

ground for so many African Americans who followed in his footsteps.

Last week, it was announced there will be a House exhibition entitled, "Joseph Rainey: 150 Years." The exhibition shares Rainey's impact from the 1870s through the 1970s. The power and importance of voting rights are at the heart of the exhibition, which tells this tumultuous history through objects, images, documents, and words of African-American Members of Congress who have lived and legislated through it.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Congratulations to President Donald Trump for leading South Carolina Republicans to the most success in 140 years since Congressman Rainey began the Republican Party.

PEARL HARBOR REMEMBRANCE

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, marked the 79th anniversary of the Pearl Harbor naval base attack.

On December 7, 1941, the surprise attack by the Japanese on a U.S. Naval base in Hawaii left nearly 2,500 people dead. Innocent lives were taken; members of the United States Navy, Army, Marines, as well as civilians. It remains one of the deadliest attacks in American history, often described as "a date which will live in infamy," according to a quote by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Every year on December 7, we pause to reflect and remember the sacrifice made by the men and women who perished in the attack on Pearl Harbor. President Roosevelt went on to say, "No matter how long it will take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory."

Mr. Speaker, thanks to the selflessness and sacrifice of the Greatest Generation, that is exactly what they did. God bless all of our Pearl Harbor victims, the survivors, and their families.

A JUST AND PROPER FIGHT

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

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I oppose the NDAA, not because I am against our troops, but because I love them so much.

America's fighting men and women are so precious that they should not have to die in some failed state, some faraway land that most Americans can't even point to on a map so that defense contractors can extend our involvement in these wars, so that lobbyists can get rich, and so that Members of Congress can get reelected.

This good bill has been hijacked by the forever war lobby and their bought-and-paid-for allies in the United States Congress. It puts barriers in the way of an administration that wants to bring our troops home and put America first. This legislation has become too swampy. It does good things to ensure that America can vanquish any foe on the battlefield, but we should only fight when that fight is just and proper.

Mr. Speaker, we have spent two decades trading the same villages back and forth in Afghanistan. And I believe that the administration that leads our country should work to bring those troops home, and unfortunately, this bill does exactly the opposite. From Afghanistan, from Germany, and elsewhere, I am going to put America first and I am voting against this bill.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 6395, WILLIAM M. (MAC) THORNBERRY NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the order of the House of December 3, 2020, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 6395) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2021 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, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Thursday, December 3, 2020, the conference report is considered read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of December 3, 2020, at Book II, page H6145.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. THORNBERRY) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the conference report to accompany H.R. 6395.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the conference report before us today. This is the defense policy bill, and this is an incredibly important piece of legislation. There is a lot of public debate about different issues that sort of rise to the level of people

arguing about, and they are very important, passionate issues. But lost in that sometimes is the basic substance of what we do in the defense policy bill, and that is, we exercise our legislative authority to do oversight of the Pentagon and national security policy.

And on that measure, this year's bill is an incredibly important piece of legislation. To begin with, we address the issue of diversity within the military. I really want to thank the Congressional Black Caucus and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, specifically ANTHONY BROWN, VERONICA ESCOBAR, and RUBEN GALLEGOS for putting forward policy that will address the diversity problems that we have.

Mr. Speaker, our military right now in its leadership and in its recruitment does not adequately reflect the diversity of this country. This bill puts in place a chief diversity officer at the Pentagon and takes a number of other steps to try to correct that, to make sure that we have a military that reflects diversity of this country and that meets the equity and social justice requirements. I think that is an incredibly important policy statement, and a step forward.

We also implement a number of the provisions from a defense policy board led by Eric Schmidt and Bob Work focusing on artificial intelligence. I heard some Members speaking earlier about the importance of that. We have a series of recommendations for how the Department of Defense can do a better job of getting AI right, developing the technology and using it, but also broader technologies as well. The Pentagon is woefully behind right now in taking advantage of the technologies that are crucial to getting us the proper defense going forward. I think that is incredibly important.

Mr. Speaker, we also have a provision that Ranking Member THORNBERRY worked on. It is not the most sexy or exciting thing in the world. It is 300 pages of cleaning up the technical problems within the acquisition process at the Pentagon, but it is crucially important.

We have so many innovative technologies, so many small businesses out there that are generating great ideas that would be terrific for the Pentagon, but they can't get in. They can't penetrate the bureaucracy and figure out how to even do business, so most of them walk away. It is crucially important that we take steps to fix that.

We also have a provision I have worked on a lot dealing with satellites and launch. Same thing—encourage competition, encourage innovation. Regrettably, the Pentagon has a somewhat understandable bias towards incumbents. They also have a bias towards large companies. But what that does is it makes it harder for that innovation, for those new technologies that are crucial to get through. We make changes to address that.

We also have a provision in this bill to deal with Agent Orange, to make

sure that we are taking care of our troops, because that is a crucial part of our oversight as well, to make sure that once the fighting is done, we don't forget the people who fought, that we help them.

For too long, veterans have not been able to access the healthcare they deserve. This bill addresses that. I know that MARK TAKANO and JOSH HARDER on our side worked very hard on that issue and I thank them for that. It is crucially important.

Mr. Speaker, I also take a moment to address the concerns that Representative GAETZ raised. He is not accurate in saying that we stop the President from being able to move troops. All we do in Afghanistan is we say, Make sure you give us a reason. And then, frankly, if the President doesn't give us a reason, he can exercise a national security waiver and not follow our advice. It is simply advice that says, Yes, in our opinion, we need to get out of Afghanistan, but we need to do it responsibly.

□ 1230

It is a way crazy overstatement to say that we prevent a Chief Executive from pulling out of Afghanistan. This bill does not do that. It merely says, if you are going to do it, make sure that you do it right so that we protect our troops as we make that decision.

I think that is not an accurate description of what this bill does.

But overall, I want to remind people, it is incredibly important that we pass this piece of legislation for a couple of basic reasons.

Number one, we are the legislative body. The one thing we have in common—House, Senate, Democrat, Republican—is that we are all legislators. We all represent people. If we don't do our job, if we don't pass this bill and exercise oversight, we are ceding authority to the executive branch, authority that is too great already. I think Democrats and Republicans agree on this as well. Granted, when there is a Democratic President, Republicans are more enthusiastic about it, and when there is a Republican President, Democrats are more enthusiastic about it. But we all agree there is too much executive power and not enough legislative oversight.

Let's not walk away from our biggest opportunity every year to exercise that legislative oversight. This is a good bill. If we don't do this, we are not fulfilling one key aspect of our duties to our constituents.

Also, the legislative process itself, I think, is incredibly important. These are times when we have a deeply divided Nation and a deeply divided Congress, but that is precisely the moment when legislative authority is so important. It is how we come together and solve problems.

I will tell you, Senator INHOFE and I disagree on a lot. We also do not have a lot in common.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, we have come together on this bill because we recognize the importance of that process. You have to learn how to work with people you disagree with in order for civil society to function. That is what we have done.

Now, sadly, this is the only conference report that we will vote on this session. I think it might be the only one we have voted on in the last 2 years. I could be wrong about that. But if not, it is one of the precious few. That shows you how far we are drifting away from exercising our responsibilities.

If Senator INHOFE and I can come together and agree on this, then I think we can all understand that this is a good bipartisan compromise that we all should support.

I want to close by thanking the staff. I have not worked with a better group of people on anything I have ever done in my life; the House staff, the Senate staff, all outstanding people doing a difficult job.

I also want to do something I haven't done before, and that is specifically thank the legislative counsel and also apologize. Every year, we put this bill together seemingly at the last minute. It is a very big bill. We come up with our ideas, we turn them over to the legislative counsel at 2 o'clock in the morning on Sunday, and say, "Please do this."

I am sorry. We are going to try to do better in the future. But thank you, thank you, thank you for the outstanding work that you do.

