

than the next 10 largest military spenders combined. We spend \$500 million a year on military bands alone.

But it's not just about what we spend; it's also how we spend. Former Secretary of Defense Gates called for billions in cuts, saying, "what had been a culture of endless money" at DOD must "become a culture of savings and restraint."

Admiral Mike Mullen once called our debt the "greatest threat to our national security."

The Sustainable Defense Task Force and the Bipartisan Policy Center have also outlined close to \$1 trillion in defense cuts that can still keep us safe.

But this defense budget doesn't reflect the expertise of our military leaders, defense experts, or the American people.

It ignores our military leaders by including a new east coast missile interceptor the Pentagon doesn't want, and it rolls back efforts by the DOD to be more energy efficient because the commanders on the ground know that lives are lost transporting fuel to troops abroad.

It ignores military experts by funding the deadly V-22 Osprey, which is 186 percent over budget, it is not safe to fly in extreme heat or excessive sand, has killed 36 servicemembers, and can be replaced with cheaper helicopters.

It also ignores experts such as Henry Kissinger, who promote drastically reducing our nuclear stockpile by including a huge funding increase for nuclear upgrades.

Finally, perhaps more importantly, it ignores the American people, who want a smaller military footprint and want our troops home from Afghanistan. According to a recent report released at the Stimson Center, the public supports cutting the defense budget by 18 percent. And according to the latest opinion polls, close to seven in 10 Americans oppose the war in Afghanistan, yet this defense bill includes language aimed at slowing down the withdrawal of U.S. troops.

We aren't fighting the Cold War anymore, yet this budget continues to invest billions in nuclear weapons and thousands of troops stationed in Europe and Asia.

Today our greatest threat is a global network of extremists who find safe haven in ungoverned spaces across the world. There have been at least 45 terrorist attacks plotted against the U.S. since 9/11, and each one of them was foiled, not by our mass ground forces in Afghanistan, but through intelligence, policing, and citizen engagement.

According to terrorism expert Erik Dahl of the Naval Postgraduate School, when it comes to domestic attacks and securing the homeland, what works is really good, old-fashioned policing, law enforcement, tips from the public, and police informants. Our enemy today must be caught with less costly policing, intelligence gathering, and special operations, not multibillion dollar tanks and nukes.

The real ramification of overspending on defense is not simply that we have too many unneeded nukes or planes, but that we don't have enough resources to support vital domestic investments such as health care, education, and infrastructure needed to remain a superpower.

Military power is not simply about spending more than our adversaries. Real military power, argues Kori Schake, a former McCain advisor, is "premised on the solvency of the American Government and the vibrancy of the U.S. economy." In order to maintain that vibrancy, we must get our fiscal house in order and do so by reexamining our defense spending, and making cuts and reforming where necessary.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL NURSES WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Madam Speaker, every year, in May, this country celebrates National Nurses Week. Often described as an art and a science, nursing is a profession that embraces dedicated people with varied interests, strengths, and passions because of the many opportunities the profession offers.

As a husband of a critical care nurse, I know all about the lives they touch each and every day. They work in emergency rooms, school-based clinics, hospitals, and homeless shelters, just to name a few. They have many roles, from staff nurses to educators to nurse practitioners and nurse researchers, and serve all of them with a passion for the profession and with a strong commitment to patient security and safety.

National Nurses Week occurs each year in May, surrounding Florence Nightingale's birthday. Our nurses strive for excellence in all they do. They provide patients and their families with skilled, compassionate care, and help them navigate a very complex and oftentimes overwhelming health care system to provide safe passage for the patients and their families.

Regardless of their role or title, nurses educate, counsel, advocate, and lead. These men and women work to make a difference to countless patients, families, and communities who benefit from nurses' dedication and professionalism.

This month is a time to reflect on all the good nurses do. It is a time to acknowledge and celebrate the differences our nurses make.

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HORSE PROTECTION PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. SCHRADER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHRADER. Madam Speaker, today I rise to discuss an important

and timely issue negatively affecting the welfare of the horses of this great country. It's called "soring." Soring is the act of deliberately causing pain to exaggerate the leg motion of high-gaited horses, such as Tennessee Walking Horses.

This inhumane practice, despite being illegal for almost 40 years, is still used far too often by many owners and trainers to win in the show ring. Today, I hope I can persuade you, my fellow Members of Congress, to take interest in this issue, to oppose this cruel and illegal practice, and to increase the support for the USDA's Horse Protection Program.

Horses are sored in several different ways:

Caustic materials, such as kerosene or mustard oil, are applied to the lower leg. This makes the horse's leg sensitive so that, when certain cruel devices like chains are placed against it, it causes severe pain, causing the horse to lift its leg high in an exaggerated gait. There are other common approaches also, like trimming the hoof excessively, exposing sensitive tissues, inserting devices between the shoe pads and the sole of the horse and, frankly, improper shoeing techniques. No matter the technique, its purpose is to cause the horse pain so that it lifts its leg higher and faster.

While rest and training may allow some horses to eventually recover from that harm, others suffer irreversible hoof damage and are actually crippled for life. The harm caused by soring is not just physical. The mental damage done to the horse can make its rehabilitation difficult, if not impossible.

Soring is so egregious that it has actually been illegal in this country for over 40 years. The Horse Protection Act was passed in 1970. So why, 40 years later, are we still having the same conversation?

The problem lies within the culture of some of those in the walking horse industry, in which unethical trainers and unethical owners not only continue this practice but use tricks to deceive detection. Substantial financial gains come from winning horse shows, and this makes soring appealing to many unscrupulous owners and trainers. Soring is a shortcut that overshadows the balance and collection seen in the beautiful natural movement of horses that perform racking gaits. These gaits can actually be achieved without soring, rather by investing the proper time, training, and conditioning on the horse.

The Horse Protection Program at the USDA serves as regulatory enforcement for the Horse Protection Act. Unfortunately, due to budget constraints, USDA inspectors only attend a small fraction of the shows. In 2011, USDA documented 587 violations of the act while attending only 62 of the 600 to 700 shows held that year. Fiscal year 2012 was the first time in the history of the Horse Protection Program that it actually received more than \$500,000 in