this legislation directly helps by bringing more physicians to places like eastern Washington by providing creative avenues for funding our graduate medical education. It also helps solve the longer-term problem of too few doctors in rural areas, because studies show that, if we do not do the residencies in the rural areas, they’re more likely to practice in the rural areas.

I urge the support of this legislation, and I thank Mr. Thompson for joining me in introducing it.

RELUCTANT OPPOSITION TO THE NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2012

(Mr. MORAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in reluctant opposition to the National Defense Authorization Act of 2012, which will be voting on today.

The bill provides provisions that are vital to our national defense, but it also includes provisions that present a false choice between our safety and our values.

Section 1021 would authorize the indefinite military detention of all terrorism suspects. Allowing the United States military to detain individuals, some of whom may be innocent, without charge or trial during this endless war on terrorism undermines our most defining principles as a Nation of individual freedom and justice for all.

Mr. Speaker, our civilian law enforcement agencies have proven themselves capable of apprehending, interrogating, and prosecuting terrorism suspects. In fact, civilian courts have overseen the successful prosecution of more than 400 terrorists—the military courts only six.

This Congress should not impose these law enforcement duties upon our troops. It is un-American and unconstitutional. We should reject the false choice between our short-term security and our long-term survival as the leader of the free world.

SUPPORT H.R. 1905, THE IRAQ THREAT REDUCTION ACT

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

Mr. WELCH. I rise today in support of the Iraq Threat Reduction Act.

Mr. Speaker, I believe in dialogue and I very much believe in diplomacy; but despite an unprecedented effort by President Obama in his speech to the Iraqi people for outreach, the Iranian Government was unreciprocal in any kind of response. Instead, what we’ve seen is that they are pursuing the development of nuclear weapons with a speed ahead. Last month, the International Atomic Energy Agency further confirmed in a report detailing efforts by the Iranian Government Iran’s nuclear aspirations to acquire the skills needed to weaponize highly enriched uranium.

This is extremely dangerous. Iran has had a longstanding relationship with Hezbollah, which continues to condone violence as a political tactic; and Iran is continuing to be the major bulwark of support for the brutal crackdown by the Syrian Government on the democratic aspirations of its people.

I urge my colleagues to support the Iran Threat Reduction Act.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1540, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2012

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 493 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. Res. 493

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report on the bill (H.R. 1540) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 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. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered ordered to be raised on the conference report to its adoption without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate; and (2) one motion to recommit if applicable.

Sec. 2. It shall be in order at any time through the remainder of the first session of the One Hundred Twelfth Congress for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules, as though under clause 1(c) of rule XV, if the text of the measure proposed in a motion is made available to Members, Deliberative Committees, and the relevant Committee of Chairman (including pursuant to clause 3 of rule XXIX) on the calendar day before consideration.

Sec. 3. On any legislative day of the first session of the One Hundred Twelfth Congress after December 16, 2011—

(a) the Journal of the proceedings of the previous day shall be considered as approved;
(b) the Chair may at any time declare the House adjourned to meet at a date and time, within the limits of clause 4, section 5, article I of the Constitution, be announced by the Chair in declaring the adjournment; and
(c) bills and resolutions introduced during the period addressed by this section shall be numbered in the Congressional Record, and when printed shall bear the date of introduction, but may be referred by the Speaker at a later time.

Sec. 4. On any legislative day of the second session of the One Hundred Twelfth Congress before January 17, 2012—

(a) the Speaker may dispense with organizational and legislative business;
(b) the Journal of the proceedings of the previous day shall be considered as approved if applicable; and
(c) the Chair at any time may declare the House adjourned to meet at a date and time, within the limits of clause 4, section 5, article I of the Constitution, to be announced by the Chair in declaring the adjournment.

Sec. 5. The Speaker may appoint Members to perform the duties of the Chair for the duration of the period addressed by sections 3 and 4 as though under clause 8(a) of rule I.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YODER). The gentleman from Utah is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. Hastings), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days during which they may revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, this resolution provides a standard conference report rule and other end-of-the-year housekeeping provisions.

H.R. 1540, the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2012, was considered in committee. It was debated on the House floor. It included 152 amendments made in order before passing this Chamber, and that was done in May with an overwhelming and bipartisan majority. It went through the Senate. And now we bring to you today a bipartisan conference report.

I have to commend the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON), as well as the ranking member, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH), for truly continuing the tradition of bipartisanship and mutual cooperation in the Armed Services Committee and in this particular bill.

These are some Congress have a reputation of being somewhat contentious and partisan, sometimes deservedly so. However, I have been a member of the Armed Services Committee myself for several years, and I recognize that they clearly understand Article I of the Constitution, which requires a common defense of our country; and in that particular committee, bipartisanship really has been checked at the door regarding the product of the Armed Services Committee, which is this annual Defense Authorization bill.

In its essence, I think the process has been good, the efforts have been good, and it has made a significant issue that we are bringing here to the floor ready to pass in its final version from the conference committee. There are significant underlying issues that I think we will talk about during the course of the discussion on the rule and perhaps on the bill as well, but those things, I think, will be handled as they appear at a particular time.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I thank my friend from Utah for yielding the
time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it’s been more than 10 years since the attacks of September 11. We have fought two wars and have engaged in military action in numerous countries. Hundreds of thousands of people have died, and many more have been wounded. We have spent more than $1 trillion. Osama bin Laden is dead, and the Obama administration officials have declared that al Qaeda is “operationally ineffective.”

Here we reformed a national government, compromised our civil liberties, spent billions on a surveillance state, and created a culture of paranoia in which, even in the last few days, a reality TV show about Muslim Americans is subjected to a campaign of hate and intolerance.

Before proceeding, let me commend the chairman and the ranking member of the relevant committee of jurisdiction that put this package together. I am fully opposed to many aspects of it, but I am in tremendous agreement with their bipartisan efforts and the staffs of both of them and the other committee members for putting forth the effort to bring us to this point of deliberation.

We should take this opportunity at this moment in our history to seriously and carefully deliberate our Nation’s counterterrorism efforts. We ought to consider which policies are effective, not only create more anti-American sentiment but we ought to consider which policies align with our national values and which, instead, undermine them. We ought to consider whether we should continue using the full thrust of the United States Armed Forces in country after country or whether a more nuanced approach might better serve our needs.

Unfortunately, the legislation before us does not attempt to answer these questions. It commits us to dive even further down the road of fear. It commits us to more war and more wasteful spending, and it commits us to ceding our freedoms and liberties on the mere suspicion of wrongdoing. This legislation erodes our society and our national security by militarizing our justice system and empowering the President to detain anyone in the United States, including American citizens, without charge or trial, without due process.

If this is going to continue to be the direction of our country, Mr. Speaker, we don’t need a Democratic Party or a Republican Party or an Occupy Wall Street party or a Tea Party; we need a Mayflower party. If we are going to undermine the foundational principles of this great country, then we might as well sail away to someplace else.

This legislation establishes an authority for open-ended war anywhere in the world and against anyone. It commits us to seeing as “terrorists” anyone who ever criticizes the United States in any country, including this one. The lack of definitions as to what constitutes “substantial support” and “associated forces” of al Qaeda and the Taliban mean that anyone could be accused of terrorism. Congress has not tried to curtail civil liberties like this since the McCarthy era; but here we are today, trying to return to an era of arbitrary arrests, witch-hunts, and fearmongering.

While this measure includes an exception for United States citizens, it does not protect them from indefinite detention. In one fell swoop, we have set up an adoption where American citizens could have their Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Amendment rights violated on mere suspicions. And by placing suspected terrorists solely in the hands of the military, these provisions deny civilian law enforcement the ability to conduct effective counterterrorism efforts.

The fact of the matter is that our law enforcement agencies and civilian courts have proven over and over again that they are capable of handling counterterrorism cases. I had the distinct privilege in this country of serving as a Federal judge shepherding terrorists solely in the hands of the military. Here at home, we’ve reformed our national values and which, in the end, only create a situation where American citizens is subjected to a culture surveillance state, and created a culture of paranoia.

Laden is dead, and the Obama administration officials have declared that al Qaeda is “operationally ineffective.” Although this reauthorization of our terrorism policies. This bill contains over $600 billion in spending, runs to over 1,000 pages, and is coming to the floor less than 48 hours after it was filed. While the detainees provisions in this legislation might have received the most attention in the last few days, there are plenty of other critical provisions that Members may have opinions about, and that’s why on these kinds of measures we should have open rules.

I realize that I’ve said that Congress—and we are proving it at the end of this session—has a bad case of deadline-itis. But my friends in the Republican majority don’t only have deadline-itis, they have deadline-ophiilia. We are considering a poorly conceived extenders package that will harm the middle class and weaken our economy. Today we are considering controversial language in a defense bill that sets a dangerous precedent and potentially harms the civil liberties of American citizens.

I appreciate that the Republican majority, many of whom are my friends, don’t want their holiday season ruined by having to work. But that doesn’t mean we have to ruin everyone else’s holiday season by passing bad laws.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, the issues and accusations that were brought up by the gentleman from Florida will be something that we will address in the course of this debate, but I wish to do this in somewhat of a regular order. There are other issues, as he said, that are significant.

To address the first of those, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. QUAYLE).

Mr. QUAYLE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I rise in support of the rule and the conference report of the National Defense Authorization Act.

The NDAA includes a long-term reauthorization of the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer programs. I was proud to serve as a co-conference for this important bill.

SBIR was originally signed into law by President Reagan and has been an effective tool supporting innovation among our small business community for nearly 30 years. Since its inception, this competitive grant program has enabled more than 100,000 research and development projects across the Nation and has helped spawn familiar companies such as Qualcomm, Sonicare, and Symantec.

Although this reauthorization of these programs isn’t perfect, it improves them in a number of ways. It opens up the program for more small companies to participate. It increases
Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased at this time to yield 2 minutes to my good friend, the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. Lee).

Ms. LEE of California. First let me thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding. He is a former member of the Intelligence Committee, and I just have to commend his forthright leadership and for his opening statement which laid out many of the concerns that many of us have about this bill.

Mr. Speaker. I rise today in strong opposition to this very controversial bill that directly attacks the bedrock values of America. I am talking about the constitutional guarantees of due process for those charged with crimes. Now, against the wishes of President Obama and our Defense Secretary, Mr. Panetta; the Director of National Intelligence, Mr. Clapper; and FBI director, Mr. Mueller, this bill allows the Federal Government to seize suspected terrorists, including United States citizens, and hold them in indefinite detention. Arresting citizens and holding them without trial violates the Fifth Amendment's due process guarantees. This bill fundamentally is un-American, and it threatens all of our liberties. We cannot allow those who seek to terrorize the American people to win by trashing the very civil liberties at the heart of our national identity. Giving up American ideals will not make us safer. This legislation undermines our national security and our democracy.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to enter into the RECORD this letter from 26 retired generals and admirals concerned about how the United States treats detainees. Ten retired general and admiral experts wrote this rare public letter denouncing the detention provisions.

I will conclude with the words of those honorable retired generals and flag officers who warned that this legislation "both reduces the options available to our Commander in Chief to incapacitate terrorists and violates the rule of law, and would seriously undermine the safety of the American people." I ask my colleagues to defend the civil freedoms which we all cherish, to support our national security, to support our democracy, and to vote "no" on this very dangerous bill and this rule.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 3 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. Pascrell).

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, over 8 years since the start of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, we are still not compatible with any remaining vestige of our Bill of Rights. Well, that's a good point if the court were the sole guardian of the Constitution. But it is not. If it were, there would be no reason to require every Member of Congress to swear to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution. We are also its guardians.

And today we, who have sworn fealty to that Constitution, sit to consider a bill that affirms a power contained in no law and that has the full potential to crack the very foundation of American liberty.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 3 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. McClintock).

Mr. McCLINTOCK. I thank the gentleman for generously yielding to me to offer a dissenting view of section 1021 of the underlying conference report.

This is the section referenced by the gentleman from Florida that specifically affirms that the President has the authority to deny due process to any American citizen accused of supporting terrorist activities. This legislation explicitly states that nothing in it shall alter existing law. But wait—there is no existing law that gives the President the power to ignore the Bill of Rights and deny Americans without due process. There is only an assertion by the last two Presidents that this power is inherent in an open-ended and ill-defined war on terrorism. But it is a power not granted by any act of Congress until now.

What this bill says is, what Presidents have only asserted, Congress now affirms in statute.

We're told this merely pushes the question to the Supreme Court to decide and Afghanistan, we are still not compatible with any remaining vestige of our Bill of Rights. Well, that is a good point if the court were the sole guardian of the Constitution. But it is not. If it were, there would be no reason to require every Member of Congress to swear to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution. We are also its guardians.