Lastly, I want to thank MAC. This bill was named after him—over his objection, by the way. He has done an outstanding job as chairman and as ranking member of this committee. He will be missed. I really thank him for his leadership. Without him, this would not be possible.

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

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TURNER).

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, I want to continue our chairman's lauding of the career of MAC THORNBERRY, again, over his objections. In my 18 years that I have served in Congress, I can tell you, not only has his leadership been essential on the Armed Services Committee, but his time, both as chairman and ranking member, has been incredibly important. He has served the Nation well.

I want to thank Chairman SMITH for his leadership. We have truly a bipartisan bill in front of us, and it is a result of MAC THORNBERRY and ADAM SMITH, their work to try to ensure that we do put America first.

Contrary to the prior speaker—before we began to debate this bill, we heard accusations that this did not put America first. This puts America first. What is essential about this is that our

adversaries are gaining on our capabilities. They are investing in modernization. They are investing in capabilities that will threaten our ability to ensure our safety and our liberty. This bill is about America first.

I would like to highlight a few key issues in this bill.

First, the conference report fully authorizes the administration's budget request for the National Nuclear Security Administration. These funds are critical to ensuring our nuclear weapons enterprise remains safe, secure, and effective going into the future. We have put off needed investment too long. There is no longer any margin of error or delay. Now, the NNSA must transform from a culture of sustainment and maintenance to a culture of development and manufacturing to meet the nuclear safety environment of the future.

Second, I am pleased that the conference report removes a provision that would have prohibited the NNSA from conducting necessary testing and experimentation.

Next, the conference report funds the ground based strategic deterrent, the replacement for the Minuteman III, which has provided the Nation with a nuclear security umbrella for half a century. Transition to the ground-based strategic deterrent will be one of the most complex projects the Federal Government has ever undertaken.

The bill also continues the progress of Space Force, and the bill makes serious investments in missile defense by funding the Missile Defense Agency's highest unfunded priorities. It authorizes funds for nine SM-3 Block IIA missiles and a new THAAD battery.

The conference report also includes a provision directing the DOD to collaborate with research centers so that we can bring forward information on our adversaries and what they are doing.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage everyone to vote for this bill. It is important for the future and the security of America.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Intelligence and Emerging Threats and Capabilities, and I thank him for his leadership.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the conference report to accompany H.R. 6395, the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021. I have served with Ranking Member MAC THORNBERRY for nearly 20 years, and I thank him for his service to the Nation and for his bipartisan leadership.

Mac, it has been an honor, and you will be missed.

I congratulate my colleagues, particularly Chairman ADAM SMITH, for his leadership in crafting the National Defense Authorization Act for the 60th consecutive year.

The portions of the NDAA under my purview provide direction and oversight for Special Operations Forces and

the defense intelligence enterprise. The bill supports scientists and funds STEM programs that will diversify our workforce. It also advances several policy priorities in artificial intelligence and cyberspace, including 27 recommendations from the Cyberspace Solarium Commission on which I serve.

Among the most important, notably, this bill establishes a long-overdue provision that I authored, the Senate-confirmed national cyber director within the Executive Office of the President. The national cyber director will be the singular point of strategy development and implementation and will provide vital coordination to keep us safe in cyberspace.

This bill also funds two Virginia-class submarines and the first Columbia-class submarine. I was proud to work with Chairman COURTNEY to fight cuts to the President's budget that would have eliminated a Virginia-class submarine. I am equally proud to represent the workers in Rhode Island who make such important and unique contributions to building the most sophisticated weapons systems ever built, which are vital to our national security.

In all of my efforts on the NDAA, I have been privileged to serve with my ranking member, Congresswoman ELISE STEFANIK, by my side. I thank her for her contributions and her commitment to bipartisanship.

I also want to thank my colleagues and the staff on the Intelligence and Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee and my personal staff for their tireless efforts to get the NDAA across the finish line.

Finally, this bill provides a 3 percent pay raise for our men and women in uniform, although no price can ever be put on their invaluable service. Every day, servicemembers put their lives on the line to protect our way of life and keep us safe at home, and we owe them an enormous debt of gratitude that we can never repay.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan commitment to national security.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN).

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say our country and our military are a better place because of Ranking Member THORNBERRY's hard work, involvement, and dedication.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the conference report to accompany H.R. 6395, the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021. This NDAA continues the Armed Services Committee's commendable bipartisan tradition.

I am particularly happy with the following aspects of the conference report that affect readiness.

It authorizes over \$250 billion for operations and maintenance, including facilities sustainment and \$8 billion in new military construction.

It reforms logistics and sustainment to better align the Department's support to the National Defense Strategy while ensuring that sustainment planning is emphasized early in major weapon system acquisition.

It extends critical land withdrawals for the Navy and the Air Force to perform training activities at the Fallon Range Training Complex and the Nevada Test and Training Range. These are vital to the readiness of our aviation forces.

It provides the Air Force with much-needed flexibility to synchronize military construction and weapons system fielding for the ground-based strategic deterrent system.

It continues to reform military family housing with better remediation of severe environmental hazards.

These are just some of the important improvements in readiness that the NDAA accomplishes.

I want to thank Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member THORNBERRY for their leadership to complete the NDAA, along with Readiness Subcommittee Chairman JOHN GARAMENDI.

Passing this bill signals the clear support of Congress to our military members and their families. If not enacted, these critical readiness authorities and vital matters like military pay raises will not happen.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the conference report.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the 2021 William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act.

I want to begin by congratulating Chairman SMITH and Mr. THORNBERRY for their persistent teamwork in bringing this bill to fruition. It is the way Congress is supposed to work.

Mr. Speaker, the Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces made a significant mark in this year's bill. Last February, the President's budget, out of nowhere, cut the Navy's shipbuilding budget by 17 percent, including the removal of an entire Virginia-class attack submarine, with no rationale or 30-year shipbuilding plan, as required by law.

Our subcommittee led the way in fully restoring that submarine, having listened to the combatant commanders who have articulated the need for that repeatedly, and adding a fast transport ship, bringing the total new ships in this bill to nine, two more than requested in the Trump budget.

We also focused attention on our domestic sealift fleet. The final bill authorizes half a billion dollars for the Maritime Security Program to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on our domestic sealift fleet and creates a new tanker security fleet aimed at addressing alarming gaps in at-sea logistics.

The bill enhances crucial airlift programs by funding our next-generation refueler, the KC-46A, and rejecting harmful cuts in our refueling fleet.

The final agreement also includes a provision that sets a firm floor in support of more than a dozen State Governors' requests to preserve the C-130 aircraft for the Air National Guard.

Mr. Speaker, this is truly a bipartisan bill that represents the hard work and input of Members on both sides of the aisle.

Thank you to my friend, Ranking Member ROB WITTMAN, for his amazing friendship and work, and our colleagues on the subcommittee for their hard work in crafting this year's bill.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge a "yes" vote today.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON).

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise in support of the conference report to accompany the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act.

For the past 59 years, Congress has passed the NDAA on a bipartisan basis for one simple reason: Politics must never, ever stand between the American people and the security of our country. This record of bipartisan unity is unrivaled in our history and a testament to what we can do when we come together to ensure that the needs of our Nation are met.

As a conferee, I can proudly say that this bill wisely balances the differences between each Chamber and puts America's security first.

Let me say at the outset that I am in agreement with the President's concerns about section 230 and the need to deny broad immunity to tech companies that abuse legal protections to censor voices that do not share their particular political viewpoints.

However, as important as this issue is, it falls outside the jurisdiction of this bill and deserves its own debate and a separate vote so that every Member of Congress is on record where they stand. For Members considering to vote "no" because of this issue, ask yourself: Do you think you will get a better bill in 2 months? The answer is no.

