

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2012

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4310) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2013 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2013, and for other purposes:

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Chair, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 4310, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013. As a former Lieutenant Commander in the U.S. Navy Reserve, and as the son of a World War II veteran, I firmly believe that Congress has a responsibility to ensure that the United States has the best trained and best equipped military in the world. However, I have a number of concerns about this legislation that cause me to be unable to support it.

Last year during consideration of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act of 2012, I expressed my disappointment in the pace of troop withdrawals from Afghanistan initiated by President Obama. I supported an amendment to that bill that would have accelerated the withdrawal by reducing funding for combat operations while allowing for a reserve force of 25,000 troops to protect American personnel, carry out anti-terrorism operations, and assist with the training of Afghanistan's security forces.

While a similar amendment was submitted to the National Defense Authorization Act we are considering today, the Republican majority unfortunately refused to make it in order and instead only allowed a vote on an amendment offered by my colleague Representative LEE. Her amendment would require the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan. While I support the intent of the amendment, I am concerned that it does not provide our President and military leaders with the ability to keep a small reserve force in Afghanistan to help build up the capacity of the Afghan military or carry out limited operations against terrorists plotting against the United States. I prefer the approach advocated by my colleague Rep. MCGOVERN, which is why I am a cosponsor of legislation he has authored entitled the Afghanistan Exit and Accountability Act. This bill would require the President to submit a plan to Congress for an accelerated transition of our military out of Afghanistan, and to report regularly on the implementation of that plan.

During consideration of last year's National Defense Authorization Act, the Senate included provisions that could be construed as allowing for the indefinite detention of those apprehended on United States soil. The Ranking Member of the Armed Services Committee ADAM SMITH and my colleague from Michigan Representative JUSTIN AMASH offered an amendment that would have clarified that any

person captured in the United States must be extended the right to be charged and tried in a U.S. Court consistent with the Constitution. Unfortunately this amendment was defeated, and the bill now creates a dangerous, and I believe unconstitutional, precedent.

Finally, the bill funds the Department of Defense at a level \$8 billion above the one set for defense spending in the Budget Control Act passed last year. If signed into law, this would necessitate dangerous cuts to non-defense spending if we are going to meet the deficit reduction targets agreed to by President Obama and the Republican Leadership in the House. The Republican Budget would offset these increases in defense spending by imposing harmful and draconian cuts on programs that help provide food assistance to needy children, health care to our seniors, and assistance to unemployed parents trying to get back to work.

Everyone in this body supports keeping our Nation and our troops safe. Unfortunately, for the reasons outlined above, I cannot support this legislation. I remain hopeful that the Senate will produce a bipartisan bill that responsibly ends the war in Afghanistan as soon as safely possible, respects the Constitution, and ensures that our deficit reduction goals are met through balanced cuts that do not disproportionately impact the most vulnerable Americans.

TRIBUTE TO BOB CUDWORTH

HON. ANN MARIE BUERKLE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 30, 2012

Ms. BUERKLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to Bob Cudworth for his service to this nation in World War II and to congratulate him upon the occasion of serving as the Grand Marshall of the Camillus Memorial Day Parade.

Lt. Cudworth arrived in Iwo Jima on February 25, 1945 with Alpha Company, 9th Marines, 3rd Division. During a period of three days, 87 Marines from his Platoon were killed in action; Lt. Cudworth was dangerously close to being injured when an enemy bullet nearly grazed his boot. Lt. Cudworth and his Platoon were instrumental in taking "Hill Oboe" from the Japanese. He departed Iwo Jima in April 1945.

It is important that we remind our Veterans that they are greatly appreciated for their service to this great Nation and that they will never be forgotten. It is because of our service men and women that the United States of America remains the Greatest Nation in the History of Mankind.

The men and women who served our country in World War II are shining examples of patriotism, strength, courage, and decency. It is with great honor that I pause and reflect upon the sacrifices of men and women like Bob Cudworth.

I wish to extend Mr. Cudworth my gratitude for his dedicated service to the United States of America and congratulate him upon the occasion of serving as the Grand Marshall in this year's Camillus Memorial Day Parade, where we honor and remember all of our heroes of war, past and present.

HONORING ALMA T. GAMMAGE

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 30, 2012

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following:

Whereas, forty-two years ago a virtuous woman of God accepted her calling to serve in the Educational System; and

Whereas, Mrs. Alma T. Gammage began her educational career in teaching in the Chattahoochee County School System in Georgia and this year she retires from teaching at Edward L. Bouie, Sr., Elementary Theme School in Lithonia, Georgia, she has served the DeKalb County Public Schools System well and our community has been blessed through her service; and

Whereas, this phenomenal woman has shared her time and talents as a Teacher, Educator and Motivator, giving the citizens of Georgia a person of great worth, a fearless leader, a devoted scholar and a servant to all who want to advance the lives of our youth; and

Whereas, Mrs. Gammage is formally retiring from her educational career today, she will continue to promote education because she is a cornerstone in our community that has enhanced the lives of thousands for the betterment of our District and Nation; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize Mrs. Alma T. Gammage on her retirement from the DeKalb County Public Schools System and to wish her well in her new endeavors;

Now Therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, Jr. do hereby proclaim May 18, 2012 as Mrs. Alma T. Gammage Day in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

HONORING THE WORLD WAR II VETERANS OF ILLINOIS

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 30, 2012

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the World War II veterans who traveled to Washington, D.C. on May 23, 2012 with Honor Flight Chicago, a program that provides World War II veterans the opportunity to visit the World War II Memorial on The National Mall in Washington, D.C. This memorial was built to

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