And today we, who have sworn fealty to that Constitution, sit to consider a bill that affirms a power contained in no law and that has the full potential to crack the very foundation of American liberty.

We appreciate that our leaders are constantly striving to make America more secure, but in doing so, we must be careful not to overreact and overreach, resulting in policies that will do more harm than good. At the very least, the detention provisions merit public debate and should not be agreed to behind closed doors and tucked into legislation as important as our national defense bill.

Sincerely,

General Joseph P. Hoar, USMC (Ret.);
General Charles C. Krulak, USMC (Ret.);
General David M. Maddox, USA (Ret.);
General William G. T. Tuttle Jr., USA (Ret.);
Lieutenant General Robert G. Gari Jr., USA (Ret.);
Lieutenant General Charles P. Ostott, USA (Ret.);
Lieutenant General Harry E. Soyster (Ret.);
Major General John Batsiste, USA (Ret.);
Major General Paul D. Eaton, USA (Ret.);
Major General Eugene Fox, USA (Ret.);
Rear Admiral Don Gutier, USN (Ret.);
General William L. Nash, USA (Ret.);
Major General Thomas J. Romig, USA (Ret.);
Major General Murray G. Sagsveen, USA (Ret.);
Major General Walter L. Stewart, Jr., ARNG (Ret.);
Major General Antonio 'Tony' M. Taguba, USA (Ret.);
Brigadier General John Adams, USA (Ret.);
Brigadier General David M. Brahms, USMC (Ret.);
Brigadier General James P. Ewing (Ret.);
Brigadier General Evelyn P. Foote, USA (Ret.);
Brigadier General Gerald E. Galloway, USA (Ret.);
Brigadier General Leif H. Hendrickson, USMC (Ret.);
Brigadier General David R. Irvine, USA (Ret.);
Brigadier General John H. Jones, USA (Ret.);
Brigadier General Anthony Vervang, USAP (Ret.);
Brigadier General Stephen N. Xenakis, USA (Ret.).

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. McClintock).

Mr. McCLINTOCK. I thank the gentleman for generously yielding to me to offer a dissenting view of section 1021 of the underlying conference report.

This is the section referenced by the gentleman from Florida that specifically affirms that the President has the authority to deny due process to any American citizen accused of supporting terrorist activities. This legislation explicitly states that nothing in it shall alter existing law. But wait—there is no existing law that gives the President the power to ignore the Bill of Rights and deny Americans without due process. There is only an assertion by the last two Presidents that this power is inherent in an open-ended and ill-defined war on terrorism. But it is a power not granted by any act of Congress until now.

I want to thank Chairman Mckeon, Ranking Member Smith, all the chairmen of the subcommittees, as well as members of this committee who are moving forward on this issue. I wish we had the same compromise as we would have on other issues. I commend them for compromising. That's what our Forefathers talked about. I'm glad to see that the Defense Center of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Injury will move oversight to the Army where there will be an increased efficiency and attention for our soldiers.

But there are still problems with screening and treating our troops. Report by NPR ran an expose on how the Department of Defense has tested over 500,000 soldiers with a predeployment cognitive test, but has performed fewer than 3,000 tests postdeployment to actually compare the results and see if our troops were injured in theater. The fiscal 2008 National Defense Authorization bill, bipartisanly supported, Public Law 110-181, required
predeployment and postdeployment screenings of a soldier’s cognitive ability. Current policy is clearly violating the intent of the law. We must ensure that the same tool is used for pre- and postdeployment cognitive screenings. We can’t gauge the cognitive health of our troops without comparing tests.

Last year, my amendment to the NDAA for fiscal year 2011 to address this passed the House, but was not in the final bill. We need to correct this in the next year’s Defense authorization before our soldiers slip through the cracks. It has consequences within service; and when they get out of service, it has bigger consequences.

The Defense Department has raised concerns with the currently administered test, but has stated that it will not be able to select an alternative until 2015. That is not acceptable. The longer we wait, the longer our troops suffering from undiagnosed TBIs go untreated.

I am concerned that we are not providing proper oversight for those soldiers who could have been injured in theater before this policy took effect in 2010. Many of these soldiers remain on active duty, and we must ensure that they are tested and treated.

I fear we are doing a disservice to them and our Armed Forces by not addressing this problem in this bill, and I ask everyone to consider this. This is a critical, critical issue given little attention except by Mr. McKean and Mr. Smith.

I ask that you do review that.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to my good friend from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, this bill authorizes permanent warfare anywhere in the world. It gives the President power to pursue war. It diminishes the role of this Congress.

The Founders saw article I, section 8 of the Constitution, which places in the executive constitutional responsibility, and for that there must be government workers who are required to do this. That is what it should, indeed, be.

Unfortunately, we have a President and an administration that has decided there should be some financial restraints in this particular area. Indeed, it means reducing spending significantly on the military, not necessarily other areas. The result of this will be, as has been shown in testimony, that we will create a very different, perhaps, than any Army we have had since World War II, a Navy at its smallest since World War I, and an Air Force that is smaller and older than at any time in this country.

And to do that, there will at least be 100,000 uniformed jobs that will be cut, destroyed, and reduced.

There are some people who think that simply cutting a few soldiers, a few airmen, and a few sailors will be an easy solution to this issue. That is naive. It will not happen. What it means, though, is that, also, programs must be cut at the same time. We have acquisition which buys new materials and the appropriations bill to come later.

For example, the United States has owned air superiority ever since the Korean war, and we take it for granted. Yet the F-16s we fly to maintain that air superiority we were flying at 150 percent of their designed capacity when I was first elected to this Congress. And yet this is an administration that, even though we have that deficit, decided not to build any more F-22s and are delaying the F-35, which does produce, and put our air superiority in the hands of our enemy, and we have to have a plane for an Air Force, and you have to have a boat for a Navy. And they cost some kind of money.

In each case, we will have the oldest equipment. That means when men and women go into battle to defend this country, we are equipping them with the oldest products they will ever have to protect themselves, and that old stuff requires massive maintenance if you really want to get to it.

But what we are requiring to do in this particular budget, if we go along with the President’s request for making bigger and bigger cuts in the defense of this country, is killing those civilian employees that make that maintenance effort, that do that maintenance, and that make that equipment last longer than they were designed to last, we are taking them out of the picture.

The end result for the massive cuts we are looking at in the military, both proposed by the Obama administration and if, in effect, they go into effect because of rescission by the failed super-committee, will be anywhere between 100,000 and a half million employees—and this vital function that will lose their jobs. And if you go to the worst case scenario, it may even be 1 million employees.

I mention that specifically because we have heard often and often, where are the jobs bills. This House has passed a number of jobs bills to promote private sector growth. Yet at the same time, we now have a situation where the right hand does not know what the left hand is doing. There are those out there who are going around saying that we have to pass—and they are pillorying this Congress for not passing much bigger and bigger spending to create more and more government jobs in areas which are questionable if we should be there in the first place. But at the same time we are being pilloried for not doing that. We are being presented by the left hand a proposal that will actually cut existing civilian jobs in areas where we were constitutionally required to have them and to maintain them.

If we don’t find that at least inconsistent—and mind-bogglingly inconsistent—it is one of our problems in not facing the reality. We are always told pass more government jobs. And at the same time, the same people who are demanding that are saying, okay, let’s have a plan that will actually cut existing civilian jobs. There is no consistency with that.

And the sad part is the left hand, the one that is defending this country with the needs of the military—which is our constitutional responsibility—those are the ones which are appropriate, and those are the jobs that are needed, and those are the jobs that are not being protected in the future.

We must make some decisions in Congress on what is significantly important to us, and this is an area in which we must make those decisions in the future. We must continue to talk about jobs; but we have to realize that if you want more jobs, you can’t go...
First of all, it attached extraneous provisions about whether to build an oil pipeline. Some people are for it, others are not. It doesn't belong in that bill; and

Second, a large way the bill was paid for was to blame the unemployed and to say we're going to pay for what's in that bill by cutting their benefits. That's wrong.

The SPEAKER. The time of the gentleman has expired. Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. ANDREWS. What we ought to be saying is we can hold down the taxes on the middle class, we can fairly extend benefits for the unemployed, we can make sure our doctors will continue to see our seniors and our disabled people if we ask the hedge fund managers and the millionaires and the billionaires of this country to pay just a little bit more.

We will give the House an opportunity this afternoon to vote on that bill. That's the bill we should be considering. If we do, we can then proceed immediately to passing this badly needed defense bill.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from New Jersey is right, yesterday the House did act in a bipartisan way. Now it's up to the Senate to act—amend, change, anything except just sitting there and not taking action.

I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE).

Mr. FLAKE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of section 1245 in the conference report to the NDAA that would require what we hope are crippling sanctions on the Central Bank of Iran. These provisions, offered as a bipartisan amendment in the other Chamber and approved by a unanimous vote, would severely limit the funding available for the Iranian regime to use in its pursuit of nuclear weapons. Iran has introduced similar less serious bills that have become law as a stand-alone bill here in Congress, and we also wrote a letter encouraging the conference leaders to accept this language. I am pleased that they did.

There is no silver bullet when it comes to stopping the Iranian regime from acquiring nuclear weapons, but if there is any sweet spot where we can make a difference, it is with the Central Bank of Iran. And so I am pleased that the President signed it, and I also urge adoption of that section all the way through the process. And I hope that this signals our intent certainly to ensure that Iran does not obtain nuclear weapons.

Mr. HAYES of Florida. Mr. Speaker, would you be so kind as to inform us as to the amount of time remaining on either side.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Florida has 10 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Utah has 18½ minutes remaining.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

At this time, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to my friend, the distinguished woman from California (Mrs. DAVIS).

Mrs. DAvis of California. Mr. Speaker, this is a positive bill for our military families. And to the people who are paying the bill I'm going to take an opportunity to address that. But while we're on the rule, I have to express my immense disappointment that still, to this day, we, as a Congress, will not even bring to the table, we won't even look at the fact that if a military service woman is raped and becomes pregnant, she does not have access to an abortion procedure. Mr. Speaker, this is really an outrage.

We say that we want to help our servicewomen. We say that we are finally starting to treat them as the warriors that they are, and yet I ask you: How many women have to fight and die for our country in order to have the same rights as women sitting in Federal prison?

This is a slap in the face to all military women. They volunteer to train, they volunteer to deploy and fight for our country, and they repay them by treating them as less worthy than prisoners.

Honoring women in our military means changing this policy and treating them with respect. Haven't they earned this? It's well past time to show them that they have.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

If we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to provide that immediately after the House adopts this rule it will bring up the Middle Class Fairness and Putting America Back to Work Act of 2011, which extends middle class tax relief, unemployment benefits, and the Medicare reimbursement doc fix.

I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD along with extraneous material immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, at this time I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Ms. HAHN).

Ms. HAHN. I thank my colleague from Florida for giving me this time.

I want to encourage my friends and colleagues on both sides to defeat the previous question so that we can work toward a compromise to pass a clean extension of unemployment benefits and the payroll tax cut.

You know, yesterday the House Chaplain began the day with a reminder that the holidays are a time of hope. And it is in that spirit of hope that Congress should embrace and put aside some of the politics that have darkened our recent discussions.
The material previously referred to by Mr. HASTINGS of Florida is as follows:

Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect existing law or authorities relating to the detention of U.S. citizens, lawful resident aliens of the United States, or any other persons who were captured or arrested in the United States.

In 1022 it makes it very clear, before somebody can be detained, there are two standards which must be met. First of all, there has to be association with an armed force that is in coordination and acting against the interests of the United States and, not just membership, they have to have participated in the course of planning or carrying out attacks or attempted attacks against the United States or its coalition partners.

You can’t just go out and pick people off the streets. There has to be a standard. And everyone still gets habeas corpus rights in all of these events.

Let me quote again from the law, from the report, the bill that we are debating and discussing and voting:

“The requirement to detain a person in military custody under this section—this power—“does not extend to citizens of the United States,” which means you can’t do this kind of detention against a citizen or a lawful alien of the United States.

Only in this section, and in both sections, do you have to meet certain very restrictive criteria which are not different than what we are currently doing, which simply means in the past history of this United States, especially in some of our war times, there have been Presidents who we jokingly say throw people in jail who were opposed to them.

President Obama could still do that under existing statute, but he can’t do it with this language in this particular bill. There are specifics that are set forth. There are specific protections written for American citizens, specific protections written for illegal aliens of the United States. It is only a very restricted authority and a very restricted power, and it doesn’t affect habeas corpus. It doesn’t change existing law.

In essence, those people who worked in the committee on this bill have done a yeoman’s work in coming up with a good bill. Those people who worked in the conference did a yeoman’s work in coming up with a good conference report.