I wish to commend the outstanding leadership of Chairman SMITH and my friend MAC THORNBERRY for navigating this bill through conference. Under their leadership, this legislation will continue the readiness recovery we began 4 years ago.

It will fully fund modernization of our strategic nuclear deterrence. It ensures America's military advantage well into the future with necessary investments in air, land, sea, space, and cyberspace. It directs the Secretary of Defense to establish emergency medical surge partnerships with Federal, State, and local entities, universities, and private healthcare providers to prepare for future pandemics. It keeps the faith of our servicemembers and military families.

This bill also provides long-overdue support and relief to veterans suffering from toxic exposure. As an airman who deployed four times, I served with many who were exposed to burn pits and now suffer from tumors in their lungs. This bill grants presumptive benefits for veterans suffering from these illnesses and requires the VA to fast-track disability statuses.

So this conference report provides our servicemembers the tools they need to defend America. On the 60th consecutive NDAA, I am proud to have helped craft this bill, and I thank the statesmanship of MAC THORNBERRY, whose name it bears.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes."

□ 1245

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the Speaker of the House.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him and Mr. THORNBERRY for their leadership in bringing this legislation to the floor in a strong bipartisan way.

I am proud to support the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act that honors our values, strengthens our security, and advances our leadership in the world.

I, again, salute Chairman SMITH. I congratulate Ranking Member THORNBERRY for his service in the Congress. I know this legislation is named for him. That is pretty exciting for all of us. I don't know if it is for him, but it is exciting for the rest of us.

I thank the members of the committee for their patriotic, persistent leadership on this legislation; it reflects the brilliance and the collaboration we can have. Nearly half the members contributed to parts of this bill.

While we would have liked to have seen the House version of this legislation, we can all take pride that the NDAA, again, will strengthen our national security for years to come.

I am particularly pleased with some of the issues in the bill that are supportive of our troops. This NDAA, Mr. Speaker, incorporates key Democratic priorities, including supporting our troops' financial security, authorizing a long-overdue pay raise and hazard duty pay, extending paid parental leave to civilian employees who had not been included, and providing long-overdue benefits to Vietnam-era veterans exposed to Agent Orange.

This issue has been an issue for a long time in our country and in this Congress, and it needed some expansion. I am glad in this legislation the exposure extends to hypothyroidism, bladder cancer, and Parkinson's. If you are there and you have this, it is connected.

Mr. Speaker, I am personally interested in this because many years ago, before I was in Congress, in our community in California, we had a big—in LA, actually, we had a big hunger

strike by Vietnam vets over Agent Orange. This was, like, 35 years ago, long before Congress acted on this. They were on a hunger strike, and I went to be sympathetic and show support. I was chair of the California Democratic Party at the time.

Dick Gregory came. Dick Gregory had been on many hunger strikes for one thing or another, civil rights, this and that. He taught them that, if you are on a hunger strike, you must show-er, you must hydrate, hydrate, hydrate; telling them how not to make themselves sick because they were on a hunger strike, but to control that damage.

I was particularly pleased to be there with Dick Gregory because my brother and he served in the Army in Texas together. In those days—that was in the fifties, a long time ago—my brother was Dick Gregory's friend, at a time when there wasn't so much, shall we say, integration among the troops. So we had that personal connection.

Then, once again, with our Vietnam-era vets, when it came to Agent Orange. So I commend you all personally, patriotically, and in every way for taking care of our vets there.

Then the families, defending their health and well-being and that of their families, improving housing and access to childcare, improving pandemic response, protecting military communities from dangerous PFAS chemicals, and addressing sexual assault in the military.

JACKIE SPEIER has been such a champion on that issue, and I thank her for that.

Combating our adversaries and investing in our allies with important tools to deter China and Russia, fight transnational threats, and further strengthening our partnership with Israel.

Bringing our defense further into the 21st century with reforms to make the Pentagon more efficient and innovative, important bipartisan provisions on artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and key investments in military construction and base realignment.

This NDAA is momentous in this respect, as Congress comes together on a bipartisan and bicameral basis to begin the process of changing the names of military bases and infrastructure named after individuals who served in the Confederacy.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to know that this isn't names of things that, oh, my gosh, later we found out that so-and-so did this and that, that was so wrong. This was a decision made to name these bases after people, White supremacists, and those who were part of the Confederacy. The men for whom these bases were named are not heroes. They are named for traitors who took up arms against America and killed American soldiers in defense of slavery.

As I have said before, there is no room for celebrating the violent big-

otry of the men of the Confederacy in any place of honor across our country, whether in the hallowed Halls of the United States Capitol or on our military bases.

Changing the hateful names of these bases is supported by an overwhelming majority of the American people, by our Active Duty servicemen and -women, and by top military leaders.

And now the President has threatened to veto this legislation. I hope not. I hope not. This bipartisan policy bill has been signed into law for 59 consecutive years. Let us urge the President to a show respect for the work of the bipartisan, bicameral Congress, and for the sacrifice of our military.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a strong bipartisan vote for this legislation, which upholds our values, honors our troops, and keeps the America people safe. And I hope that it will be swiftly signed into law.

I just want to make the further point that the strength of our Nation, of course, depends on our strength that we are talking about here, but it also depends on the health and well-being of the American people. So as we have our budget debate and the rest, let us recognize that the health and well-being of the American people, whether it is the education of our children, the security of our economy, and the rest, and so many other aspects of our budgeting here, that this is one element of the strength of our country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a "yes" vote. I congratulate Mr. THORNBERRY for his namesake bill, and I acknowledge the great leadership of our chair, ADAM SMITH. I want to also acknowledge ANTHONY BROWN, who did such a tremendous piece of work on the base renamings.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER).

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the conference report to accompany H.R. 6395, the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021.

I am grateful that this bill bears the name of a public servant who has fought tirelessly throughout his 26 years in Congress for our men and women in uniform, and whose steadfast and wise leadership has made such a difference. This legislation is a fitting tribute to his enduring legacy.

As ranking member of the Tactical Air and Land Forces Subcommittee, I am pleased this conference agreement builds on the progress we have made in rebuilding military readiness after years of deferred modernization.

Through targeted oversight, this agreement will set the right conditions to ensure needed capabilities required for the national defense strategy and credible deterrence are delivered in a timely manner to maintain our competitive edge against Russia and China.

A few examples of these critical capabilities include funding for 12 F-15EX aircraft; an additional \$1.2 billion for

F-35 Joint Strike Fighters for a total of 93 F-35 aircraft; funding for 24 F-18 Super Hornets to include an additional \$28 million for advance procurement; strong support for the Army's identified big six modernization priorities, such as future vertical lift and long-range precision fires; an additional \$104 million for Army Ammunition Plant modernization; and an additional \$150 million for National Guard and Reserve Component Equipment modernization.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to, again, thank Ranking Member THORNBERRY for his leadership, thank Chairman ADAM SMITH for his steadfast and fair handling of the committee and this vital bill, and thank our subcommittee chairman, DONALD NORCROSS, for his spirit of bipartisanship.

In addition, this conference report wouldn't be possible without the hard work and dedication of the entire subcommittee staff, and I thank them all.

The NDAA has always been a product of bipartisan consensus, whose purpose has always been to support our troops and to protect American national security.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bill and vote "yes" on H.R. 6395 for the 60th year in a row.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER), the chair of the Subcommittee on Military Personnel.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for the time and for his outstanding leadership, patience, and perseverance.

I also thank Ranking Member THORNBERRY for his many years of distinguished service to our Nation, both in the military and in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member of the committee, Mr. KELLY; also the committee staff, Craig, David, Hannah; and my personal staff, Josh, Brian, and Luke.

