretary of Defense may establish Advanced Technology Centers at community colleges with workforce programs that include a critical national production facility. An Advanced Technology Center established under this subsection shall provide workforce training in covered critical skills.

(b) **COVERED CRITICAL SKILLS.**—In this section, the term “covered critical skills” means any of the following:

(1) Advanced composite material layup.

(2) Advanced coatings applications.

(3) Computer numerical control manufacturing.

(4) Aircraft mechanical assembly and integrated circuit development, including with respect to aircraft such as B-21 and F-35.

(5) welding, pipefitting, and metal fabrication related to vessel construction, repair and maintenance.

AMENDMENT NO. 294 OFFERED BY MR. WHITESIDES OF CALIFORNIA

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

SEC. 2. REPORT ON RESEARCH RELATING TO THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE AND NEAR-SPACE ENVIRONMENT.

(a) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the upper atmosphere and near-space environment are important to Air Force and Joint operations worldwide and the operational and threat environments that U.S. assets are likely to encounter;

(2) research is needed to study atmospheric phenomenology and develop technologies for continuous monitoring and detection of encroachment and adversarial effects in the atmosphere;

(3) research on atmospheric signatures and dynamics in the upper atmosphere and the development of predictive techniques to ensure observational and operational superiority would be beneficial for Air Force missions; and

(4) the Secretary of the Air Force should conduct additional research in these areas.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of the Air Force, shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report that includes the following:

(1) An assessment of intelligence activities and other competitive activities undertaken by foreign nations with respect to the upper atmosphere and near-space environment.

(2) A comprehensive strategy to address the upper atmosphere and near-space environment, which shall include requirements for high-altitude, long-duration, and heavy-lift propulsion systems and platforms.

AMENDMENT NO. 295 OFFERED BY MS. WILLIAMS OF GEORGIA

Page 429, after line 3, insert the following new subparagraph:

(M) Cervical cancer.

AMENDMENT NO. 296 OFFERED BY MR. WILSON OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Add at the end of subtitle D of title XII the following:

SEC. 12. STRATEGY.

Not later than 300 days after the enactment of this Act the Department of Defense shall submit a strategy to the House Armed Services Committee and Senate Armed Services Committee relating to raising the issue of political prisoners in Pakistan, including former Prime Minister Imran Khan, in all military-to-military engagements with the military of Pakistan.

AMENDMENT NO. 297 OFFERED BY MR. WILSON OF SOUTH CAROLINA

At the end of subtitle B of title XVII, add the following:

SEC. 17. STRATEGY TO ENCOURAGE DEFECTIONS FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretary of State, shall develop and submit to Congress a strategy aimed at encouraging defections by senior Iranian security officials and members of the armed forces.

(b) STRATEGY DESCRIBED.—The strategy required under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) identification of mechanisms to securely communicate with potential defectors;

(2) measures providing assurances of safety and security to defectors and their families;

(3) establishment of a dedicated inter-agency working group tasked with managing defections, ensuring defector safety, verifying information provided by defectors, and mitigating potential intelligence risks;

(4) incentives for defectors who can provide actionable intelligence about regime operations, including potential financial assistance, employment support, and housing assistance in coordination with relevant domestic agencies;

(5) measures for publicizing successful defections, when appropriate and consistent with security protocols, to encourage additional defections within the regime; and

(6) coordination with international partners to share best practices, jointly facilitate defections, and ensure defectors receive international protection, as needed.

(c) FORM.—The strategy required under subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may contain a classified annex if necessary.

AMENDMENT NO. 298 OFFERED BY MR. WITTMAN OF VIRGINIA

At the appropriate place in subtitle H of title VIII, insert the following:

SEC. 8. REPORT ON WAIVERS OF SECURITY REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN SOFTWARE CONTRACTS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on contracts awarded to offerors of software applications and software services for which a waiver of security requirements relating to such applications and services has been granted. Such report shall include the following:

(1) The name of the software application or service.

(2) The number and type of waivers that were granted to statutes, regulations, and policies.

(3) A comprehensive justification for granting the waiver instead of awarding the contract to a compliant offeror.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 682, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ROGERS) and the

gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama.

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Chair, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL), my friend and the chairman of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Chair, I thank Chairman ROGERS for the opportunity to visit on this en bloc. I appreciate his leadership in once again guiding the NDAA successfully, on a bipartisan basis, through the House.

