

million to Moldova, and \$83 million to Georgia; so a \$40 million commitment to a country that, on its own, has delivered democracy is a small gift. I urge that we support that.

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

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

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

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

Mrs. LOWEY. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. SPEIER. I yield to the gentlewoman from New York.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Chairman, while this amendment does not have a budgetary effect, I would like to thank my friend for raising such an important issue.

The progress made in Armenia's transition to democracy and the Velvet Revolution is a refreshing development at a time when so many other countries are headed in the opposite direction. This account funds critical programs to counter Russian aggression and influence in Europe and Eurasia and support to key partners like Ukraine and Georgia. I am prepared to work to provide the necessary resources to encourage continued progress in Armenia, and I am willing to accept the amendment.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman and leader of our Appropriations Committee for her support, and I am grateful beyond words.

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

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Chairman, the funding directed in this amendment is a significant increase above current levels. It could result in funds being cut from important partners in Europe facing Russian aggression. For this reason, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment.

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

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

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

Mr. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

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

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER).

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman from New York for yielding.

I rise to engage in a colloquy with the chairwoman of the State-Foreign

Operations Appropriations Subcommittee. I rise today to discuss the immense value to the American taxpayer and Congress provided by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction.

Since 2002, the U.S. Government has spent over \$126 billion—that is a building the Afghan security forces, promoting good governance, and conducting development assistance. Created in the 2008 National Defense Authorization Act, the SIGAR, as we refer to it, has helped to oversee the effectiveness of these programs and guarded against waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement.

The SIGAR has alerted Congress to programs stymied by corruption, flawed leadership, and poor design, while also providing implementing agencies with lessons learned that have improved their efforts. I believe that SIGAR provides immense value to the American public and that their efforts should continue so long as the United States continues to allocate significant sums of money to the Afghan reconstruction.

I want to ask the chairwoman to clarify that no language in the bill's House report should be construed as creating an end date for the SIGAR.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Chair, I thank my friend for bringing this issue to our attention.

The committee takes seriously oversight of taxpayer dollars. I concur with the gentlewoman's remarks. The SIGAR continues to serve American taxpayers by reporting on instances of waste, fraud, and abuse in Afghanistan.

The language included in the House report was not intended to suggest that the committee expects or is directing SIGAR to cease operations by September 30, 2021. Rather, the requirement in the House report is for SIGAR to provide a plan on its future state considering the administration's proposing drawdown in Afghanistan.

We must protect American taxpayer funds from waste, fraud, and abuse. I look forward to working with SIGAR on effectively achieving this important mission as the U.S. engagement with Afghanistan continues to evolve.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Ms. SPEIER) assumed the chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2020

The Committee resumed its sitting.

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AMENDMENT NO. 85 OFFERED BY MR. MEADOWS

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. RICHMOND). It is now in order to consider amendment No. 85 printed in part B of House Report 116-109.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 560, line 13, after the dollar amount insert "(increased by \$33,000,000)".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 431, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Chair, this amendment withholds an additional \$33 million from Pakistan, in addition to the \$33 million that is currently being withheld. This seems like it should not be necessary, but, indeed, it is.

Dr. Shakil Afridi has been in prison for his role in helping the United States Government locate Osama bin Laden. The message, Mr. Chair, needs to be clear that imprisonment, in violation of human rights, of this fine doctor needs to cease.

Mr. Chair, you probably find the same thing back home in your State as I do in mine. Many of my constituents question why we are sending money to Pakistan anyway, let alone if they are going to violate the human rights of someone who has helped bring justice to a terrorist.

In prison since 2011, Dr. Afridi was almost entirely restricted. He was prevented from meeting with his lawyers. Indeed, his previous lawyer was murdered. Dr. Afridi has been tortured, reportedly. He has been described as now looking like a skeleton.

Mr. Chair, this body needs to stand unanimously together and send a clear message to the Pakistani Government that we will not tolerate this kind of behavior and this violation of human rights. We need to stand with his wife, and we need to stand for freedom.

We appreciate the support of Freedom House in supporting this amendment.

Mr. Chair, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS), someone I fondly refer to as "Mr. Chairman," who has been a leader on so many of these issues.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding the time.

Mr. Chair, I rise in support of this amendment.

This amendment would double the amount withheld from assistance to Pakistan until Dr. Shakil Afridi has been released from prison and cleared of all charges relating to assistance provided to the U.S. in locating Osama bin Laden.