Before I speak about the conference agreement, I feel like I must speak about the Fort Hood Independent Review, which was ordered after Specialist Vanessa Guillen's murder. This is the report. It is being released in a matter of 3 minutes by the Secretary of the Army. I won't go into details, but I will say that it is a damning expose of a system at Fort Hood that does a shameful disservice to the sacrifices of our servicemembers and their families.

The report makes clear what I have been saying since before I was on the Armed Services Committee, that the Army sexual assault and harassment response has failed, that servicemembers are afraid to report, believe they will not be taken seriously and will be retaliated against, and that major systemic changes are needed, including greater independence from the chain of command for handling sexual assault and harassment.

Any parent reading this report would have to ask themselves: Is my son or daughter safe in the military?

This bill is not perfect. Important provisions on sexual assault and domestic violence were left out. But this conference agreement would make progress, including a new confidential reporting option for sexual harassment and a provision to ensure that servicemembers who report sexual assault are not disciplined for related minor infractions.

It also includes a pay raise for servicemembers, long-overdue provisions to promote racial and gender equity within the armed services, including goals for accessions and promotions of persons of color and women, as well as the creation of a new deputy inspector general for diversity and inclusion that will investigate White supremacists' activities by servicemembers.

Additionally, the bill expands support for childcare and provides for exceptional family member services.

Therefore, I will be voting for the bill, and I hope my colleagues will join me in this. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to recognize that this is just the beginning. We have more to do. More lives are lost and must be accounted for.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. STEFANIK).

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bipartisan bill.

As the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Intelligence and Emerging Threats and Capabilities, I am proud of our oversight and legislative activities this year, which have included recharging our science and technology enterprise, strengthening our Nation's cybersecurity, expanding the resources and authorities for irregular warfare activities across the globe, and bolstering our biological threat and pandemic preparedness efforts.

Two years ago, I introduced legislation in the NDAA that created the National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence with the purpose of accelerating and advancing the development of AI across the Federal Government. I applaud the commission for their work on this important issue, and I am pleased that this conference report includes 17 of those recommendations, including elevating the role of the Joint AI Center; modernizing how the DOD attracts and retains AI talent; and ensuring our AI research ecosystem maintains its competitive advantage over China.

□ 1300

Second, this bill extends and expands the opportunities for our Special Operations Forces to partner with foreign forces, build critical relationships, and more effectively counter the malign influences of Russia and China. This bill also ensures that all of our Special Operations Forces—active duty, reserve, National Guard and their families are provided the care and support that they deserve.

Third, this bill takes concrete steps to protect critical defense tech-

nologies, strengthen cybersecurity cooperation with the defense industrial base, and rebuild our domestic manufacturing capabilities for sensitive microelectronics and semiconductor components. This bill brings transparency to Federally funded research while at the same time restricting foreign influence on our university campuses.

As the chief advocate for Fort Drum and the 10th Mountain Division, I am proud to deliver results for the Army's most deployed division since 9/11. This year's NDAA addresses our homeland missile defense, as Fort Drum is named as the preferred East Coast missile defense site. I am also proud to include provisions that require plans for renovating child development centers and review of IT infrastructure enhancements at Army mission training complexes. These provisions are critical to enhance readiness and ensure the 10th Mountain Division can conduct safe and secure operations.

I recognize my partner, my colleague, Congressman JIM LANGEVIN of Rhode Island. And lastly, I thank Ranking Member THORNBERRY for his extraordinary leadership and guidance, not only this year, but in many years of his truly exemplary service. He is a giant in the people's House, and he will be sorely missed.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill and vote "yes."

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COOPER), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces.

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I am pleased to support the fiscal year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act. Thankfully, maintaining a tradition of bipartisanship to get the 60th, a record, National Defense Authorization Act through the House and then through conference with the Senate is no small feat, particularly during a global pandemic.

I thank, in particular, our outstanding Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member THORNBERRY for their leadership, as well as Ranking Member MIKE TURNER for his partnership in the Strategic Forces Subcommittee, and all of the conferees for getting to this point.

In particular, I would like to thank Ranking Member THORNBERRY for his extraordinary leadership on the HASC over the last 6 years, and I am happy to congratulate my friend and colleague, MIKE ROGERS, as the next HASC ranking member.

The Strategic Forces provisions in the bill would not have been in place without the outstanding staff work of Leonor Tomero, Maria Vastola, and Grant Schneider as the lead staffers.

These provisions support our nuclear forces and nuclear nonproliferation. They also enhance oversight of the warhead acquisition and plutonium pit production programs, which continue to be major undertakings.

The conference report supports regional missile defense efforts, restores funding to critical radar discrimination capabilities, and provides needed oversight on the next generation of interceptors in order to ensure fly-before-you-buy principles in this \$10 billion program.

The report acknowledges the increased focus on development and delivery of conventional hypersonic weapons, while also initiating efforts to address broad policy concerns regarding the risk of miscalculation as these new strategic-level weapons are fielded.

With regard to the rapidly transforming space domain, the conference report supports innovative commercial capabilities, competition, and the emergence of small-launch providers to provide national security as well as the codification of the Space Development Agency's mission.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a strong vote in favor of this conference report.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. KELLY).

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

As ranking member of the Military Personnel Subcommittee, I stand before you today in proud support of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2021. The conference report reflects bipartisan compromise that has been a hallmark of this committee for 59 consecutive years.

The National Defense Authorization Act has always been about ensuring the national defense of the United States, which would be impossible without appropriate focus on the men and women who tirelessly serve this country; and appropriate focus on their families who serve this great Nation by supporting their loved ones time and again; through the deployments, the training periods and all the challenges of day-to-day living. We owe them a great debt of gratitude. The NDAA also preserves a number of robust TRICARE and retirement benefits for our retirees.

To this end, we addressed a number of significant and overdue policy issues that would directly improve the quality of life of our servicemembers and their families.

The NDAA authorizes a 3 percent increase in basic pay for servicemembers. It also standardizes the payment of hazardous duty incentive pay and increases hazardous duty pay from \$250 to \$275 a month for members of the uniformed services.

The NDAA reinforces the committee's longstanding commitment to the military family by requiring the Department of Defense to redefine military family readiness and military personnel resiliency, and it provides for significant reforms in the Exceptional Family Member Program.

Of course, the NDAA also addresses COVID-19.

This is an outstanding bipartisan NDAA dedicated to our servicemembers, military families, and retirees, and gives them the care and support they need, deserve, and have earned.

I thank my staff, Sergeant Major Jeremy Barton, my Army Fellow; Rodney Hall, my MLA; and our MILPER staff, Glen Diehl and Paul Golden. I thank Chairwoman SPEIER for working together with me to do a great Military Personnel mark. Finally, I thank MAC THORNBERRY, a mentor, leader, and friend.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. NORCROSS), the chair of the Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces.

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding and certainly for his leadership in bringing this conference report to the floor for the 60th year. And certainly, I take a moment to thank MAC THORNBERRY, who this conference report is named after, for his leadership, and certainly MIKE ROGERS. They are the type of Members that we all should look toward in terms of being bipartisan and working toward a goal.

Mr. Speaker, this conference report continues the Tactical Air and Land Forces Subcommittee's long tradition of bipartisanship to make America's Armed Forces the best in the world. I commend the hard work of our Members, my colleagues, our staff, certainly in these unusual and demanding circumstances brought on by the coronavirus.

I also thank Ranking Member HARTZLER for her leadership and commitment to working toward a goal of keeping America safe. Our cooperation has kept us focused on what is truly important. We have delivered a defense bill that meets the modernization and readiness needs of our Nation's air and land forces.

This bill carefully manages our military resources while increasing the Department of Defense program oversight to make sure that we do our job, particularly in the F-35, our most advanced weapons system and also the most expensive in U.S. history.

But we are also looking at manned and unmanned intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft, and continued oversight of the Army's new modernization strategy with respect to Army aviation, including the CH-47 Chinook helicopter.