While I will support this en bloc set of amendments, I would be remiss if I didn't bring to light an amendment that is included in this en bloc that I believe needs more deliberation. I appreciate the intentions of the sponsor, but I believe we need to carefully consider some of the details.

This amendment nearly duplicates the vast powers of the Defense Production Act while the House Financial Services Committee and the Senate Banking Committee are in the midst of a thorough reauthorization, including happily and proactively consulting with our colleagues on the Armed Services Committee and our Members throughout both sides of the Hill.

Note that I said the amendment narrowly duplicates the DPA because there are significant differences that should raise concerns about the text in this amendment.

Over the course of 75 years, Congress has built in crucial safeguards to the Defense Production Act. The amendment does not include these safeguards.

Here are just a few examples: Under the Defense Production Act, the Pentagon is limited in its use of financial assistance to domestic industry as well as certain entities located in our Five Eyes partner countries. Even in those countries, our closest, most reliable allies in the world, the DPA has strong oversight language to prevent offshoring to foreign companies.

This amendment, if enacted into law, would allow the Pentagon to use subsidies and purchase commitments in 190 countries around the globe, including, Mr. Chairman, Venezuela and Cuba. We must carefully evaluate these policy choices at a time when we are working to bring jobs back to the United States and reverse decades of manufacturing decline.

Under the previous administration, President Biden sought to use the DPA for things like making more baby formula and residential heat pumps. The amendment would only ensure such efforts in future administrations. This is just not a likelihood. It is a certainty that it could, in fact, be used outside the defense arena.

These are only a handful of my concerns, and I think it would be better for this debate to happen more fully between the committees in a conference process.

Mr. Chairman, I invite Chairman ROGERS to commit to addressing these

concerns by working with our Financial Services Committee members through the NDAA process, and I thank him for yielding me some time today.

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Chair, I agree with Chairman HILL that our committees have a lot of ground to cover on authorities to strengthen the defense industrial base.

Mr. MESSMER's amendment is a good attempt to break through some of the bureaucracy that has hampered those efforts. I commit to Chairman HILL that we will work with him and his committee on the defense industrial base matters that arise in the conference on the NDAA.

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. DAVIDSON).

Mr. DAVIDSON. Mr. Chair, I thank the chairman and ranking member for their work on keeping the NDAA bipartisan.

There is such a vital focus on national security here, and there are some truly good reforms. As Mr. HILL highlighted, the Defense Production Act has broader implications than just the Department of Defense.

This turf war is, frankly, as old as the Defense Production Act, back to 1950. When Chief of Staff James A. Baker, III, was navigating this, he highlighted that tension. Since then, all kinds of things have taken place with the Defense Production Act. This year is the first opportunity to reauthorize it since the COVID pandemic, so HHS has been used.

There is a lot of thoughtful work underway as we seek to modernize and reauthorize this. I look forward to future collaboration.

Mr. Chair, I thank Chairman ROGERS for his commitment to Chairman HILL. As chairman of the National Security, Illicit Finance, and International Financial Institutions Subcommittee, this authorization does go through my subcommittee, and I am happy to work with colleagues across the spectrum here to get a good product across the finish line.

Mr. Chair, I am opposed to this en bloc because of this amendment.

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SELF).

Mr. SELF. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of my amendments Nos. 476 and 478.

We are at an inflection point in American history. China is investing heavily in AI, integrating it into its military and economy. America cannot afford to fall behind.

My first amendment expands AI pilot programs and logistics, cyber defense, intelligence, and maintenance. AI is a vital force multiplier, cutting costs, speeding decisions, and keeping our warfighters ahead. It also mandates regular reports to Congress for swift, informed action to maintain our edge.

My second amendment ensures an immediate pay raise for Department of

War blue-collar workers, the mechanics and technicians who keep our bases and equipment ready. These Americans have yet to receive a 2025 pay raise because the fully partisan committee that was supposed to represent these blue-collar workers failed in its mission and had to be dissolved.

Mr. Chair, I look forward to working with the Department of War on implementing recommendations to make sure these crucial workers are paid what they deserve.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HOULAHAN).

Ms. HOULAHAN. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to this bill.