This is a good rule, which is a standard conference report rule. And with the only exception that we still must be very careful that if we follow the administration’s advice and cut our military spending too much, not only are we putting our military in jeopardy and our equipment in jeopardy, but we are destroying jobs, which is what we don’t want to be doing in this particular time period.

I would urge everyone to vote for this rule, and I would urge everyone to vote for the underlying bill.

The lie to the judicial branch of our government and to the legislative branch of our government. This legislation goes too far.

If the Republican majority was serious about having this body carefully consider our Nation’s defense policies, Members would have had more than 2 days to review the more than 1,000 pages covering $600 billion in spending. I urge my colleagues to vote against this rule and the underlying legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

This bill has gone through regular order as no other bill has. It went through its committee in regular order and was passed out in an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote, 60–1. It came on the floor with 152 amendments to be considered and was passed out with an overwhelming bipartisan vote. It went to the Senate, was passed out in an overwhelming bipartisan vote, and the conference report was signed by the conferees in a clear bipartisan effort.

This is one of those good bills that does what our military needs to keep our soldiers and our citizens of the United States safe.

Let me quote from Mr. S MITH, the ranking Democrat on the committee, when talking about different things, he simply said that there is the possibility of indefinite detention without a normal criminal charge, but even if you do that, which, once again, the President said he won’t do, but even if you did that in certain isolated circumstances where it could be necessary under the law of war, even if you do that, habeas corpus still applies, which means you have a hearing in front of a Federal judge to make your case under the law for why you have the right to detain this person. And to do that, you have to show there is a connection to al Qaeda and the Taliban, and you have to show there is a danger that they present. So habeas corpus applies to everyone, whether they are a citizen, illegal alien, or a noncitizen. Habeas corpus still applies.

Members voted in both sections 1021 and 1022 that protections for American citizens are clearly stated in there. In the Senate, they added, in 1021, the words:
The vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution. It has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever, other than that it is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, 6th ed. (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2013). Here’s how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: “Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question.” When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, if yield for the purpose of amendment.”

In Deschler’s Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled “Amending Special Rules” states: “A refusal to order the previous question on such a rule (a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules) opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.” (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: “Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment, or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.”

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule has substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority’s agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 235, nays 173, not voting 25, as follows:

(The information contained herein was provided by the Republican Minority on multiple occasions throughout the 110th and 111th Congresses.)

The VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the opposition, at least for the moment, to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon’s Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as “a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.” To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker’s ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that “the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: “The question having been raised, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzpatrick, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the floor.”

Because the vote today may look bad for the Republican majority they will say “the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . (and) has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever, other than that it is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th ed., 2013). Here’s how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: “Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question.” When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, if yield for the purpose of amendment.”

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Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yes 245, noes 169, not voting 19, as follows:

(Roll No. 926)

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yes 245, noes 169, not voting 19, as follows:

(Roll No. 926)

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The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yes 245, noes 169, not voting 19, as follows:

(Roll No. 926)
the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH), and the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the conference report to accompany H.R. 1549.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of the Fiscal Year 2012 National Defense Authorization Act conference report. As you know, the NDAA is the key mechanism by which this Congress fulfills its primary constitutional responsibility to provide for the common defense, and this year will mark the 50th consecutive year we’ve completed our work. The NDAA passed the Armor Services Committee with a vote of 60–1. It passed the full House by a wide margin of 322–96. Likewise, the Senate adopted its version of the bill by a vote of 93–7. We negotiated every provision in the two bills and have delivered this conference report using regular order. This is a bipartisan product from start to finish, with a wide base of support.

Let me further assure Members that the bill’s authorization levels have been driven largely by the Department of Defense’s budget requirements and, of course, the trade-offs that result when we cut back in one area in order to pay for more in another. What the NDAA does is authorize funding levels. The President is responsible for putting together the budget plan for the Nation’s defense.

Nonetheless, what makes our bill such an important piece of legislation are the vital authorities contained therein that provide for pay and benefits for our military and their families, as well as the authorities that they need to continue prosecuting the war on terrorism.

In addition, we include landmark pieces of legislation, including the Central Bank of Iran and strengthening policies and procedures used to detain, interrogate, and prosecute al Qaeda, the Taliban, and affiliated groups, and those who substantially support them. However, I must be crystal clear on this point: the provisions do not extend any new authorities to detain U.S. citizens and explicitly exempt U.S. citizens from provisions related to military custody of terrorists.

The report covers many more critical issues, but I will close in the interest of time. However, before I do, I would like to thank my partner, the gentleman from Washington, ADAM SMITH, the ranking member on the committee, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes.

I, too, want to thank the chairman, Mr. MCKEON. We always say that our committee is the most bipartisan committee in Congress. We strongly believe that. Republicans and Democrats on that committee are committed to building our joint war-fighting capability and provide for the troops and make sure that our national security is protected in this country.

Mr. MCKEON was an excellent partner to work with. It’s a model for what happens in our joint committees and what we do to legislate together, and something that I think could be emulated by many more committees and on many more issues.

So, thank you, BUCK. It’s been great working with you on this. I think we’ve produced a good product.

I want to, upfront, address the issue that most people have focused on in the rule and elsewhere, and that is the issue surrounding detention policy. I have never seen an issue that was more distorted in terms of what people have said is in the bill versus what is actually in the bill. Number one, habeas corpus is protected, not touched in this bill. Further, anyone who is picked up pursuant to the authorization for the use of military force, has habeas corpus rights. That is not touched categorically.

Now I understand that a lot of people have a problem with what is current law, and current law is something we’ve been debating ever since 9/11. Both the Bush administration and the Obama administration have taken the position that indefinite detention is an option. In two cases before the Supreme Court, the Hamdi case most notably, a U.S. citizen was briefly subject to indefinite detention. The Fourth Circuit Court upheld that right. That is not the case.

But this bill doesn’t affect that. We, in fact, make it clear in our category on military detention that it is not meant to apply to U.S. citizens or law-ful resident aliens. Read the bill. It is in there. Nothing in this section shall apply to U.S. citizens or lawful resident aliens.

Now if you have a problem with indefinite detention, that is a problem with current law. Defeating this bill will not change that, won’t change it at all. But I’ll tell you what it will do. It will undermine the ability of our military commanders to conduct their business. And I don’t think I need to remind this body that 100,000 of those troops are in harm’s way in Afghanistan right now facing a determined enemy in the middle of a fight. It is not the time to cut off their support over an issue that isn’t going to be fixed by this bill.

And let me emphasize that just one more time. Current law as interpreted by the Bush administration, the Obama administration, and the judiciary of this country creates the problems that everybody is talking about, not this bill. We put language in on detention policy because we think it’s about time the legislative branch at least said something on the subject. But we are not the ones that created that problem. I urge support for this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself an additional 30 seconds.

One issue I want to address is the issue of military construction projects for Guam. There is some limiting language in this bill on that issue based on the fact that the Department of Defense is rethinking their posture in Asia between Okinawa, Guam, and other places. One thing I want to make clear is that Guam is a critically important part of our Asian presence. They have presence of our military there now. The language in the bill is not meant to cut off existing military construction projects or indeed other ones that may not be related to this. I want to make sure that that’s clear.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

It’s been a decade since the attacks of September 11, 2001. We are in danger of losing our most precious heritage, not because a band of thugs threatens our freedom, but because we are at risk of forgetting who we are and what makes the United States a truly great nation.

In the last 10 years, we have begun to let go of our freedoms, bit by bit, with each new executive order, court decision, and, yes, act of Congress. The changes in this bill to the laws of detention have major implications for constitutional rights. We should not be considering this as a rider to the Defense authorization bill. This should have been the subject of close scrutiny by the Judiciary Committee. The complex legal and constitutional issues should have been properly analyzed and the implications for our values carefully considered.

You will hear that this bill merely recodifies existing law; but many legal scholars tell us that it goes a great deal further than that law allows, that it codifies claims of executive power against our liberties that the courts have never confirmed. You will hear that it really won’t affect U.S. citizens, although, again, there is credible legal authority that tells us just the opposite. You will hear that it doesn’t really turn the military into a domestic police force, but that clearly isn’t the case.

Most of all, you will hear that we must do this to be safe, when the opposite is true. We can never be safe without our liberties, and this bill continues the decade-long campaign to destroy those liberties.
This bill goes far beyond the authorization for the use of military force. That resolution authorized "all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons the President determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, or harbored such organizations or persons."

This bill is not limited to those responsible for the September 11 attacks and those who aided or harbored them. It includes anyone who "substantially supported" al Qaeda and the Taliban or "associated forces that are engaged in hostilities against the United States or its coalition partners." It is not clear what is meant by "substantially supported" or what it takes to be "associated" with someone who "substantially supported" them. It refers to any "belligerent act" or someone who has "directly supported such hostilities in aid of such enemy forces." It doesn't, as does our criminal law, say "material support," so we really don't know whether that support could be merely a speech, an article, or something else.

So let's pretend that this is just the same as the AUMF. If it were, there would be no need to pass this law; we have it already. Courts, in reading legislation, operate on the very sensible assumption that Congress doesn't write surplus language, that it must to do something. Here it is pretty clear that we are expanding the reach of the AUMF beyond the 9/11 perpetrators and those who aided and harbored them. Whoever it reaches—and we don't know—but whoever it reaches, the government would have the authority to lock them up without trial until "the end of hostilities," which, given how broadly the AUMF has been used to justify actions far from Afghanistan, might mean for decades. This bill must be rejected.

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise with profound respect for our Constitution and for my colleagues and friends who care deeply about the impact of this bill on that Constitution. It is because I have considered those issues that I would respectfully disagree with some of my colleagues and argue for the propriety and constitutionality of this bill.

I would deplore the idea that an American citizen or a permanent resident alien could be rounded up and put in a prison in the United States. This bill does not authorize that scenario. I would deplore a circumstance where any person—even a person who is not here under some permanent legal status—could be rounded up and put in a prison and only a military prison. That is not what this bill authorizes. It leaves open the option that such a person could be detained in a regular civilian prison or in a military prison.

I would reject completely the proposition that any person could be held in indefinite detention anywhere in our country indefinitely without the right to have the charges that are levied against them heard by some
neutral finder of fact. It is our interpretation that the habeas corpus provisions already extend to these individuals. That is to say that a nonresident or nonlegal person in the country who is held under such circumstances in fact has the right of habeas corpus. I think the Constitution demands it.

There is a legitimate difference of opinion as to whether or not that conclusion is correct. That is the state of present law. This bill does not amend present law in a way that I would like to see it amended by clarifying that right of habeas corpus, but it absolutely does not erode or reduce whatever protections exist under existing law.

So those who would share our view that the right of habeas corpus must be clarified should work together to pass a statute that does just that, but should not subvert this necessary and important bill.

I would urge a “yes” vote on the bill. Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), the distinguished ranking member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. CONYERS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.

Mr. CONYERS. Members of the House of Representatives, this issue has never gone before the House Judiciary Committee—never.

I have a letter dated December 14 that says:

“There has been some debate over whether section 1021 of the National Defense Authorization Act merely restates existing law or would, for the first time, codify authority for the President to unilaterally detain suspected terrorists without charge, virtually anyone picked up in antiterrorism efforts, including United States citizens arrested on United States soil.

“Please find attached a letter from Judge William Sessions, a former Federal judge and former Director of the FBI under Presidents Reagan, Bush, and Clinton, explaining that current law on this point is unclear, and that enacting section 1021 of this act would dangerously expand the power for indefinite detention.”

I would like to place in the RECORD sundry correspondence, including the letter from Judge Sessions.

THE CONSTITUTION PROJECT.
Washington, DC, December 9, 2011.

Dear Representative McKean and Fellow Conference, I am writing to you with grave concern over the National Defense Authorization Act of 2012 (NDAA). It is highly regrettable that the Senate passed the NDAA without first stripping it of dangerous provisions regarding the treatment of detainees. But it is not too late to act; as Congress, it is now your task to remove these harmful provisions before the NDAA becomes law. I strongly urge you to do so, and to preserve constitutional protections and our most effective tools in the fight against terrorism.

If enacted, these detention provisions would for the first time codify authority for methods such as indefinite detention without charge and mandatory military detention, and would authorize actions on the basis of suspicion alone—to virtually anyone picked up in antiterrorism efforts, including those arrested on U.S. soil. In effect, this would become the judge, jury and jailer of terrorism suspects, to the exclusion of the FBI and other law enforcement agencies.

An astounding array of individuals from across the political spectrum opposes the over-militarization of our counterterrorism efforts. As former federal judge, former CIA General Counsel, and retired Director of the FBI, I myself can attest to the competence of our nation’s law enforcement officers and the need for the unique flexibility the U.S. military needs to preserve these tools for use in our counterterrorism efforts.

Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta similarly opposes the responsibility to the military. Indeed, virtually the entire national security establishment—including James Clapper, the director of national intelligence; Robert Mueller III, the director of the FBI; David Petraeus, the director of the CIA; White House Advisor for Counterterrorism John Brennan; Lisa Monaco, the assistant to the President for homeland security; and Jeh Johnson, general counsel for the Department of Defense—has warned that further restricting the tools at our disposal to combat terrorism is not in the best interest of our national security. I implore you to heed their warning.

With regard specifically to Section 1031 from the Senate bill, some have argued that Section simply reiterates current law, and by doing so maintains the status quo. That is not the case. This very dangerous provision would create new and unique detention authority to subject any suspected terrorist who is captured within the United States—including U.S. citizens and U.S. soil—without charge or habeas corpus. The provision does not limit, or even hint, at the need to actually detain suspects on the battlefield. Importantly, although subsection (e) of this provision states that the provision should not be “construed to affect existing law or authorities” relating to detention of “persons who are captured or detained in the course of military operations”—the reality is that current law on the scope of such executive authority is unsettled.

In fact, on two occasions when this issue was brought to the U.S. Supreme Court, the executive branch changed course so as to avoid judicial review. Specifically, in both the Padilla case in 2005—06 (involving a U.S. citizen) and the al-Marri case in 2008—09 (involving a legal permanent U.S. resident), the U.S. government claimed that the President had the authority to detain a suspected terrorist captured within the United States indefinitely without charge or trial. In both instances, however, before the Supreme Court could hear the case and evaluate the law, the Department of Justice reversed course and charged the defendant with criminal offenses to be tried in civilian court. Thus, this extreme claim of executive authority, and the actual power to capture and hold indefinitely within the United States, has never been tested, and the state of the law at present is unclear. Passage of Section 1031 would explicitly provide this authority by statute for the first time, thereby clearly, and dangerously, expanding the power for indefinite detention.

I firmly believe that the United States can best preserve its national security by maintaining the use of proven law enforcement and our well-tested traditional criminal justice system to combat terrorism. By contrast, enacting the NDAA without first removing the contentious provisions could pose a genuine threat to our national security and would represent a sweeping and unnecessary departure from our constitutional tradition.

I therefore urge you, as conferees, to strip these dangerous detainee provisions from the NDAA. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

William S. Sessions.

OCTOBER 7, 2011.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Majority Leader, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC.

Dear Senator Reid: We are members of a nonpartisan group of retired generals and admirals who believe that U.S. counterterrorism policies are strongest when they adhere to the rule of law and American values. As such, we write to applaud your leadership in ensuring that the detainee provisions (Section 1031–1033) in the Senate Armed Services Committee’s reported version of the Fiscal Year 2012 National Defense Authorization Act do not move forward.

If passed, we believe these provisions would reshape our counterterrorism policies in ways that would undermine our national security and transform our armed forces into judge, jury and jailer for foreign terrorism suspects. The military’s mission is to prosecute terrorism; it does not have the legal tools to expand the military’s mission to detain and try a large category of future foreign terror suspects, which falls outside the military’s core competence and erodes faith in the judicial process. It would also authorize the indefinite detention without trial of terrorism suspects, including American citizens captured on U.S. soil—a policy that is contrary to the very American values needed to win this fight.

As retired military leaders, we believe in the importance of the underlying bill to sustain the strength of our Armed Services. For that reason, we have been advocating against this provision and agree with you that your leadership to protect our nation’s freedom and maintain the capability and flexibility to effectively apply the full range of tools at our disposal to combat terrorism. This includes the use of our criminal justice system, which has accumulated an impressive record of success in bringing terrorists to justice. Limitations on that flexibility, or on the availability of critical counterterrorism tools, would significantly threaten our national security.

With your strong leadership on this issue this week, you took an important step to avert these threats.

Sincerely,

General Joseph F. Hoar, USMC (Ret.);
General Charles C. Krulak, USMC (Ret.);
General David M. Maddox, USA (Ret.);
General Merrill A. McPeak, USAF (Ret.);
General William G. T. Tuttle Jr., US Army (Ret.);
Lieutenant General Robert G. Gard Jr., USA (Ret.);
Vice Admiral Lee F. Gunn, USN (Ret.);
Lieutenant General Arlen D. Jamerson, USA (Ret.);
Rear Admiral Charles Ostdt, USA (Ret.);
Lieutenant General Harry E. Syoster, USA (Ret.);
Major General Eugene Fox, USA (Ret.);
Rear Admiral Joe D. Weddington, USA (Ret.);
Rear Admiral John D. Hutson, USN (Ret.);
Major General Melvyn S.

H8925
December 14, 2011
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I write to express the Department of Defense’s principal concerns with the latest version of detainee-related language you are considering including in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2012. We understand the Senate Armed Services Committee is planning to consider this language later today.

We greatly appreciate your willingness to listen to the concerns expressed by our national security professionals on the version of that legislation supported by the Armed Services Committee in June. I am convinced we all want the same result—flexibility for our national security professionals in the field to detain, interrogate, and execute suspected terrorists. The Department has substantial concerns, however, about the revised text, which my staff has just received with these comments.

Section 1032. We recognize your efforts to address some of our objections to section 1032. However, it continues to be the case that it divests the Department of Defense in particular and our national security in general in section 1032 of requiring that certain individuals be held by the military at, best, unclear. This provision restrains the Executive Branch’s options to utilize, in a swift and flexible fashion, all the counterterrorism tools that are now legally available.

Moreover, the failure of the revised text to clarify that section 1032 applies to individuals of any category needlessly complicates efforts by frontline law enforcement professionals to collect critical intelligence concerning operations and activities within the United States. Next, the revised language adds a new qualifier to “associated force”—“that acts in coordination with or pursuant to the direction of al-Qaeda.” In our view, this new language unnecessarily complicates our ability to interpret and implement this section.

Further, the new version of section 1032 makes it more apparent that there is an intent to extend the certification requirements of section 1033 to those covered by section 1032 in an annual basis without ever revisiting the substance of the legislation. As national security officials and counterterrorism professionals, we have explained, transfer restrictions such as those outlined in section 1033 are largely unworkable and pose unnecessary obstacles to transferring potentially valuable intelligence and prevent future terrorist attacks.

Section 1033. Finally, section 1033 shifts to the Department’s responsibility for what has previously been a consensus-driven interagency process that was informed by the advice and views of counterterrorism professionals and national security interests. We see no compelling reason—and certainly none has been expressed in our discussions to date—to upend a collaborative, interagency approach that has served us so well over the past few years. I hope we can reach agreement on these important national security issues, and, as always, my staff is available to work with the Committee on these and other matters.

Sincerely,

LEON PANETTA
DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE, Washington, DC.

Hon. DIANNE FeINSTEIN, Chairman, Select Committee on Intelligence, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM CHAIRMAN: I am writing in response to your views on the effect that the detention provisions in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 could have on the ability of the Intelligence Community to gather counterterrorism information. In my view, some of these provisions could limit the effectiveness of our intelligence and law enforcement professionals when we need the utmost flexibility to defend the nation from terrorist threats. The Executive Branch should have maximum flexibility in these areas, consistent with our law and values, rather than face limitations on our options to acquire intelligence information. As stated in the November 17, 2011, Statement of Administration Policy for S. 1667, “[t]he bill that challenges or constrains the President’s critical authorities to collect intelligence, incapacitate dangerous terrorists, and protect the American people must prompt the President’s senior advisors to recommend a veto.”

But principal objective upon the capture of a potential terrorist is to obtain intelligence information and to prevent future attacks, yet the provision that mandates military custody for a certain class of terrorism suspects could restrict the ability of our nation’s intelligence professionals to acquire valuable intelligence and prevent future terrorist attacks. By securing vital intelligence from suspected terrorists varies depending on the facts and circumstances of each case. In the years since September 11, the Intelligence Community has worked successfully with our military and law enforcement partners to gather vital intelligence in a wide variety of circumstances at home and abroad and I am concerned that some of these provisions will make it more difficult to continue to have these successes in the future.

Taken together, the various detention provisions, even with the proposed waivers, would introduce unnecessary rigidity at a time when our intelligence, military, and law enforcement professionals are working more closely than ever to defend our nation effectively and quickly from terrorist attacks. These limitations could deny our nation the ability to make the right decisions—and appropriately to unfold events—including the capture of terrorism suspects—and restrict a process that currently encourages intelligence collection through the preservation of all lawful avenues of detention and interrogation.

Counterterrorism professionals are best served when they have the greatest flexibility to collect intelligence from suspected terrorists. I am concerned that some provisions in the National Defense Authorization Act could reduce this flexibility.

Sincerely,


Hon. CARL Levin, Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN: I am writing from Washington to express concerns regarding the impact of certain aspects of the current version of Section 1032 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012. Because the proposed legislation applies to certain persons detained in the United States, the legislation may call into question the FBI’s ability to carry out its law enforcement investigations. In my view, the legislation as currently proposed raises two principal concerns. First, by establishing a presumption of military detention for covered individuals within the United States, the legislation introduces a substantial element of uncertainty as to what procedures are to be followed in the course of a terrorism investigation in the United States. Even before the decision to arrest is made, the question of whether a Secretary of Defense waiver is necessary for the investigation to proceed will inject uncertainty into the proper course for further investigation. Second, the legislation may call into question the FBI’s continued use or scope of its criminal investigative jurisdiction in the United States. As national security professionals, we have raised important concerns that the proposed legislation applies to certain persons who are known to fall within the mandatory strictures of section 1032 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012, absent the Secretary’s waiver. The legislation may call into question the FBI’s continued use or scope of its criminal investigative jurisdiction in the United States. Absent a statutory basis for further domestic investigation, Section 1032 may be interpreted by the courts as precluding the FBI from conducting any further investigation of the covered individual or his associates.

Second, the legislation as currently drafted will inhibit our ability to convincingly cover arrested terrorists to cooperate immediately, and may also introduce a substantial element of uncertainty as to what procedures are to be followed at perhaps the most critical time in the development of an investigation against a covered person. Over the past decade we have had numerous arrestees, several of whom would arguably have been covered by this statute, who have provided important intelligence immediately after they have been arrested, and in some instances for days and weeks thereafter. In the few days before the arrest, they have been persuaded that it was in their best interests to provide essential information while the information was current and prior to the arrest itself.

Nonetheless, at this crucial juncture, in order for the arresting agents to proceed to
obtain the desired cooperation, the statute requires that a waiver be obtained from the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of State and the Director of National Intelligence, with certification by the Secretary to Congress that the waiver was in the national security interests of the United States. The proposed statute acknowledges that a significant shift in an ongoing investigation. It provides that surveillance and intelligence gathering on the arrestee’s associates should not be interrupted. Likewise, the statute provides that an ongoing interrogation session should not be interrupted.

These limited exceptions, however, fail to recognize the reality of a counterterrorism investigation. Building rapport with, and convincing a covered individual to cooperate once arrested, is a delicate and time-sensitive operation that could permit the indefinite detention without charge or trial. The conference report ignores the concerns of members of our intelligence community, domestic law enforcement, and former generals who have warned that these provisions would undermine the ability of the government to interrogate and prosecute suspected terrorists.

Lastly, the conference report displaces the legal expertise necessary for trying successful terrorism cases.

First, Section 1021 grants broad discretionary authority that could permit the indefinite detention of United States citizens. The indefinite breadth of conference report provides little or no protection against the indefinite detention of United States citizens. In addition, it threatens our constitutional protections and civil liberties. I would like to know why an amendment to exempt American citizens from indefinite military detention failed in the Senate. If we were concerned about protecting the civil liberties and constitutional rights of American citizens, why did it fail? In addition, if existing laws prohibit this, why did we not specify this in the bill? Although supporters of this bill continue to claim that this bill would not expand detention authority inside of the U.S., that is just not the case.

There are too many questions that affect our civil liberties in the conference report that should have been referred to the Judiciary Committee for review and clarification. For example, Section 1021 is broad in its definition of “hostilities,” what constitutes “directly supporting hostilities in aid of enemy forces,” and does not address the question of when or how we determine “the end of hostilities.”

Former FBI Director under Reagan, Bush, and Clinton and former Judge, Williams S. Sessions, recently wrote to the conferees explaining that “This very dangerous provision would authorize the President to subject any suspected terrorist who is captured within the United States—including U.S. citizens and U.S. persons—to indefinite detention without charge. The provision does not limit such detention authority to people captured on the battlefield. Importantlty, although subsection (e) of this provision states that the provision should not be construed to affect existing law or authorities relating to detention of persons who are not U.S. citizens, the reality is that current law on the scope of such executive authority is unsettled.”

With so much ambiguity, this bill could authorize detention into perpetuity—United States citizens who in some instances—such as making statements protected under the First Amendment—could arguably be considered subject to indefinite detention under this provision.