Also, I take a moment for our national defense and the priorities of keeping America safe and New Jersey safe while ensuring the KC-10 refuelers are not retired prematurely and making sure the KC-46s are being delivered on time.

I am grateful this bill includes that 3 percent pay raise, taking care of military families and also providing affordable childcare on bases. Making sure that your children are safe is incredibly important.

I am proud of the hard work this committee has done to continue to

serve America's national security interests.

Mr. Speaker, this bill deserves our support, and I urge a "yes" vote.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN).

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. THORNBERRY for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, we are in a period of great power competition. These are not just words; this is our new reality. We are seeing Russian, Chinese, Iranian, and North Korean aggression on a global scale. This is why I am confounded by some pundits who believe cutting defense spending at a time of great power competition is in our best interest. Anything less than our negotiated defense topline is capitulating our global standing to an ever-expanding China and Russia hegemony.

Additionally, there are some who believe that we should not pass this defense bill this Congress. I want to remind my friends that we are already 68 days late in delivering this defense bill to our Nation. Harmed by our delay is almost \$8 billion in troop military construction. Harmed by our inaction is the potential shuttering of our Air Force's and Navy's premier training ranges at Nellis and Fallon. And most importantly, harmed by our continuing neglect are the countless servicemembers who rely on us for reasonable pay and benefits to support our national security. We must do better.

As to my Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, our conference is all about great power competition. We authorize an additional *Virginia* class submarine and eight additional P-8 submarine hunting aircraft to partially offset these great power advances. We pay down future readiness with our continued support of the next-generation bomber and *Columbia*-class ballistic missile submarine programs. And finally, we procure the long-neglected logistics that are essential to power projection. This is a strong mark to pay down our generation's contribution to our Nation's future.

While I want to acknowledge Chairmen Smith and Courtney's leadership in their efforts as chairman of the full committee and chairman of the Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, I want to particularly thank MAC THORNBERRY for his 26 years of Congressional service. MAC, thank you so much for your leadership, for your continued focus and dedication to our Nation and to those brave men and women that serve this Nation.

I also thank Congressman MIKE ROGERS and congratulate him on his new role as the future Republican leader of the House Armed Services Committee. MIKE, congratulations. We look forward to the continuation of the legacy of leadership from MAC THORNBERRY to you.

We have all seen the great service and great stewardship provided by both Chairman THORNBERRY and others, and,

my friends, at this moment this is our time. Anything less than action on this bill now is turning our backs and ignores the servicemembers and their families who continue to serve the Nation.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS).

I recognize Mrs. DAVIS is retiring after 22 years of service on the committee. It has been great working with her, and I appreciate her leadership.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, this will be my 20th and final NDAA. As I prepare to seek other challenges, I want to remind my colleagues of the incredible work that can get done with this legislation, especially when patience is required.

Since joining the Armed Services Committee, I have seen our focus change. At the height of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, we focused on the critical needs of our troops fighting every day. Now, our focus has shifted more towards innovation and future needs of our troops. But we can't forget that this bill is not just about spending on things, it is about our servicemembers and their families. We cannot forget the importance of the sacrifices that they make. It is hard to even convey the magnitude of their service.

The military can enhance performance by caring for every member of the military community, something that we hear every day from military leaders that, quite honestly, we didn't hear 20 years ago. But there is more work to be done. We must ensure no military family goes hungry and no military spouse is forced to leave the workforce because of a military move or lack of childcare.

The military can enhance performance by fostering an environment where the opportunities for advancement include all who are willing to work hard. When I began serving on the HASC, the idea of women in combat roles or LGBTQ Americans serving openly was only a distant dream. Today, we understand the importance of diversity in our ranks. That strategic focus brings the best and the brightest Americans forward to serve. Where any discrimination persists, it must end.

We have focused so much on the prevention of sexual assault and harassment.

I recently came across a picture taken at a breakfast on this issue with General James Amos in 2010, then the commandant of the Marine Corps. He asked one of his mid-level officers if she would report an assault if it occurred. She responded unequivocally, no. Much to his surprise.

□ 1315

We have made sincere policy changes to address this horrible problem, but the fight continues.

This bipartisan legislation is the culmination of many of the efforts of many Members. There is much good in

it and much that is needed to support our servicemembers and their families.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank, very quickly, our outstanding Chair SMITH, our dedicated Ranking Member THORNBERRY, and the amazing professional staff who made this all possible. I will miss them all, and I know the critical work in service to our Nation continues.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON).

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Chairman ADAM SMITH and Ranking Member MAC THORNBERRY for their dedicated work on developing this bipartisan bill appropriately named in honor of Chairman MAC THORNBERRY, an American patriot.

As a member of the conference committee, I appreciated the opportunity to work on another historically important NDAA. Enactment of this bill will be the 60th consecutive fiscal year that the NDAA has passed, exhibiting the true bipartisan nature of the process.

I am thankful for the provision of a 3 percent military pay increase, which represents the first time in a decade the troops have consecutively received a salary boost of at least 3 percent.

The most recent report contains the Guardian and Reserve Hazard Duty Pay Equity Act, a bipartisan bill introduced with Representative ANDY KIM. I was grateful to lead a letter with Representative KIM urging its inclusion.

I am also especially grateful that my bill, the Body Armor for Females Modernization Act, was included to ensure that female servicemembers have the right equipment from day one.

This legislation contains the Small Manufacturer Cybersecurity Enhancement Act, a bill I introduced with Representative JIMMY PANETTA, which will allow the Department to partner with manufacturing extension partnership centers to provide assistance to small manufacturers.

There is full funding for the Advanced Manufacturing Collaborative at USC Aiken and PILT and pit production at the Savannah River site.

It also incorporates a bipartisan bill I introduced with Representative ED PERLMUTTER to ensure continued funding for the Office of the Ombudsman in the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Program.

I appreciate the success of staff member Drew Kennedy and military fellow Major Jeremy Tillman.

I support this conference report, remembering 9/11 and the murderous attacks, by defeating the terrorists overseas.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to vote in favor.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BROWN), the vice chair of the committee.

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman SMITH for his exemplary leadership, Representative

THORNBERRY for his career service to our men and women in uniform, and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their hard work on this year's National Defense Authorization Act.

This bill strengthens our military, makes our country safer, and provides for our servicemembers and their families.

National security isn't simply defined by the planes and ships we buy, but in the values we promote within the military and for our Nation.

This legislation is a significant step forward for diversity, inclusion, and justice in our Armed Forces, core American values that our military must promote.

Today's military is the most diverse in our history, with people of color making up more than 40 percent of Active-Duty servicemembers. And as our country reckons with systemic racism, so, too, does our military.

By affirming our founding values, this NDAA enhances military readiness and taps into the diverse talents and skills of our country.

We elevate the chief diversity officer to report directly to the Secretary of Defense and service secretaries.

We provide for better accountability, transparency, and reporting on our diversity efforts.

We ensure equity in promotion boards by removing pictures and other identifying information that could bias these processes. Officers will instead be judged solely on what matters: their performance.

We foster new leaders in our military to reflect the diversity of our country and support their career development, from Junior ROTC to service academies and historically Black colleges and universities, to our elite units.

We correct racial inequities in our military justice system by appointing a deputy inspector general to investigate racial disparities.

And after years of delay, we finally rename bases and property honoring the Confederacy.

With support from Congress, barrier-breaking leaders in our military, and the American people, we will lead with our values.

Mr. Speaker, for a more equitable country and military, I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ROGERS), the next Republican leader of the House Armed Services Committee.

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member THORNBERRY and Chairman SMITH for their leadership in this essential process to ensure America's security.