I was very proud of the markup that passed out of the Armed Services Committee. The bill that we delivered to this floor this week was overwhelmingly bipartisan. It supported our men and women in uniform and strengthened our national defense.

It was an honor to work so closely with Chairman ROGERS and Ranking Member SMITH on that bill.

Unfortunately, the toxically amended bill that is here before us is no longer that. Not only have a number of very difficult amendments been added to the original markup, but also, since the markup, this administration has recklessly and dangerously deployed the National Guard to American cities without the request or permission of either State or local officials.

For good reason, the Governor of each State makes the decision about when and where to deploy National Guard, not Presidents who are trying to score cheap political points and who are trying to divide our Nation.

I am very proud to be a veteran, and as ranking member of the Military Personnel Subcommittee, it is my responsibility to make sure that we are taking care of our troops and deploying them responsibly and legally, but you don't need to be a veteran or a member of a military family to see what this administration has done with our military. It is divisive, shameful, and irresponsible.

It is divisive, shameful, and irresponsible for us to ask our soldiers to act as local police officers, a role that undermines our readiness for actual conflicts.

□ 1530

It is divisive, shameful, and irresponsible that we force them to leave their families and their jobs for an uncertain period of time with uncertain pay and benefits. It is most certainly divisive, shameful, and irresponsible when we force them to spend their days picking up trash at a cost of millions to the taxpayer.

Our National Guard is designed and trained, indeed purpose-built, to serve key roles in domestic emergencies, natural disasters, and in deployment overseas. When we stray from that mission, we put our national security at risk, and we disrespect these men and women.

For these reasons, at the appropriate time, I will offer a motion to recommit this bill back to committee. If the House rules permitted, I would have offered the motion with an important amendment to this bill. This simple amendment requires that the State's Governor must consent before the National Guard can be deployed.

I know that many of my colleagues may agree with me, including some who are, indeed, running for Governor of their home State, so I ask these Members and all of those who believe in federalism and States' rights to have the courage to support this important amendment today. I hope my colleagues will join me in voting for this motion to recommit.

Mr. Chair, I include in the RECORD the text of this amendment.

Ms. Houlahan moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3838 to the Committee on Armed Services with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendment:

At the end of subtitle B of title V, insert the following new section:

SEC. 5. REQUIREMENT OF CONSENT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER FOR CERTAIN FULL-TIME NATIONAL GUARD DUTY PERFORMED IN A STATE, TERRITORY, OR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

Section 502(f)(2)(A) of title 32, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(A) Support of operations or missions undertaken by the member's unit at the request of the President or Secretary of Defense, with the consent of—

“(i) the chief executive officer of each State (as such term is defined in section 901 of this title) in which such operations or missions shall take place; or

“(ii) if such operations or missions shall take place in the District of Columbia, the Mayor of the District of Columbia.”.

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER).

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the leadership of Chairman ROGERS and Ranking Member SMITH on this important piece of legislation.

I rise today in support of this en bloc package, which contains four of my amendments. The first requires the Secretary of the Air Force and the Director of the Air National Guard to work together to modernize the Air National Guard's fighter fleet.

Last year's NDAA required a similar report, but this report did not fulfill several requirements, like consultation from the Director of the Air National Guard and recapitalization plans for all fighter wings. It was entirely inadequate.

The average age of our fighter fleet has grown from 10 years to 30 years, and 51 percent of the Air Force's service-retained fighting force is in the Air National Guard. We need to act to modernize our fleet.

My second amendment will provide a 2-year funding mechanism for the State Partnership Program. This is a key security cooperation program that enables our National Guard units to train with United States allies and increases the interoperability, compat-

ibility, and overall readiness of the National Guard.

Budget volatility has brought fiscal uncertainty to this program, putting its future in jeopardy. A 2-year funding mechanism will bring much-needed stability to the program.

My third amendment will require the DOD to increase the efficiency of the Funeral Honors Program. The Funeral Honors Program helps the families of fallen veterans give their loved ones the dignified and respectful burial that they have earned. This program relies on local veterans service organizations to provide these funeral honors, and VSOs receive stipends for costs incurred.

Last year, it was brought to my attention that some VSOs had their stipends withheld due to budgetary shortfalls and the National Guard's operational needs taking priority.