In addition, Section 1021 does not expressly address whether U.S. citizens or lawful residents aliens may be determined as “covered persons” subject to detention under the section. Although the conference report includes the amendment offered by Senator Feinstein, the conference report leaves definitions that are very broad of who can be detained without charge or trial.

Secondly, let me remind my colleagues that Section 1021 is not the current law of the land. The definition in Section 1021 was used by the Obama Administration to continue to detain indefinitely without charge or trial detainees at Guantanamo Bay, GITMO. This definition was used in court cases dealing with GITMO detainees, NOT American citizens. Thus, the question is whether this Congress wants the same GITMO detained standard applied to American citizens? Do you want our government treating American citizens that way?

Section 1021 states that “Nothing in the section shall be construed to affect existing law or authorities relating to the detention of United States citizens, lawful resident aliens of the United States or any other persons who are captured or arrested in the United States.” This does not mean that American citizens are protected.

We are very troubled today to have learned that when an amendment came up in the Senate to address these protections for American citizens, members of the Senate stated that they would want room in the law for an American citizen to fall under this new and broad definition. We are being told that GITMO is an American citizen and the only cases that deal with this type of indefinite detention without charge or trial are GITMO detainee cases. There is no good law out there.

Thus, if existing laws do impact the civil liberties of American citizens, then we need to be changing those laws instead of codifying them.

Thirdly, the conference report violates due process and rejects our American values. The United States Constitution grants specific due process rights to citizens that guarantee they will be charged and brought to trial in the event they are apprehended by law enforcement. However, Section 1022 militarizes our justice system and could allow United States citizens to be detained by the military without charge or trial.

We take an oath every Congress to uphold the Constitution and to guard its values and protections for American citizens. Earlier this year, members of this body stood before the American people and read the Constitution. Yet I must inquire whether that was theater or did we intend to follow through with our obligation? The broad definitions in 1022 could include American citizens under indefinite military detention, and thus must be opposed if we are to be protections of the Constitution.

Next, this Congress has ignored the concerns of our national intelligence community. Changes into Section 1022 will undermine the ability of the government to interrogate and prosecute suspected terrorists.

The Secretary of Defense, Leon Panetta, Director of the FBI, Robert Mueller, Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, CIA professionals, along with dozens of retired generals and professional interrogators have rejected this proposal because it is a militarization of our justice system and some have stated that these provisions are unwise and unwarranted.

Members of the House claim that out of respect for our military we need to pass this authorization. However, passing this bill ignores...
they are better equipped to handle such terrorists like warriors. Federal courts and our Justice Department can deliver harsher sentences and are more capable of fighting and building up the Afghan security forces. While a worthy goal unto itself, this provision in the conference report will cause controversy and chaos in handling terrorism investigations. Tying the hands of our intelligence and law enforcement professionals would also cause unnecessary delays in justice.

These provisions also harm our national security by threatening the global reputation of the United States. Under President Obama, the image of the United States has been restored as well as the rule of law. However, the conference report rejects our national values of democracy, due process, and justice by authorizing the military’s role in domestic law enforcement.

Lastly, the conference report displaces the legal expertise necessary for trying successful terrorism cases. A bi-partisan alliance of our national defense and intelligence community—including retired generals—have spoken out against provisions in Section 1022 that provide for military commissions to conduct terrorism trials.

The military has not even completed 3 percent of the case load that the Justice Department has completed. Military tribunals have completed six terrorism cases, compared to the Justice Department’s case load of close to 400 cases with a 90 percent conviction rate to go along with that. To date, there is no record of any federal court unable to convict a terrorist.

This is not a responsibility the military wants, therefore Congress should not insist on the use of military tribunals in order to sound better to tough on terrorists. We should not treat terrorists like warriors. Federal courts and our Justice Department can deliver harsher sentences and are better equipped to handle such cases. In addition, Article III Judges and the Department of Justice are moved in the body of law that covers such cases.

I was also disappointed that the conference report failed to adopt Senate-passed language proposed by Senators MERKLEY, PAUL, and LEE calling for expedited transition of responsibility for military and security operations in Afghanistan to the Afghan government. Specifically, this amendment would have required the President to devise and submit to Congress a plan to expedite the drawdown of U.S. combat troops in Afghanistan and accelerate the transfer of security authority to Afghan authorities.

The conference report amended the amendment’s language to change the focus from drawing down our troop footprint to empowering and building up the Afghan security forces. While a worthy goal unto itself, this language changed the focus of the amendment and undermined the message expressed by the entire Senate through the Merkley Amendment. Including this provision would have sent an important message about our country's commitment to bringing the war in Afghanistan to a responsible end. It is unfortunate that the report does not reflect a position supported by a majority of the American people.

I also support efforts to enhance the ability of Customs & Border Protection to prevent counterfeit goods from being imported into the United States. However, Section 8 of this bill will disrupt the flow of genuine brand name products into the United States.

This is true in part because some of the goods which CPB inspectors view with suspicion are in fact genuine goods, lawfully moving in distribution streams parallel to the authorized distributors. These transactions are desirable because they provide U.S. consumers with price competition and wider distribution of brand name products.

However, the existence of these transactions is often under attack by trademark and copyright owners who actively seek to control resale pricing and downstream distribution of the products they have already sold into commerce. Section 8 will give anti-competitive companies a new tool by giving them confidential information about competing parallel imports at their times of arrival, while they are still detained by CBP and unavailable to the importer, and without giving the importer an opportunity to determine that it is genuine, and without even giving notice to the importer that its information has been shared with a competitor seeking to prevent its lawful transaction.

This problem could be minimized if Section 8 is limited to goods raising national security concerns or purchases by the military. I believe that is the intent of this provision of the Department of Defense Appropriation bill.

This problem could also be minimized if this bill or CBP would adopt the safeguards which the Administration proposes be included in the Customs Reauthorization Act. This would be appropriate since Section 8 provides that it sunsets when the Customs Reauthorization is adopted. The safeguards include a requirement that the Secretary find there is a need for disclosing confidential information, and that CBP provide the importer with notice and an opportunity to respond before any confidential information is released to other private parties.

For some reason, we are adopting this provision in anticipation of a more thoughtful approach to the Customs Reauthorization Act. This is not a wise or needed course of action. CBP today can provide redacted samples to IP owners and very often is that sufficient to determine if they are genuine or counterfeit.

CBP today keeps suspicious goods out of U.S. commerce while it determines if they are genuine. The safeguards proposed by the administration will not put suspicious goods into commerce nor delay the final determination of CBP because there is an existing 30-day requirement that is not altered by any proposed legislation.

We must not be willing to compromise our civil liberties and American values for the false sense of enhancing security. I urge members to vote no on the Conference report and do what is right for America, its people, and the rule of law.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Maryland, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Tactical and Air and Land Forces and a member of the conference committee, Mr. BARTLETT.

Mr. BARTLETT. I rise in support of the conference report for the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2012. This is the 50th consecutive conference report for the National Defense Authorization Act.

I have the honor of serving as the chairman of the Tactical Air and Land Forces Subcommittee of our Armed Services Committee. Under the full committee leadership of Chairman MCKEON and Ranking Member SMITH, the support of SILVESTRE REYES, our subcommittee’s ranking member, and a superb staff, ours is truly a bipartisan effort.

Consideration of this conference report comes at a critical period for our Nation and our military. World events and the Nation’s fiscal circumstances have challenged our government’s will and capacity to constructively address the enormity of the challenges we face. We need to develop a new national military strategy that better reflects the current and projected threat and fiscal environment. This is needed to facilitate full and balanced consideration of force structure and equipment investment plans as well as the modernization, increasing the request of 21 billion for Army and the Air Force; and multiyear programs that preserve our national security.

Our first priority and immediate requirement is to fully support our personnel serving overseas in Afghanistan and the many other countries where we have asked them to serve under the daily, constant threat to their personal survival. This conference report properly reflects this immediate requirement.

The National Defense Authorization Act Conference Report authorizes an additional $325 million for National Guard and Reserve equipment unfunded requirements; $3 billion is provided to support urgent operational needs and to counter improvised explosive device activities; $2.7 billion is provided to support Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicle modernization and survivability enhancements; and $2.4 billion is provided for Army and Marine Corps Tactical Wheeled Vehicles, including $155 million for development of the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle.

To meet projected future needs, an additional $255 million is provided to support the Abrams Tank industrial base and National Guard tank modernization, increasing the request of 21 to 70 tank upgrades, avoiding a production break in the tank upgrade program; $3.5 billion is provided for F-35 multisuervice aircraft; $3.2 billion is provided for 40 aircraft in two models of F-18 aircraft; $2.4 billion is provided for V-22 Ospreys for the Marine Corps and the Air Force; and multiyear programs, as authorized in the conference report, for various models of Army and Navy H-60 helicopters.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this conference report.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas, the ranking member on the Air and Land Subcommittee, Mr. REYES.

Mr. REYES. I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.
Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Fiscal Year 2012 National Defense Authorization Act. This bill represents months of hard work by Members on both sides of the aisle. And I especially want to thank my friend and chairman, Mr. MCKEON, and Ranking Member Mr. AKIN, as well as members of the Armed Services Committee, for the inclusive work that was done in this legislation.

It is important to note what this bill does not include. During conference negotiations, statutory provisions limiting the work of military chaplains were dropped. Now the bill will allow the repeal of Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell to proceed so that troops who defend our values will have protections that they have fought to defend.

Working with the White House, our committee achieved a final compromise on detainees that does not grant broad new authority for the detention of U.S. citizens and does not establish a new priority for indefinite detention of terrorists. The bill strikes a reasonable balance between protecting our Nation from terrorists like those who attacked our Nation on September the 11th and protecting our American values. It demonstrates that we do not need to sacrifice our civil liberties to be safe.

Finally, I urge Members to support this legislation because it also includes a pay raise for our troops and provides funds for the care needed to recover from the wounds of war. The bill improves access to mental health care for members of the National Guard and Reserves, and the bill also expands and improves laws dealing with sexual assault and harassment.

I ask all Members to vote for this very important piece of legislation.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Georgia, the ranking member of the Armed Services Committee on Seapower and Projection Forces and a member of the conference committee, Mr. AKIN.

Mr. AKIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think perhaps before we give the report on the status of seapower, I would make the comment that if this sequestration goes through, which people are talking about, it gravely influences the ability of our country to protect itself, and it hollows out our force. As it is, if that were to happen, we would have the smallest Navy or a Navy smaller than we had in the year 1916.

However, this particular authorization bill has some good aspects. One of the things it does is support the construction of 10 new ships in the budget request. The bill also is going to require a competitive acquisition strategy for the main engine of the next-generation bomber. That’s a place we’ve gotten in trouble before. It allows the retirement of six B-1 aircraft, but still maintains the requirement for 36 aircraft for the next 2 years.

It provides the recommended force from the Air Force of the strategic air-lift of 301 aircraft comprised of C-17s and C-5s. It also requires the GAO to conduct an annual review on the new tanker program which the military has just entered into.

I would be remiss if I didn’t call our attention to a historic pattern that has occurred all through America’s past. That, in times of peace, we keep cutting defense and cutting defense, and then some war comes up and we don’t have what we need, and we sacrifice a lot of lives and money. We also give ourselves fewer political possibilities because we are not prepared.

We are rapidly approaching that same mistake once again in our history with the danger of the sequestration. We’ve already taken almost a 10 percent cut in defense, $650 billion. As a Navy guy, what that means is 45 aircraft carriers. That’s what we’ve cut. We only have 11 in the Navy. You’re not supposed to lose them or sink them. This would be the equivalent of cutting 45 aircraft carriers. That’s before sequestration. We must be careful.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from California, the ranking member of the Personnel Subcommittee, Mrs. DAVIS.
Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012.

As the ranking member of the Military Personnel Subcommittee, I am pleased that this bill includes a number of important provisions that continue our commitment to our men and women in uniform as well as their dedicated families.

First, I want to thank my chairman, Joe Wilson, for his support and assistance, and I would also like to recognize Chairman MCKEON and Ranking Member SMITH for their leadership. I urge my colleagues to vote for this conference report as it supports our military and their families who have faced the stress and the strains of a decade at war.

The conference report includes a 1.6 percent pay raise for our troops. And it will also require the Department of Defense to enhance suicide prevention programs. It allows servicemembers to designate any individual, regardless of their relationship, to direct how their remains are treated.

This bill will also allow service Secretaries to permit members to participate in an apprenticeship program that provides employment skills training. It makes significant enhancements to the sexual assault and harassment policies of the DOD, such as requiring full-time sexual assault coordinators and victim advocates, ensuring access to legal assistance, and allowing for the consideration of a permanent change of station.