This bill takes important steps forward to confront China by establishing the Indo-Pacific Deterrence Initiative. It is vital that we support and strengthen our allies and partners in the region in order to deter the growing threat from China.

This NDAA also funds critical investments here at home that will enable us

to confront the sophisticated threats we face from China and Russia.

The NDAA also includes provisions implementing a number of Cyber Solarium recommendations. These changes will continue to modernize our military and civilian cybersecurity efforts. I think that we have only begun our work in this area.

In addition to these cutting-edge needs, this conference report also reauthorizes the pay to troop deployed in combat zones.

Most importantly, this bill adheres to the budget agreement and fully funds the President's budget request.

Now more than ever, we must reject calls for blanket defense cuts from partisans who are using the current crisis as an opportunity to push their agenda.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague MAC THORNBERRY for his years of service and dedication to the Armed Services Committee. No one cares more about our men and women in uniform and has been a better leader for our conference. We are going to miss his passion and dedication for these issues, and we wish him and Sally nothing but the best as they go forward.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. LURIA), a member of the committee.

Mrs. LURIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the fiscal year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act. This NDAA will provide the tools and resources essential to maintaining our national security.

I am pleased that the conference report includes a 3 percent pay raise for our troops and invests robustly in initiatives to compete with China, Russia, and others who threaten our security around the world.

The conference report includes vital investments in our fleet, our readiness, and continued construction of the *Virginia*-class submarine and the modernization of our nuclear deterrence through the *Columbia*-class submarine.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to supporting the final passage of this bipartisan legislation and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. CHENEY), the distinguished Chair of the Republican Conference.

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this NDAA conference report named after a true American patriot, our Armed Services Committee Ranking Member MAC THORNBERRY, whom we will very much miss and who has dedicated his career to serving this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I also thank the chairman of our committee, Mr. SMITH, for his work on this bipartisan product.

Congress has no greater responsibility, Mr. Speaker, than providing for the defense of our Nation.

At a time when the United States faces the most complex array of

threats in our history, it is incumbent upon us to ensure that our service-members have the tools they need to deter and defeat our adversaries.

The 2021 defense bill before us today makes critical progress towards modernizing our military, supporting our military families, protecting supply chains, and deterring Russia and China.

At this crucial moment when we have troops deployed overseas, including those from Wyoming's 153rd, 187th, and 243rd Air National Guard units, it is imperative that they have the full support of the United States Congress behind them as they execute their missions.

Failure to pass this act would force hundreds of thousands of our men and women in uniform and their families to endure cuts to their pay right before the holidays. Over 250,000 military families would lose their hazardous duty pay.

Given the sacrifices they make for all of us, our troops should never have their livelihoods threatened by political battles in Washington, D.C.

In addition to all that this NDAA does to support our troops, it also builds on the Trump administration's successful efforts to counter the Chinese Communist Party, including through provisions I authored that require publication of the names of Chinese Communist military companies operating in the United States.

It also includes my bipartisan provision seeking to reduce DOD's dependence on China for critical rare earth minerals. States like Wyoming are blessed with these resources, and we must rebuild our Nation's capacity to mine and process rare earths here at home.

This legislation funds the modernization of our nuclear triad and contains crucial provisions to strengthen our deterrence capability in the Indo-Pacific.

American security requires that we maintain a military that is second to none, that we arm our troops with the world's best equipment, and that we provide for their families. Our men and women in uniform put their lives on the line to defend our freedom. We owe them the tools to do their job.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to support this year's NDAA, and I urge all my colleagues to vote for it.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS), the distinguished chair of the Financial Services Committee.

I really want to thank her for her leadership. The Financial Services Committee provided a number of key pieces of legislation on this bill.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the William "Mac" Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act, NDAA, for Fiscal Year 2021, for which I served as a conferee.

For several months, I have worked with my House and Senate counterparts to include 10 measures authored

by Democratic members of the Financial Services Committee within the NDAA. These bills would help to protect the U.S. financial system, provide more remedies to investors who were deceived by corporate wrongdoers, expand access to housing assistance for our veterans, and direct the incoming Biden administration to use its full authority to help relieve the student debt crisis.

For years, the issue of shell companies has been ignored by this Congress. This is why one of the first actions I took as chair of the committee was to move legislation to prevent bad actors from using shell companies to hide their activities, a provision I have been fighting for for over a decade, and I am very pleased it is included in the conference agreement.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY from New York for her tireless work on this provision and the Members and the many outside stakeholders for their work on all the measures included in the legislation.

I am also pleased to see the conference report reflected my work and progress ensuring that technologies procured by the Department of Defense are ethically and responsibly screened for potential bias.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BANKS), a distinguished member of the committee.

Mr. BANKS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for yielding time to me today and for his many years of service. America and the world are safer today because of MAC THORNBERRY's service in the United States House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. SMITH, the chairman of the committee, as well, for ensuring that this year's NDAA is bipartisan once again.

Mr. Speaker, I want to rise most of all in support of the aptly named MAC THORNBERRY National Defense Authorization Act.

While the bill doesn't include everything I want it to and there are certainly items that I wish would be removed, overall, it ensures that our Nation is protected, and it supports our men and women in uniform.

So many in the Trump administration have warned us for years that China is our Nation's long-term strategic competitor, and countering China is a key focus of the fiscal year 2021 NDAA.

Having just been a part of the Future of Defense Task Force and the China Task Force, I am more motivated than ever before to stop the Chinese Communist Party's egregious affronts on the U.S. Government, its citizens, and our military. I appreciate the inclusion of many important recommendations from both of those task force reports in this year's NDAA.

This NDAA establishes the Pacific Deterrence Initiative to strengthen U.S. posture and capability in the Indo-Pacific region, and it works better with

allies to deter against Chinese malign behavior.

□ 1330

It also protects against Chinese industrial espionage by requiring a Presidential assessment on how to deter it and large-scale cyber threat of intellectual property and personal information.

The NDAA also includes a number of protections for Federal investments in science and technology by including new mandates on university research and limiting funding for universities with Confucius Institutes, for example.

These are just some of the very important provisions in this year's bill, to not just acknowledge the China threat, Mr. Speaker, but to address it head-on. That is why I urge all of my colleagues to vote in favor of this critical legislation.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the distinguished majority leader of the House.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank both Mr. SMITH, the chairman of the committee, and Mr. THORNBERRY, who I have had the opportunity to work with through the years. Both of them are leaders who have focused on America's well-being, America's national security, and the well-being of our troops who serve in uniform and support those who are at the point of the spear.

I believe that we have and our country has been advantaged by the leadership of both and by the fact that they have been able to work together collegially to accomplish objectives on behalf of the country, not on behalf of party.

So, I thank both Mr. SMITH, the chairman, and Mr. THORNBERRY, the ranking member who was the chairman. They have both held the responsible positions of leading this committee and its work.

I rise in strong support of this year's authorization bill. Let me say at the outset, as the majority leader, I schedule legislation for the floor. Mr. SMITH and I have had long conversations, and Mr. THORNBERRY and I have had conversations in the past.

This bill should not be on the floor in December. This bill has historically passed in May through the committee and has been to the floor before we break for the August break. I have had discussions with Mr. SMITH and will tell successors on the Defense Committee that it will be my intention to urge the committee to mark up its bill and have it ready to report to the floor by May.

Now, there have been exigencies from time to time which made that impossible. That was certainly the case when the government was shut down, and it has been this case through the pandemic, which has obviously slowed up our work as well.

But I am hopeful, Mr. Speaker, that I will be able to bring this bill, at the

instance of the chairman and the ranking member, to the floor either in late May or very early June, the first week in June before, frankly, we get to the appropriations process, which is really how the process ought to work, as opposed to the other way around.

Mr. Speaker, this is a major piece of legislation, one of the most important we pass each year and one, frankly, that we need to pass each year.