My amendment will require the DOD to identify best practices and cost-effective ways to protect the operational needs of our National Guard while ensuring VSOs are supported in their selfless dedication to our Nation's heroes.

My last amendment will require the DOD to address our crippling reliance on Communist China for critical minerals. We currently rely on Communist China for roughly 80 percent of our critical minerals. These minerals are used to produce everything from cell phones to fighter jets.

With the flip of a switch, Communist China could cease all exports of critical minerals to the United States. In fact, they have already started reducing their exports.

Further, we have turned a blind eye to the atrocities committed by our supplier. Communist China owns 13 of the 19 industrial mines in the Congo, and they utilize child slave labor and follow zero environmental laws.

My amendment would require DOD to help develop a strategy to reshore critical mineral production and end our reliance on Communist China.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to support this en bloc package.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

There are three things I want to do in the closing here. First of all, I want to really recognize the efforts of all of the staff that were involved in bringing us to this point to get the bill to the floor: certainly the House Armed Services Committee staff, and the bipartisan staff, ably led on both sides of the aisle.

This is a long process. Thousands of amendments are generated, thousands more ideas that they have to work their way through to get the bill through the markup and get it to the floor.

Certainly, the Rules Committee staff works overtime processing all those amendments, as well as the floor staff. I thank them all very much for putting up with this. This process was not as bad as it has been in the past. I am not

sure that is a good thing, but there was a lot less stuff that came out here.

Everyone has to do so much work on this to make this happen, so I really thank the staff for their incredible work. It is a fine testimony to how vital government employees are to making our country run, and I really appreciate that.

Second, I thank Chairman ROGERS, all of the members of the House Armed Services Committee, and their respective staffs for the product we produced out of committee. It was a bipartisan product that really focused on what we needed to do to make the Defense Department better and make sure that we support the men and women who serve in the military.

There are all manner of external issues that really are focused more on partisan advantage one way or the other that typically get thrust at us. We resisted that and stayed focused on the policy. It is not that there aren't disagreements on that policy, even partisan disagreements, where Republicans tend to be in one place and Democrats tend to be in the other. However, it was all around the focus of what is the best way to run the Department of Defense, and that is a legitimate debate to have. Chairman ROGERS handled that incredibly well. It was a very fair debate, a fair discussion, and we produced what I think was an excellent product.

It is worth remembering what is in that base bill. The single biggest thing is acquisition reform, which is every little bit as important as it is boring to talk about. It is hard to dive into the details of who is making this decision, the other decision.

The bottom line is, it just takes too long now to buy the equipment, to update and get the innovative technologies that we need in the modern world. The pace of change has never been this rapid—AI, drones, counter-drones, all manner of different technologies. We have got to get those in the hands of the warfighter vastly more quickly and vastly less expensively than we currently do, and the focus in this bill is absolutely right to deal with this.

We also continue to prioritize quality-of-life issues for the men and women who serve in our military and their families, as well we should. There are a lot of very good provisions in that bill, and we produced that product.

The Rules process was a different thing. It was a very, very partisan exercise in which if Republicans made requests, they got them, including the weird little thing that we just went through with some financial services issue, which I don't understand why that is in our bill. It shouldn't be. Well, I do understand why it is in our bill, because the Speaker has a very difficult time saying no to people that he ought to say no to. We need to work on that.

That created a partisan process out of what was a bipartisan process. In

and of itself, that is problematic because what it means is Democrats do not get to adequately participate in the process. We didn't get any of the amendments in the debates that we wanted, not a single, solitary one. Meanwhile, all manner of different issues that are pure culture war, partisan issues were allowed in. I fear that many of those are going to pass. We will see. If those amendments are defeated, we will wind up in a different place, but if they pass, we will have a bill that is no longer bipartisan.

This year, as Ms. HOULAHAN just highlighted, there is one particular thing that was problematic, and that is we are not exercising oversight of the Chief Executive in the manner in which we should. We have become vastly more partisan in that regard as well. I have served under—I am going to lose track of how many Presidents. I think it is five now. Every single one of those, Republicans would always have complaints about a Republican President and Democrats would have complaints about a Democratic President, now not as many as would go the other way, to be sure. But there were always efforts when we would, on a bipartisan basis, say no, the executive branch shouldn't do that. We are going to stand up for Congress.