And, finally, H.R. 1540 will ensure future TRICARE prime enrollment fees are tied to increases in military retired pay cost of living adjustments.

The bill before us continues to recognize the sacrifices of those who serve our Nation in uniform. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished lady from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO).

Ms. BORDALLO. I wish to thank Ranking Member SMITH for his support for Guam, and I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 1540, the conference report accompanying the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012. If I were able to vote on the final passage of this legislation, I would vote against this bill.

The bill completely ignores the important efforts that this administration and the Pentagon made to better posture our military forces in the Pacific. Furthermore, we undercut efforts, significant efforts, by Prime Minister Noda, in Japan, in trying to achieve progress with the development of a Futenma replacement facility.

I am deeply concerned about this bill because there is constant talk in this Chamber about recognizing the importance of the Asia-Pacific region, and now we are going in the opposite direction. People discuss their concerns about the potential threats posed by both China and North Korea. Yet when this country and this administration ask the Congress to act in our best national interest, they fly in the face of the Pacific. We blink. We are all talk and no action on this very important issue. I understand the budget realities that we currently face; but we must make the necessary hard choices and investments now, or it will cost us more money and time in the long run.

That said, it is important for our partners in Japan to continue the progress they are making to begin the construction of a replacement facility for Futenma in northern Okinawa. It is important for Prime Minister Noda to continue to show leadership and present an environmental impact statement to the Governor of Okinawa by the end of this year. In addition, we must have further progress toward the permitting of a landfill so that we can finally move forward with this realignment. Right or wrong, the patience of those in the Senate has run out, and it is important to have more action and less rhetoric in Okinawa.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. BORDALLO. For the gentleman from South Carolina, Mr. WILSON.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. My concern is that the issue does not apply to U.S. citizens. This is directed at al Qaeda—illegal enemy combatants—not at U.S. citizens.

Mr. MCKEON. I agree completely. Mr. LANDRY. Do you agree that, as the Supreme Court has held, “a state of war is not a blank check for the President when it comes to the rights of our citizens”?

Mr. MCKEON. I do. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MCKEON. I yield myself an additional 15 seconds.

Mr. LANDRY. Will the chairman assure me that together we will work with the committee to further clarify the language contained in this year’s bill in order to ensure that the clear and precise language which protects the constitutional rights of American citizens is protected?

Mr. MCKEON. I do, and I will be happy to work with you to that end.

Mr. LANDRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MCKEON. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS).

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the National Defense Authorization Act that is before us today.

I want to thank Chairman MCKEON, Ranking Member SMITH, and all the members of the Armed Services Committee who have worked to ensure that significant protections for our service members are in this year’s bill, particularly for those who are survivors of military sexual trauma.

I also want to highlight the inclusion of a long-term reauthorization of the Small Business Innovation Research program. It is the government’s most effective research and development program, creating jobs and fostering innovation in Massachusetts and across the country, and it plays a critical role in the Department of Defense.

The bill before us today ensures that the SBIR program retains its proper focus on true small businesses—creating a platform for needed job growth while guaranteeing that our Armed Forces continue to have access to the best technology available.

I urge its passage.

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

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from South Carolina, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Military Personnel, Mr. WILSON.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Chairman MCKEON, for your clarification of the claim of the administration that this issue does not apply to U.S. citizens. This is directed at al Qaeda—illegal enemy combatants—not at U.S. citizens.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my friend from Louisiana, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. My concern is that the issue does not apply to U.S. citizens. This is directed at al Qaeda—illegal enemy combatants—not at U.S. citizens.
The military personnel provisions of H.R. 1540 provide new and important authorities to support the men and women in uniform and their families. Some of the more important personnel provisions contained in the conference agreement are: a 1.6 percent increase in military personnel projections for fiscal year 2012, a revised policy for measuring and reporting unit operations tempo and personnel tempo, especially when we must continue our resolve for victory in the current mission requirements.

Another initiative important to my constituents is the reform of the military recruiting system to include graduates of home schooling and virtual schools. I see military service as opportunity and fulfilling, and these are extraordinary patriots who deserve the opportunity to serve.

The conference agreement would make the chief of the National Guard Bureau a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Furthermore, the agreement clarifies the legal authority for the oversight of Arlington National Cemetery, a national shrine for veterans.

I believe this bill is also strong in the multiple provisions dealing with sexual assault and; it provides new authority, such as temporary early retirement, to ease the impact of future military personnel reductions.

I urge all of my colleagues to support the conference report.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time each side has remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington has 10 minutes remaining. The gentleman from California has 8 minutes remaining. The gentleman from New York has 4 minutes remaining.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. With that, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN), ranking member on the Emerging Threats Subcommittee.

Mr. LANGEVIN. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1540, the 2012 National Defense Authorization Act.

I would like to begin by thanking Chairman MCKEON, Ranking Member SMITH, and my subcommittee chairman, Mr. THORNBERY, for their leadership and commitment to keeping our Nation safe and protecting our service members. As a conference, I was proud to join them in signing the conference report Monday night, and I am even more proud of our excellent staff that completed a full conference in a record 1 week’s time.

As ranking member of the Emerging Threats Subcommittee, I am especially pleased with the inclusion of significant funding for special operations forces, the full reauthorization of the SBIR program to support our job-creating small businesses, and also the inclusion of important cyberprotections to prevent future incidents similar to WikiLeaks.

This bill will also ensure the long-term strength of programs critical to our naval dominance and strategic posture, such as the purchase of two new Virginia class submarines, fully funding the development of the Ohio replacement submarine, and continuing work on the first Zumwalt DDG-1000 destroyer.

Further, the conference committee successfully removed damaging language that would have ended efforts by DOD to procure clean alternative fuel technologies to break our dependence on foreign oil and reduce our carbon footprint, which DOD officials have stated are both high risks to our national security.

Finally, while I’m concerned that we were unable to remove some harmful measures requiring that terrorist detainees be held in military custody, provisions included in this bill help address concerns about potential detentions of U.S. citizens in military custody and they counter-terrorism efforts by the FBI.

In closing, this legislation supports the incredible sacrifices that our brave men and women in uniform make for our country every day and provides critical resources to carry out vital national security projects.

With that, I am proud to serve on the House Armed Services Committee and to serve with Chairman MCKEON and Ranking Member SMITH. I commend them for the great work they have done in producing a good bill, and I appreciate the staff for their great work as well.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Virginia has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Ohio, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces and member of the conference committee, Mr. TURNER.

Mr. TURNER of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in speaking in favor of passage of the conference report on the FY12 NDAA.

As chairman of the Strategic Forces Subcommittee, I would like to walk through some of the key provisions of the conference report.

This conference report imposes checks on the administration’s plans for nuclear weapons reductions by requiring assessments of those reductions from the STRATCOM commander before any nuclear weapons reductions are made. It also requires the administration to disclose its plans for future reductions and reasserts congressional oversight of the Nation’s nuclear war plan.

Concerning the proposed LightSquared network, we have retained House and Senate provisions that will ensure that the FCC will not be able to give final approval to that network unless it resolves concerns about impacts to our national security.

Recent press reports indicate that, per new test results, LightSquared’s proposed network will cause unacceptable interference to DOD GPS systems.

I would also like to thank Chairman HAL ROGERS and Chairman RODNEY FRELINGHUYSEN for their support of the NGA vital nuclear weapons programs.

And I would also like to discuss an issue that is important to our men and women in uniform, impacts our Air Force’s readiness, and forces service members to choose between their service to their Nation and their families. This is the issue of military child custody.

A short time after becoming a member of the House Armed Services Committee, I was struck to learn that this annual judicial decision was using a servicemember’s deployment against them when making child custody determinations. Just to be clear, we’re asking an all-volunteer force, which consists of less than 1 percent of our population, to engage in the longest conflict in our Nation’s history, endure more deployments than any other generation in our history, and do so at the peril of losing custody of their children upon return.

Recognizing this unconscionable injustice, the House Armed Services Committee has included language in the past five National Defense Authorization Acts to provide servicemembers a uniform standard of protection. This provision has also made it through the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee.

Unfortunately, despite overwhelming bipartisan support in the House and the support of the Department of Defense, the Senate has once again failed our servicemembers and their families. It appears that they are operating on false information.

This provision should pass the House, and we are going to continue to stand for our servicemembers.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentlelady from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I thank the ranking member, and I thank the members of this House.

This is a very tough decision. But in the midst of welcoming home many of our troops, I believe it is important to look at aspects of this legislation that have been corrected and aspects that have been enhanced.

Let me thank the members of the committee for the enhancement of the small business technology and the efforts on research and development. Let me thank them for the response on sexual assault and harassment policies that have been enhanced.

Let me thank the members of this committee for the improvement of the military pay for our military families and soldiers, and the enhanced resources that have been
put in to help our soldiers return to the workplace.

But I am concerned. And as I have reviewed this, let me specifically yield to the gentleman from Washington, the ranking member, and ask a question on detention, about which I think so many are concerned.

It is my understanding, along with present law, that this has been vetted, the language of detention and the response to civilians, American civilians and legal aliens have been vetted to be in sync with the Constitution, due process, and the right to habeas corpus if individuals are detained.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Yes. That was a huge priority for me in the conference committee. We worked hard to make sure that that happened, and we absolutely protect those rights.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. And I believe also that Congress has the privilege to be notified if someone is detained and has the ability to both intervene with the executive, the President, on the particularly unique circumstances of a U.S. citizen being detained as a person that may be involved in terrorist acts.

I thank the gentleman and would argue that this is a difficult bill but that this bill has value because it improves the law on the question of detention and compliance with the Constitution. It also improves the lives of our soldiers and families.

I support the legislation.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Illinois, a member of the conference committee, Mr. SCHILLING.

Mr. SCHILLING. I rise today in support of the NDAA conference agreement. First I want to thank Chairman MCKEON and Ranking Member SMITH for shepherding this bill through the committee and through the Armed Services Committee and for really doing a great job for our brave men and women.

This marks the 50th year of the NDAA passing, and it is truly an example of bipartisan cooperation for the good of our country. I appreciate the opportunity I have had, serving on this important conference. And I believe that what we have put together is a great framework that is fiscally responsible and supportive of our troops and national security.

Included in this bill were provisions that would help support our military organic base, including arsenals like the one I represent in Rock Island. I am proud to represent this national treasure found within the Department of Defense. The Rock Island Arsenal and its 8,600 employees have worked hard for our country.

One of the provisions that was included in the NDAA allows our Army industrial facilities to enter into private-public partnerships under section 4544. This provision does away with the cap on these partnerships and ends the sunset date.

I urge strong support and passage of the bill.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, in a few minutes I will offer a motion to recommit that would strike a misplaced provision in the conference report that would exempt Tricare network providers from our labor protection laws.

Section 715 of this conference report excludes the Tricare network health care providers from being considered subcontractors for purposes of any law. Section 715 is nothing but an attempt to override pending litigation and longstanding civil rights law under Executive Order 11246 of 1965, section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974.

The civil rights protections contained in these laws have existed for decades, and they've served to protect millions of workers from race, sex, and other forms of discrimination. Large Federal contractors are simply required to have an affirmative action plan to ensure that minority groups are not being discriminated against and that the Department of Labor reviews the records. The law currently exempts employers with fewer than 50 employees who do not meet minimum contract value requirements.

The health care industry employed approximately 16 million workers in 2009. Hospitals and similar entities employ tens of thousands of minorities, women, veterans and low-wage workers, groups that historically and currently depend on the basic assurances of fair treatment. The health care industry is the largest sector of employment in this country.

Veterans would be especially hard hit under this change in the law. There are close to 900,000 unemployed veterans in America right now. Despite their unique experience and leadership skills, wounded warriors and veterans often struggle to find meaningful employment in the civilian sector. That's why Congress passed laws, enforced by the Department of Labor, to protect the brave men and women who have served our country.

The Office of Federal Contract Compliance ensures that Federal contractors and subcontractors do not discriminate against our veterans, and instead take steps to recruit, to hire, to train, and to promote qualified protected veterans.

Tricare providers, the very people who provide health care to our Nation's veterans, are arguing that they should be exempt from adhering to the very regulations that were passed to protect our service members. This action would gravely undermine our efforts to employ veterans. These large government health care contractors should not be exempted from civil rights responsibilities that apply to all other similarly situated contractors or subcontractors.

Section 715 is a brazen attempt by large health care industries to overturn pending litigation and exempt themselves from civil rights scrutiny. Congress should vote against weakening these laws, and I urge my colleagues to join with me and support my motion to recommit the conference report.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 ½ minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Missouri, the chairman of the Small Business Committee and a member of the conference committee, Mr. GRAVES.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the conference report on H.R. 1540.