I just said we need to do it in a timely fashion, but it is never too late to do the right thing. What we are doing today is the right thing, passing a bill which provides for the security of our country.

Again, I want to thank both of those leaders who I have referenced. This conference report will ensure that our men and women in uniform can continue to protect our Nation and meet global challenges.

Now, I hope that President Trump does sign this bill. He ought to sign this bill. This is about our national security. It is not about partisanship. Taking issue with one provision or another in such a large and important bill is no reason to block the whole of it. That is particularly true when this bill would take a major step forward to right a historic wrong.

But let me say, with respect to a veto, I hope the President does not veto this. I hope that we have, as previous speakers have said, overwhelming bipartisan support on both sides of the aisle.

Of course, there are specifics in a bill this large where one can say: "I don't like that provision." Well, I don't think there is a bill that you can't have a significant number or one of us say: "I wish that provision were different." But we ought not to have our focus on the doughnut hole. We ought to have our focus on the doughnut, on the whole of what makes this bill so critically important for our country.

In our founding document, it states that all are "created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

It said: "All men are created equal." None of us would argue that all men should be exclusively perceived as being created equal. We believe that all human beings are created equal, whether they are men or they are women, or they are Black or they are White, or they are yellow or they are red. Whatever the differences may be, it is our perception and articulation in this Declaration that it is God who created the soul that is colorless, that is genderless, that is of no one nation.

It is the soul that is imbued in us, as we say in our Declaration, by our creator. While these rights may have been self-evident, I tell people, they are not self-executing. It fell to future generations of Americans to secure them in practice.

Less than a century after our Nation's founding, it was torn apart by a

Civil War, with Southern States waging war to protect the evil institution of slavery. All of us would agree that one human being owning another human being is untenable. But it is what we fought a war over.

The names of those who fought violently to perpetuate slavery and who rebelled against the United States do not deserve the honor of being associated with the installations housing, training, and equipping those who serve today under our flag of freedom and democracy.

Now, without getting into that argument, it would have been perverse to drop an amendment adopted by 93 percent of the Senate, not because they voted on the individual amendment but because it was included in the bill and 93 percent of the Members of the United States Senate voted for it.

It simply says what is the right thing to do: remove a name from a base on which an African-American sailor, an African-American soldier, an African-American marine, an African-American coastguardsman serve. An African American of whatever service, at whatever time, should not have to serve on a base named for somebody who believed that person ought to be enslaved.

I congratulate both the chairman and the ranking member for making sure that that language was kept in. I know the President has said he doesn't like that language, but as I said, I am convinced that any one of us could point to something in this bill we don't like. But we need to keep our eye on the ball, the national security of our country.

This National Defense Authorization Act requires the military to remove the names. I think that is appropriate, and I congratulate them for leaving that language whole.

I had made it clear that I felt this bill needed to pass. But I felt that if that provision were left out, it would be inappropriate to put it on the floor.

Additionally, I also want to mention that this conference report will ensure that all Federal employees can access 12 weeks of paid parental leave. That is now the practice in most, if not all, certainly, but many of the largest corporations in our country. Why? Because they believe it is good for their employees. They believe it is good for their children. They believe it is good for America. We have now adopted that, and I praise the committee for doing so.

Unfortunately, some Federal employees were left out last year when we enacted paid parental leave, and we have now included them. Today, we are fixing that and making sure that it applies to all Federal workers.

Mr. Speaker, it is also important that we are able to include language in the conference report that will close corporate loopholes, which were referred to by Ms. WATERS, the chair of the Financial Services Committee, eliminating loopholes which allowed

dark money to enter the U.S. financial system from Russia and other malign actors.

That beneficial ownership provision is a major win in the fight against foreign kleptocrats and oligarchs seeking to undermine America's security and fund those who wish to do us harm.

Congratulations to Mr. SMITH, congratulations to the ranking member, and congratulations to the committee for that.

Mr. Speaker, we have an opportunity today to do right by our servicemembers and by the principles they uphold. Let us do so by passing this conference report and doing our part, as President Lincoln said, to bind up the Nation's wounds.

I urge all of my colleagues, not because they will come to the conclusion that this is a perfect bill—there are no perfect bills. But it is a bill essential for the defense of our values, our people, and our land. This bill needs to pass overwhelmingly.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote for it.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL), the distinguished ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to also thank my good friend from Texas for his service to the Nation.

The United States has a special partnership with Israel. In the past 4 years, we have strengthened this relationship while taking steps toward peace in the Middle East under the Abraham Accords with Bahrain, Sudan, and the UAE. This has made Israel and the entire Middle East safer.

However, Israel still faces threats from malign actors like Iran that seek to sow chaos and spread terror. In fact, earlier today, Iranian President Rouhani directly threatened Israel by promising to support Syria's aggression in the Golan Heights.

I am pleased the final bill bolsters cooperation between our countries and fully funds the security assistance to Israel. It also improves the laws on the books so that we can quickly supply Israel with precision-guided missiles to defend themselves against malign actors in the region.

This bill also enhances cooperation between our two nations by establishing a defense acquisition advisory group.

As an NDAA conferee, I am proud this year's bill includes provisions that support Israel and deepen our partnership.

Mr. Speaker, before I close, I would like to take a moment of personal privilege to honor my colleague, my friend, my fellow Texan, Congressman MAC THORNBERRY. His leadership on the House Armed Services Committee has made our country stronger.

I am proud to have served with him in the Congress where we have worked together on key national security issues, including the year's NDAA which bears his name.

But most importantly, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to call him my friend. He has brought dignity and bipartisanship to this Chamber.

For that, sir, we are forever grateful.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY).

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on an important aspect of this bill.

My Corporate Transparency Act is the most important anticorruption, anti-money laundering bill in 20 years. When a terrorist cell or a criminal organization wants to move or hide money, they usually do it right here in the United States with a shell company. So the same terrorist groups that want to attack the United States are using our own financial system to finance those attacks. It is appalling, and it has to stop.

My bill will end the abuse of anonymous shell companies in the United States by requiring companies to disclose their true beneficial owners to the Treasury Department at the time the company is formed.

I want to thank my negotiating partners, Chairman CRAPO, Ranking Member BROWN, Chairwoman WATERS, and Ranking Member MCHENRY, and I congratulate Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member THORNBERRY for all of their hard work on this bill.

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Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LUETKEMEYER), who is a distinguished member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment of personal privilege to express my thanks to Mr. THORNBERRY, who is retiring, for his many years of service to our military and our country through his actions in this committee. He will certainly be missed.

Mr. Speaker, each year, Congress is tasked with one of its most important duties: reauthorizing the NDAA to ensure that our military has everything that they could possibly need to continue protecting this country.

This year, I am proud to have served as conferee for the financial services measures in the NDAA, which includes the most significant overhaul of our anti-money laundering laws in decades.

The bipartisan Anti-Money Laundering Act authorizes new resources for the Treasury Department to combat illicit finance and requires the Treasury to apply more rigor to its data collection. This will allow suspicious activity reports and currency transaction reports to be as useful as possible for law enforcement.

For too long, Congress and the private sector have had little to no insight into how the executive branch uses these reports, which has decreased accountability and prevents us from modernizing the reporting regime. That ends with this bill.

The conference report also contains the ILLICIT CASH Act, legislation that Congresswoman MALONEY and I have been working on for years. This provision will deliver a significant blow to human traffickers and drug cartels by eliminating shell corporations that, for decades, have been a critical vehicle for laundering money in the United States.

In the fight against shell companies, the Federal Government has continuously deputized financial institutions, threatening massive penalties unless they play the role of law enforcement, effectively forcing private industry to do the government's job.

This legislation puts an end to that practice by forcing Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network to collect beneficial information with minimal effort or inconvenience to businesses.