This is the first term I have ever seen that completely silenced. There is no effort whatsoever for Congress to criticize anything the President does. That is a problem. That upsets the balance of power, the checks and balances that were put in place by our Founders to make sure that we continue to be a constitutional Republic, a Nation based on the Constitution and laws, not on any one individual.

We see that played out most starkly with the way the United States military is currently being used in our cities, in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, and even the specter of the President threatening the city of Chicago that he will invade them like a scene from "Apocalypse Now." That should trouble everybody. I don't care whether you are conservative, Democrat, Independent, Republican, liberal, whatever. You should be troubled, even if, by the way, as I do, you have profound concerns about crime in our areas.

I have profound concerns about the way some of those cities are using the criminal justice system. I have concerns in my own area.

□ 1540

I have concerns in my own area. The answer to that is not sending in the United States military.

The way I have come to sum it up is: Crime is a problem. Fascism isn't the answer. More police and stronger communities, that is the answer.

We need to exercise oversight on that because it violates the law. It also undermines the readiness of the United States military. They are supposed to be trained to defend us against our enemies and adversaries, not to engage in

domestic law enforcement. We should have a conversation about that and exercise oversight.

We also have the problem with the whole Signalgate thing, where classified information was shared in a way that it should not be shared, and there should be no disagreement on that. We didn't exercise oversight on that either, so stepping aside from all of these issues, simply letting the President do what he wants to do.

Then, internationally, the last point, this attack on that boat down in the Caribbean is incredibly problematic. This is an expansion of the war powers of the President that we have never seen before.

If the President has the power on his own, without even notifying Congress, much less with us exercising any oversight of it, to declare war on any drug cartel in the world whenever he wants to, then our Constitution, Article I, pretty much ceases to have meaning.

We just had an amendment to repeal the AUMFs. I listened to some of those arguments. I support that amendment. I think it was a good argument. The argument was for Article I, for the United States Congress playing a role. We have abdicated that role at this point in a way that we have never done before.

That is a problem. It is something that the Rules Committee should have permitted us to really debate through a series of amendments on the floor, and they did not. I am troubled by that. We will see how the amendment process goes.

Again, beneath all of that is a really good bill that a lot of very good people worked very hard to produce. I hope that when we get through the end of this process and actually pass the bill and send it off to the President, we get that bill back, because it is really important that we pass it.

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

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chair, I support this bipartisan en bloc amendment that was worked in advance with the minority.

I also want to take a minute to completely foot-stomp what my friend, the ranking member, just said about the staff, not only the House Armed Services staff on both sides of the aisle, who have just done incredible work, but the floor staff here and the Rules Committee staff in moving what is the biggest bill that this Congress has to move each year in such an expeditious fashion. They are all to be commended, and I thank them all.

Mr. Chair, I can't overstate how much I appreciate the ranking member and his partnership and leadership in this process. He is, as you can tell, a thought leader in this area, but also just a great partner in advancing this very important piece of legislation.

This is a good bill. It is a very important bill. It reforms the Pentagon's

broken acquisition system; continues historic improvements in the quality of life of our servicemembers and their families; builds a ready, capable, and lethal fighting force necessary to deter global threats; and enacts President Trump's Peace Through Strength agenda.

The House will work its will on the amendments before us today, but I urge all Members to support final passage of the bill. It is critical we get this bill to conference and, ultimately, to the President's desk.

The threats we face today are more complex and precarious than at any point in the last 80 years. The Department needs the authorities that this NDAA provides to stay ahead of these threats. I urge all Members to support this en bloc amendment and the underlying bill.

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

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Chair, Representative Moolenaar's amendment No. 26, entitled the SAFE Research Act, would enact excessive prohibitions for research awards that would stymie American innovation. In particular, the amendment would introduce a government-wide prohibition to give awards to individuals if they, or a research collaborator, have been affiliated with a hostile foreign entity at any time within five years of applying for the award. The definitions of who is included a "hostile foreign entity" is very far reaching and includes twelve separate entity lists as well as any entity performing academic, scientific, or technical collaboration perceived to contribute to nefarious activity.