Included in this bill is a long-term reauthorization of the Small Business Innovative Research program. This program sets aside Federal research and development dollars for small businesses that have cutting-edge ideas and promising research that the government needs. The SBIR program fosters innovation while giving a boost to our Nation's best job creators.

I want to thank Chairman MCKEON and Ranking Member SMITH for including this bipartisan deal in the National Defense Authorization Act conference report, and I would also like to thank the ranking member of the Small Business Committee, Ms. VELAZQUEZ, for her very important contributions to this debate, as well as the chairman and ranking member of the Science Committee, Mr. HALL and Ms. JOHNSON, who have also been partners in this effort. And, of course, all of the staff on the various committees who have worked hard on this. They deserve a lot of credit for their hard work.

I encourage my colleagues to support the conference report and the thousands of small businesses and jobs that benefit from the SBIR program.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia has 3 ½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Washington has 3 ½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from New York has 4 minutes remaining.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleagues. I am prepared to say that the House and Senate have come together on a compromise that will give certainty to our small businesses and make important reforms to the program. I want to thank Chairman MCKEON and Ranking Member SMITH for including this bipartisan deal in the National Defense Authorization Act conference report, and I would also like to thank the ranking member of the Small Business Committee, Ms. VELAZQUEZ, for her very important contributions to this debate, as well as the chairman and ranking member of the Science Committee, Mr. HALL and Ms. JOHNSON, who have also been partners in this effort. And, of course, all of the staff on the various committees who have worked hard on this. They deserve a lot of credit for their hard work.

I encourage my colleagues to support the conference report and the thousands of small businesses and jobs that benefit from the SBIR program.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia has 3 ½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Washington has 3 ½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from New York has 4 minutes remaining.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I will reserve until it is time to close.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. I am also going to reserve until it is time to close. We are down to our last speaker. Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would tell my colleagues I am prepared to close.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 4 minutes.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, we are told, and this seems to be one of the
principle issues in the debate today, that this bill, with reference to the detention and security provisions, merely codifies existing law. Some of us say no, it doesn’t codify existing law; it codifies claims of power by the last two administrations that have not been confirmed by courts, but not by the Supreme Court. Rather terrifying claims of power, claims of the right to put Americans in jail indefinitely without a trial even in the United States.

Now, I state specifics here. The text, for example, says very specifically that Congress affirms the authority of the President, includes the authority for the Armed Forces of the United States to detain covered persons pending disposition under the law of war, and then expands the definition of covered persons to people not implicated or supporting or harboring people implicated in 9/11 for the first time.

And then we have a provision that says nothing in this section is intended to limit or expand the authority of the President or the scope of the authorization for use of military force.

Well, that directly contradicts what I just read, which is a very specific provision. Again, the rules of statutory construction always say that the specific controls the general, this provision, frankly, insofar as it contradicts the first, is meaningless. It provides no protection whatsoever. The same is true of the Feinstein amendment, for similar reasons.

Now, we have disagreement we heard on the floor today, but that reflects the disagreement in the country at large. We have many law enforcement people, many legal scholars disagree on what this language means. The President’s chief counterterrorism advisor, John Brennan, said that the bill mandates military custody for a certain class of terrorism suspects, and since it would apply to aliens inside the U.S. which we have heard denied on the floor but the President’s counterterrorism advisor thinks it does—it would be inconsistent with the fundamental principle that our military does not control our streets.

And we have many generals, including a former Commandant of the Marine Corps, saying that this is a terrible expansion and change of existing law.

Now the fact of whether it simply codifies existing law or further restricts our liberties in unprecedented ways is unclear. That my friends here can say it only codifies existing law, and I can say and all of these other people—experts, legal experts, military people, counterterrorism experts—by some say it goes way beyond existing law, shows why it is dangerous to have this kind of provision affecting fundamental rights and civil liberties in a defense authorization bill which is admissible in all courts.

The Armed Services Committee is not the proper place to consider questions of civil liberties and legal rights, and certainly not a conference report. All these questions should have been considered in hearings. The Judiciary Committee in both Houses, frankly, should have held hearings. We should have called in the counterterrorism experts, the legal experts, by some the statutory scholars and asked: What does this provision mean? How should it be changed? Does this provision contradict that provision, and what does it really mean? Does it go beyond existing law, and, if so, how can we change that?

In legislation like this, there should be hearings and testimony and proper debate and consideration.

Now, we can still fix this. If we defeat this bill now, we can then take this provision out of the bill, and pass the bill without this provision in a couple of days. We are going to be here. There is no reason we shouldn’t do that. And then next year—which is only a couple of days—consideration to these detention provisions if people feel a need to pass them. We should not do such fundamental changes on the fly in a conference report with one hour of debate, no proper committee consideration, no public hearing, and considerable disagreement among scholars and judges and counterterrorism experts and military experts as to what this language means and what it does.

This true answer is that nobody on this floor can be 100 percent certain what this does. And when you are dealing with our fundamental liberties, that should say don’t pass it. So I urge my colleagues to defeat the bill. We can then take this out of the bill, take the bill up on the floor again in a couple of days, and that’s the safe way to safeguard our liberties and to do what we have to do for our military security. I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. First of all, let me say we had hearings on this last February and March. We had language in our bill which we passed in May. This issue has been thoroughly debated. Now, I’ve heard a couple of times that the Judiciary Committee has not heard this issue. This has been going on for 10 years under both Democratic and Republican control. I don’t know why the Judiciary Committee has not chosen to have hearings on this issue, but that’s hardly our fault. We have. We’ve had endless discussions on this. It has, in fact, been debated.

And let me also say that I am very concerned about these very issues. On our committee, I have been one of the strongest members, I support closing Guantanamo. I know a lot of people don’t. I think we should have all of the suspects here in the U.S. and that we should try them. I also strongly believe that the criminal justice system has to be part of how we combat al Qaeda. I have heard the argument. People say, this is a war, not a criminal matter. Why are we bothering with things like article III courts? I disagree and strongly and in many cases even when popular support has been on the other side of issues like closing of Guantanamo.

I care deeply about this issue; and from the very start, I fought hard to protect precisely the things Mr. Nadler is referencing. I fought hard in the conference committee to make sure they were protected, and they were.

Now the argument is we don’t know exactly what it means; so, therefore, we should do nothing. It is very true that law is unsettled. That, again, has nothing to do with this bill. There are court cases ongoing; there are habeas corpus cases continuously happening as of Guantanamo and it’s being interpreted by courts and also by the executive branch. I want to make it also clear that the judiciary and the executive branch would always rather that we do nothing. They would always rather forget that we are supposed to be a coequal branch of government, but we are.

After 10 years and after countless hearings, the legislative branch should say something about this. And what we have said very clearly is to simply codify what the executive branch and the judiciary have said about the AUMF and to make absolutely clear—and this language is not ambiguous—that military custody in the U.S. does not apply to U.S. citizens and does not apply to lawful resident aliens.

Again, the problems that people have—and I share some of them—are with existing law, not with this bill. Defeat this bill, and it would change a piece of that existing law that we’ve heard about and that we should all be concerned about. But defeat this bill, and it will make it very difficult for our troops to get the support they need.

Now, I’ve been around this process long enough to know that there ain’t no guarantee of fixing anything. And if we defeat this bill, our troops will be left to wonder if they’re going to get that pay raise. If those military support projects are going to get built, if our troops are going to get the support they need. And I don’t know the answer to that question.

So there’s a ton of very, very good stuff in this bill that supports our troops, that addresses Members’ concerns on issues like sexual assault within the military and a whole host of others. We need to support this bill to support our troops.

And the issues that folks are concerned about on detention, again, that is existing law. Whether this bill passes or not, those controversies will continue.
This is an excellent piece of legislation, well-crafted and worked hard by a lot of folks. It deserves an overwhelming "yes" vote.

With that, I urge passage and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 3½ minutes.

Mr. WITTMAN. I want to thank our conferees and the members of the Armed Services Committee once again, and I want to thank our staff directors, Bob Simmons and Paul Arcangeli.

This report addresses a wide array of policy issues, from cooperation with nations like Israel and Georgia, operations in Afghanistan, our new partnership with Iraq, and balancing strategic opportunities and risks with respect to China and Pakistan, to mitigating the threat from Iran and North Korea, enhancing missile defense, and maintaining this Nation's nuclear deterrent. Passage ensures our troops get a 1.6 percent pay raise and the benefits their families rely upon.

This bill also ensures that we continue to fulfill our Nation's most sacred obligations to our brave men and women serving in the greatest all-volunteer force in history. The service by our men and women in uniform is priceless, especially during the last 10 years of combat operations. Besides thanking them for their service and sacrifice to this Nation in ensuring they are afforded the best benefits and care for their service, there's little we can do to repay them for standing the watch and keeping America safe.

This bill authorizes a modest 1.6 percent pay increase, but it never can express how truly grateful we are as a Nation for the service and sacrifice of our all-volunteer force and their families.

Additionally, some very important provisions were included to ensure our industrial base maintains a constant workload and a fully employed workforce; and $149.5 billion was authorized for U.S. Navy shipbuilding, a total of 10 ships, which include two Virginia class submarines. The bill also extends the multiyear funding authority for the second and third Ford-class aircraft carriers for 4 to 5 years of incremental funding authority.

American ingenuity, creativity, and initiative are alive and well in our shipyards that build warships for the United States Navy. Shipbuilding is supported through business and industry spanning 50 States and designed and engineered by our greatest assets—the armed services. The American aircraft carrier is the pinnacle of this industrial engineering ingenuity and genius where mechanical, nuclear aerospace, and electrical engineering converge with naval architecture to form a magnificent machine. The American nuclear power plant is a prime example of American sovereignty that travels anywhere, anytime around the world.

Additionally, the bill reinstates the requirement for annual delivery of the Navy's 30-year shipbuilding plan solidifying the need for the Navy to communicate their plan as it relates to the strategic objectives of the United States balanced against a very challenging budget environment.

I'm pleased that this legislation came together to support our men and women in uniform. In times of austerity, they remain a priority, as do the safety and security of this Nation.

Today, I stand in support of this legislation and encourage my colleagues to support its passage; and I would like to reflect that all 26 Senate conferees signed this report, and 29 out of the 32 House conferees signed as well. This is a solid product, thoroughly debated and deliberated considerably. I urge my colleagues to support and vote in favor of the conference report.

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

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the conference report for H.R. 1540, the National Defense Authorization Act. While this legislation reauthorizes the defense budget, it provides the necessary resources and support to our men and women in uniform. As our nation winds down one war and continues to fight another, giving the troops the resources they need to succeed should be a top national priority. The legislation before us today accomplishes this important goal.

H.R. 1540 does the right thing and gives our service members a pay raise of 1.6 percent. It also ensures that we are taking adequate measures to protect our troops which are still in harm's way. Authorizing $2.7 billion for Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) Vehicles, which protect our troops from improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Additionally, the legislation provides $3 billion for directly combating IEDs in Afghanistan, and increases the Abrams tank program by $255 million.

All of these important increases will have a real impact on the safety and wellbeing of our troops overseas, and it would be irresponsible to not support this legislation because of that fact.

The provision relating to military detention for foreign al-Qaeda terrorists has generated much discussion, and rightfully so. Any effort which deals with civil liberties and constitutional rights must be taken very seriously. H.R. 1540 simply restates what has become law on this issue through court decisions and executive actions over the last 10 years. It provides for military custody for foreigners who are members of, or substantially supporting, al-Qaeda, but gives the president wide latitude in trying and punishing terrorist suspects. Specifically, the president is granted the authority to issue a national security waiver to authorize a trial in civilian courts. The provision explicitly states that U.S. citizens are not subject to military detention, which is a vital imperative for maintaining our constitutional order. Finally, H.R. 1540 includes language to ensure that the FBI can continue with their investigations of terrorists on U.S. soil. While this language is certainly not perfect, I believe it strikes a fair compromise between national security and civil liberties as it simply restates what our policy has been over the last decade.

Decisions about war and our national defense should never be taken lightly, and this is especially true in this instance. This legislation makes the necessary investments to keep our troops safe and deserves to be supported.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, while I support the conference agreement on the National Defense Authorization Act, I am extremely disappointed that it does not include language from previous years to prevent the Administration from moving forward with increases in TRICARE pharmacy copayments and enrollment fees.

As a cosponsor of the Military Retirees Health Care Protection Act, which would prohibit increases in TRICARE costs for servicemembers, I do not believe our brave soldiers and their families should have to bear the burden of closing our Nation's deficits.

For thirty-five years, I have fought to expand and protect affordable, quality health care for our servicemembers, and I will continue to do so.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the National Defense Authorization Act because it will continue to waste more on weapons and programs that are not necessary. This legislation prioritizes military spending over our economic stability, the health of our people, and the basic civil liberties guaranteed by the Constitution. The costs of this bill are simply too great.

Families in my district and across the country are facing unemployment, foreclosures, and the loss of their retirement savings. All levels of government are making difficult decisions to decrease budget deficits. Now is the time to focus our efforts on bringing the defense budget under control. Instead, this bill continues our unsustainable spending on wars and the military.

It is our job to spend taxpayer dollars wisely and efficiently. When it comes to defense, we have failed miserably. We have doubled our military spending since 2001, and spend six times more than China—the next highest-spending country. Continuing to spend 60 percent of our discretionary budget on an already bloated and redundant defense sector is more than just negligence; it is malicious. Every dollar we spend on war and weapons is a dollar we cannot spend on education, health care, infrastructure, or even deficit reduction. This bill does nothing to seriously rein in our defense budget.

To make matters worse, this defense authorization is costing American citizens more than just their tax dollars, but their civil liberties as well. Provisions within this legislation allow anyone—including Americans—to be detained indefinitely by the military if found to have "substantially supported" forces "associated" with a terrorist organization, or who are "carrying special purposes as co-alliance partners." As none of the quoted terms are defined, this vague language gives excessive and broad power to the military.

Our Constitution does not permit the Federal Government to detain American citizens without charge or trial, nor does it give the military the authority to act in place of our justice system. And yet this legislation would codify into law the authority of the military to indefinitely detain suspected terrorists—something never even seriously considered during the McCarthy-Cold War era. I could never support a measure that, in the name of security, violates Americans' constitutional rights.

This authorization is not an accurate reflection of American values. Our first priority is
I would also like to thank Subcommittee Chairman Quayle of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, for his work in improving this legislation and ensuring that it produces strong research outcomes.

Finally, I would like to thank our Committee’s Ranking Member, Mr. Connolly, who served as a co-sponsor of the original House legislation, for her work throughout this process.

This legislation has been a long time coming. I am confident that we have produced an outstanding bill that will improve the SBIR and STTR programs, will improve the quality of research and innovation from the programs, and will help small businesses create high-paying jobs.

Ms. SCHAUKOWSKY. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the C National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2012.

Mr. Speaker, I oppose this bill because it fails to rein in our out of control defense spending, it includes over $115 billion in war funding, and, most of all, because it codifies dangerous constitutional provisions that are in direct conflict with the U.S. Constitution.

At a time when we are discussing drastic cuts to domestic spending programs critical to millions of Americans, this bill provides a whopping $670 billion in Pentagon spending, an amount that’s almost as much as the rest of the world, combined, spends on defense. We can reduce our defense spending without jeopardizing our national security, yet this bill continues what former Secretary Gates termed the ‘‘gusher’’ of defense funding.

In addition, this legislation codifies indefinite detention without charge or trial in military custody for foreign Al Qaeda terrorists suspected of involvement in attacks on the U.S. It also blocks the transfer of Guantánamo Bay detainees to the U.S., even for trial. It severely restricts the transfer of detainees to third countries.

Most disturbingly, the bill does not guarantee suspected terrorists a trial, even if they are U.S. citizens arrested within the United States, leaving open the possibility of indefinite detention. Passing this legislation tramples on fundamental rights of American citizens into serious jeopardy.

These provisions are both dangerous and unnecessary. The Secretary of Defense, Director of National Intelligence, and Director of the FBI have all publicly opposed the bill’s detainee language. Neither the military nor the national security establishment has sought the added detention authorities provided under this legislation.

Military detention and trial not only jeopardizes our American ideals, it is also not practical. The role of the military is to fight and win wars—not to detain and try criminals. Since 9/11, military commissions have convicted only six people on terror-related charges, while over 400 have been convicted in civilian courts. Military experts have expressed concern over the legal and logistical constraints of our current military tribunal system, as well as the overall capacity of the military to handle a large influx of terrorism-related cases.

Mr. Speaker, we can provide for the national security of the United States without jeopardizing our fundamental freedoms and rights. Even some of our closest allies, including Germany and the UK, have expressed reticence to transfer suspected terrorists or share intelligence about them over concerns that these individuals will end up in U.S. military custody.

In his inaugural address, President Obama stated that we "reject as false the choice between our safety and our ideals." This bill would undermine 200 years of respect for fairness and due process. I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in opposing this dangerous and destructive legislation.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, this bill could have been a landmark bill. Instead, it offers our nation more of the same—more spending on programs we don’t need, and no rethinking of our priorities.

To be fair, there are some good provisions in this bill—a military pay raise, additional funding for programs important to military families. I am pleased that this bill authorizes $216 million for cooperative tactical missile defense programs with Israel like Iron Dome. Indeed, it’s astounding that some in the Republican Party have suggested that America should zero out our aid to Israel—a reckless idea that would endanger the security of our ally in the Middle East.

I regret that the congressmen elected to continue a series of dubious Cold War-era programs instead of taking this opportunity to do what we must do: rescue our armed forces to meet the real threats we face.

I urge Congress to authorize $5 billion for 31 F-35 Joint Strike Fighters and $9 billion for missile defense programs. Neither of these kinds of programs will give us the ability to deal with the kind of asymmetric threats we currently face and will likely encounter in the future. It’s worth remembering that our Cold War legacy is a program with nothing to stop modern attacks. They will do nothing to confront the cybersecurity threats we face. They will do nothing to address our imported oil vulnerability, or our strategic minerals vulnerability. Continued funding of these and other Cold War-era programs only proves that the Congress has no intention of seriously rethinking our defense spending priorities, without which we cannot possibly responsibly provide for “the common defense”.

Additionally, this bill should be defeated because it contains provisions that would eviscerate Constitutional protections against indefinite detention.

I am not at all convinced by the arguments of proponents of this bill that sufficient changes have been made to the sections dealing with detainees to ensure that no U.S. citizen can be detained indefinitely in U.S. military custody. We need only remember the case of Jose Padilla, the accused terrorist and U.S. citizen who was held in a military brig for years without trial. This bill would do nothing to stop the kind of thing that happened to Padilla, because it does nothing to change the language of the original Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) passed after the 9/11 attacks.

That language makes the President of the United States the sole determiner of who is a ‘‘terrorist’’ and who may have ‘‘supported’’ Al Qaeda. Such standards do not go far enough to immediately challenge the President’s determination of who is a terrorist, there is no way to ensure that innocent Americans will not be charged falsely with having committed terrorist acts. That is the true problem with the detainees-related implications of this bill.

Finally, I cannot support this bill because it does not even mention the recently disclosed scandal at the Dover Port Mortuary, much less...
take any action to correct the egregious degrada-
tion of the remain of hundreds—and per-
haps thousands—of our fallen heroes.

The initial revelations about the mishandling or desecration of the remains of deceased servicemen came about through the work of three employees at Dover. Despite the risk of retaliation from their chain of command, they brought their allegations to the Office of Special Counsel, which ultimately prompted investigations by the Air Force Office of Special Investigations and the Army In-
spector General. Separately, a constituent of mine—Mrs. Lynn Smith of Frenchtown, New Jersey—made me aware earlier this year that for at least seven years, the unclaimed addi-
tional remains of fallen servicemen were being cremated, mixed with medical waste, and dumped in a Virginia landfill.

When Mrs. Smith learned that this had hap-
penned to her husband, she suspected imme-
diately that it had happened to others. She was right, as we learned late last month with the Pentagon finally providing a response—a bit incomplete—to my inquiry as to how many unclaimed remains in the vaults at Dover had been mishandled in this way. Right now, the number stands at 274. I strongly suspect that number is actually higher.

Although the House Armed Services Com-
mittee held a briefing with the Air Force sec-
cetary and service staff in mid-January, this issue is not even mentioned in this bill, which is inexcusable. At a minimum, the bill should’ve had condemned the Air Force’s mis-
handling of the remains and directed that the Secretary of Defense establish a family advi-
sory group comprised of families of those who have been mishandled or whose remains have been mishandled in this way. Right now, the number stands at 274. I strongly suspect that number is actually higher.

I rise today in opposition to the National De-
fense Authorization Act of 2012. As a member of the Committee on Homeland Security, I am well aware of the threats that face this nation from home and abroad, but even though this struggle is often described in black and white terms, we must re-
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It has been reported that if enacted, the de-
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When Mrs. Smith learned that this had hap-
penned to her husband, she suspected imme-
diately that it had happened to others. She was right, as we learned late last month with the Pentagon finally providing a response—a bit incomplete—to my inquiry as to how many unclaimed remains in the vaults at Dover had been mishandled in this way. Right now, the number stands at 274. I strongly suspect that number is actually higher.
Throughout my service in Congress, I have almost always supported this annual measure, which authorizes funding for a wide range of programs upon which our military depends, from salaries and benefits to military health care to critical equipment and readiness accounts. But I deeply regret that the House Republican leadership chose to use this year’s bill as a vehicle for advancing ill-advised policies that seek to tie the President’s hands in the war on terror and expand the military’s role in the detention and disposition of terrorist and enemy combatant suspects indefinitely. As the DoD reports, this is an expense of our civil and military justice system and our civil liberties.

To be sure, the original House version of this bill, which I opposed, was much worse. It would not only have indefinitely extended the Authorization for the Use of Military Force that was enacted in the wake of September 11, but would also have required suspects detained pursuant to that authorization to be prosecuted in military tribunals. My Republican colleagues’ inexplicable insistence on forcing terror trials into military commissions instead of civilian courts flies in the face of the facts; our court system has a strong record of trying and convicting terrorism suspects, while the record of military commissions has been spotty at best.

It is no wonder that the Obama Administration threatened to veto this bill—as any administration, Democrat or Republican, would almost certainly have done.

To their credit, our Democratic conference succeeded in averting the worst aspects of the House bill in the conference report before us today. They didn’t go far enough. The measure would still require all foreign suspects detained in the war on terror to be kept in military custody, potentially disrupting critical anti-terrorism operations and muddying the waters of a process that should be crystal clear. As FBI Director Robert Mueller reiterated today, this provision would unnecessarily complicate interrogation and intelligence collection—the very capabilities that the provision’s supporters claim they are trying to enhance. The conference report would also needlessly reaffirm our ability to detain terror suspects indefinitely, upholding an ambiguity in current law that should be resolved by the courts. And it would impose new consultation requirements that further restrain the discretion of the Attorney General to determine how the force reductions the Administration may plan, including those under the New START treaty.

I also hope that our NATO allies and the Administration read closely the provision on our extended nuclear deterrent in Europe and any future arms control negotiations with Russia, which states that if any negotiations occur they should focus on Russia’s massive stockpile of tactical nuclear weapons and that for the purposes of the negotiations, consolidation or centralized storage of Russia’s tactical nuclear weapons should not be viewed as elimination of those weapons.

This last position was recently endorsed by the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, the U.S. delegation to which I am the Chairman. Now I would like to discuss an issue that is important to our men and women in uniform, impacting our Armed Forces readiness and forces servicemembers to choose between service to their nation and their families. This is the issue of military child custody.

Now I would like to discuss an issue that is important to our men and women in uniform, impacting our Armed Forces’ readiness and forces servicemembers to choose between service to their nation and their families. This is the issue of military child custody.

In a short time after becoming a member of the House Armed Services Committee, I was struck to learn that this country’s judicial system was using servicemember’s deployments against them when making child custody determinations. Just to be clear, we are asking an all volunteer force which consists of less than one percent of our population to engage in the longest conflict in our nation’s history, endure more deployments than any other generation in our history, and do so at the peril of losing their children.

Recognizing this unconscionable injustice, the House Armed Services Committee has included language in the past 5 NDAA’s to provide servicemembers a uniform national standard of protection. This provision has also made it through the House Veterans Affairs Committee.

Unfortunately, despite overwhelming bipartisan support in the House and the support of the Department of Defense, the Senate once again failed our servicemembers and their families. It appears that they have done so using false information.

Earlier this year, Secretary Gates stated, “I have been giving this matter a lot of thought and believe we should change our position to one where we are willing to consider whether appropriate legislation can be crafted that provides servicemembers with a federal uniform standard of protection.” This year, I worked with the DoD and the House Armed Services Committee to provide that legislation. Yet, the Senate failed to provide the protections in the final bill.

Given all the sacrifices made by our servicemembers, I ask that the Senate finds it within themselves to reconsider their position and work with us to provide the protections our men and women in uniform deserve. It’s the right thing to do and we owe it to them.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired. Pursuant to House Resolution 493, the previous question is ordered. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of the conference report is postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair. Accordingly (at 3 o’clock and 27 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:
H.R. 1905, by the yeas and nays; H.R. 2105, by the yeas and nays; H.R. 3421, de novo; H.R. 1264, de novo.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

IRAN THREAT REDUCTION ACT OF 2011

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the