For an agency to implement this prohibition, they would have to analyze a personal history of every awardee, along with every research collaborator (defined by joint research, coauthored publications, collaboration on awards, and formal mentor relationships) that awardee has had in the past five years. Furthermore, the amendment restricts post-award activity, prohibiting covered individuals from sharing "expertise" with "hostile foreign entities," or those affiliated with them, for five years. This is vague, onerous, and impracticable. Simply from an implementation standpoint, it is highly difficult for any research agency, nonetheless one that has had its staff gutted, to properly carry out these proposed policies.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. SMUCKER). The question is on the amendments en bloc offered by the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ROGERS).

The en bloc amendments were agreed to.

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Chair, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ROGERS of Alabama) having assumed the chair, Mr. SMUCKER, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3838) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2026 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, had come to no resolution thereon.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 45 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GOLDMAN of Texas) at 4 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.

STREAMLINING PROCUREMENT FOR EFFECTIVE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY AND NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOLDMAN of Texas). Pursuant to House Resolution 682 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 3838.

Will the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MOORE) kindly take the chair.

□ 1602

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3838) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2026 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, with Mr. MOORE of North Carolina (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, amendments en bloc No. 5, printed in part A of House Report 119-255, offered by the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ROGERS), had been disposed of.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in part A of House Report 119-255, on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 34 by Mr. MEEKS of New York.

Amendment No. 13 by Mr. NORMAN of South Carolina.

Amendment No. 14 by Ms. MACE of South Carolina.

Amendment No. 15 by Ms. MACE of South Carolina.

Amendment No. 16 by Ms. MACE of South Carolina.

Amendment No. 17 by Ms. MACE of South Carolina.

Amendment No. 7 by Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.

Amendment No. 9 by Mr. PATRONIS of Florida.

Amendment No. 11 by Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

Amendment No. 18 by Mr. MILLS of Florida.

Amendment No. 20 by Ms. GREENE of Georgia.

Amendment No. 22 by Ms. GREENE of Georgia.

Amendment No. 23 by Ms. GREENE of Georgia.

Amendment No. 24 by Ms. GREENE of Georgia.

Amendment No. 25 by Mr. MCCORMICK of Georgia.

Amendment No. 29 by Mr. BIGGS of Arizona.

Amendment No. 253 by Mr. ROSE of Tennessee.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 34 OFFERED BY MR. MEEKS

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on amendment No. 34, printed in part A of House Report 119-255, offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS), on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 261, noes 167, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 244]

AYES—261

Adams	Cole	Garcia (TX)
Aguilar	Comer	Gillen
Amo	Conaway	Golden (ME)
Ansari	Correa	Goldman (NY)
Auchincloss	Costa	Gomez
Balint	Courtney	Gonzalez, V.
Barragan	Craig	Goodlander
Barrett	Crane	Gosar
Beatty	Crank	Gottheimer
Begich	Crenshaw	Gray
Bell	Crockett	Green, Al (TX)
Bera	Crow	Greene (GA)
Beyer	Cuellar	Griffith
Biggs (AZ)	Dauids (KS)	Grothman
Bishop	Davidson	Hageman
Boebert	Davis (IL)	Hamadeh (AZ)
Bonamici	Davis (NC)	Harder (CA)
Boyle (PA)	Dean (PA)	Hayes
Brecheen	DeGette	Hernandez
Brown	DeLauro	Himes
Brownley	DelBene	Horsford
Budzinski	Deluzio	Houlahan
Burchett	DeSaulnier	Hoyer
Burlison	Dexter	Hoyle (OR)
Bynum	Dingell	Huffman
Cammack	Doggett	Ivey
Carbajal	Donalds	Jackson (IL)
Carson	Elfreth	Jacobs
Carter (LA)	Emmer	James
Casar	Escobar	Jayapal
Case	Espallat	Jeffries
Casten	Evans (CO)	Johnson (GA)
Castor (FL)	Fedorchak	Johnson (TX)
Castro (TX)	Fields	Jordan
Cherfilus-	Figures	Joyce (OH)
McCormick	Fletcher	Kamlager-Dove
Chu	Foster	Kaptur
Cisneros	Foushee	Keating
Clark (MA)	Frankel, Lois	Kelly (IL)
Clarke (NY)	Friedman	Kennedy (NY)
Cleaver	Frost	Khanna
Cline	Fry	King-Hinds
Cloud	Garamendi	Krishnamoorthi
Clyburn	Garcia (CA)	Landsman
Cohen	Garcia (IL)	Larsen (WA)