I thank Congresswoman MALONEY for her tireless efforts and collaboration on several provisions that protect small businesses and streamline regulations for financial institutions. I also thank Ranking Member MCHENRY for fighting for additional protections and relief for small businesses in conference.

Mr. Speaker, with these provisions, America can better fight illicit and terrorism finance, which helps our brave men and women in uniform who risk their lives every day to protect our freedoms and keep us safe.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman very much for his leadership. I also thank my fellow Texan, MAC THORNBERRY, for his service to the Nation as he continues his journey.

Let me say how important this legislation is as it relates to basic pay, incentive pay, and hazard pay for our military families, many of whom are in my congressional district; the work that has been done on the maternity uniform pilot program; and also the work on reinforcing NATO; the sexual assault prevention and response that is so important, particularly in our community in Texas, for the horrible acts at Fort Hood against Vanessa Guillen, causing her to lose her life along with many others. This is a legislation that focuses on the personnel and that focuses on the security of our Nation.

I am very grateful to Congressman BROWN for his leadership on joining with other Members to ensure with Chairman SMITH that we remove these Confederate names from the names of military bases that represent all people. I am very grateful that my language indicates that profound, dignified, qualified, and heroic African-American soldiers have the right to have their names listed on these particular bases.

I ask America to send in the names of your relatives. Call my office. Send it to the Armed Services Committee.

Let us have a base where soldiers go that reflects everyone. I am thankful that my language was put in to name bases after African-American soldiers and other diverse persons.

Mr. Speaker, I ask support of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in strong support of all the Jackson Lee Amendments made in order for consideration of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021.

I thank Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member THORNBERRY and their staffs for working with me and my staff in consideration of several Jackson Lee Amendments.

I am particularly thankful to Chairman SMITH for taking up the challenge of removing the stain of confederate traitors being honored by the naming of bases and military installations in their name.

It has been too long that African Americans guarded their communities from the hidden racism that existed under the guise of the confederate flag and knowing through oral history the brutality of those who served voluntarily in the confederate army and whose names were on bases and military installations.

This bill is ushering in a new era where the names of confederates who served voluntarily to take up arms against the United States will have their names removed from places of honor such as military bases or installations and these individuals be placed in historical context where historians and scholars may study and understand their place in American history.

It is also time that African Americans and Native Americans be recognized for their contributions in defense of our nation.

The history of African Americans and Native Americans serving in the military date back to the colonial period of our nation to the present day.

In every war waged from the Battle of Lexington to the Battle for Fallujah, African Americans and Native Americans have honorably answered the call to duty, and served with great valor and distinction in America's armed forces.

At decisive moments in our nation's history, the United States military and its citizens warriors, were there and made the difference:

The Revolutionary War (1776–1783),
The War of 1812 (1812–1814),
The Mexican-American War (1836),
The Civil War (1861–1865),
The Spanish-American War (1898),
World War I (1914–1918),
World War II (1941–1945),
The Korean War (1950–1953),
The Vietnam War (1965–1975),
The Gulf War (1991), and

The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as conflicts in other theaters of war.

The military is there defending our nation when attacked by hostile nations or adversaries.

But it is also there when needed to respond to attack from natural elements like floods and hurricanes like Hurricanes Irma, Harvey and Katrina.

The military was there doing a job no other branch of our nation's government could do—in the face of overwhelming calamity when the lives of thousands of American citizens were on the line—they came.

Our thanks to the military for being always ready to answer the call of duty—whether that

call comes in the dead of night or the light of day—we know that we can count on you.

The names and faces of millions of African Americans who have served our nation in uniform may fade from memory, but this evening we have the opportunity to remember and see them in the faces of the young people who have answered the call to duty by becoming members of the armed forces.

I offered several amendments to H.R. 6395 to improve the bill.

I thank my colleagues: Representatives BENNIE THOMPSON, WILLIAM LACY CLAY, GREGORY MEEKS, A. DONALD MCEACHIN, MARC VEASEY, STANFORD BISHOP, ANDRE CARSON, and JAHANA HAYES for joining as cosponsors of this Amendment.

The fact that military bases have been named after Confederate military leaders or soldiers is hard to imagine given that they were fighting to end the United States.

The Confederacy was not something that should be held up for honor by the United States or our nation's military.

There is no shortage of honorable replacement candidates to receive the honor of having a military base, installation or facility named in their honor.

UNITED STATES ARMY

1. Gen. Roscoe Robinson Jr.

General Robinson was a 1951 graduate of West Point who attended the service academy before the Army was desegregated. Robinson served in Korea and Vietnam, with valor decorations in both conflicts, and as a training officer as part of the U.S. military support mission in Liberia. He went on to become the first black commander of the 82nd Airborne Division, deputy chief of staff for operations in U.S. Army Europe, commander of U.S. Forces Japan, the U.S. representative on the NATO Military Committee, and the first black four-star general in the Army.

2. William Harvey Carney

William Carney was the first African American recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor, which he received for his actions on July 18, 1863 at Fort Wagner, SC while a member of the 54th Massachusetts Regiment in the Civil War—the state's first all-black regiment.

The 54th Massachusetts was the subject of the film, "Glory," starring Denzel Washington and Morgan Freeman.

3. Lieutenant Colonel Charity Edna Adams

Lieutenant Colonel Charity Edna Adams was appointed to lead the African American Women's Army Corps unit designated as the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion, which became known as the "Six Triple Eight."

This unit was instrumental in establishing and maintaining morale because it assured that mail from the battlefield and the homefront flowed efficiently and timely.

4. Lt. Col. Margaret E. Bailey

In 1964, Margaret E. Bailey, Army Nurse Corps, was the first nurse to be promoted to lieutenant colonel.

UNITED STATES NAVY

5. Dorie Miller Messman First Class and Admiral Michelle Howard

Dorie Miller, Messman First Class was serving in a noncombat role in the Navy, Dorie Miller responded heroically when the battleship West Virginia was attacked at Pearl Harbor. He was the first African American to be awarded the Navy Cross, the third highest honor awarded by the US Navy at the time.

6. Admiral Michelle Howard

Admiral Michelle Howard is a four-star Admiral and one of the highest-ranking African American women ever to serve in any branch of the military. Admiral Howard is also the first African American woman to command a U.S. Navy ship, the USS *Rushmore*.

She is the Navy's second highest ranking officer and is currently serving as the commander of U.S. Naval Forces Africa, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe and commander of Allied Joint Force Command Naples.

THE AIR FORCE

7. Lt. Col Shawna Rochelle-Kimbrell

In 2012, Lieutenant Colonel Kimbrell became the first female African American fighter pilot in the Air Force history. Her flights in Northern Watch marked her as the first female pilot to fly combat missions for Misawa's 35th Fighter Wing, and the first African American woman to employ ordinance in combat. She has more than 1,110 hours in the F-16, including 176 hours of combat time.

8. Colonel Ruth A. Lucas

Colonel Lucas was the first African American woman in the Air Force to be promoted to the rank of colonel. At the time of her retirement in 1970, she was the highest-ranking African American woman in the Air Force.

9. Gen. Benjamin O. Davis Jr

In 1959 General Benjamin O. Davis became the first African American Major General in the United States Air Force. In 1943, he organized and commanded the 332nd Fighter Group known as the Tuskegee Airmen. General Davis received many decorations during his career, including two Distinguished Service Medals and a Silver Star. On December 9, 1998, General Davis was awarded his fourth general's star by President Bill Clinton.

THE COAST GUARD

10. Alex Haley

Chief Petty Officer Haley is best known for writing letters for his shipmates and his short stories and articles, which got him promoted to Chief Journalist of the Coast Guard in 1959. Haley ultimately received a number of military honors, including the American Defense Service Medal, World War II Victory Medal and an honorary degree from the Coast Guard Academy. And most of you know him also as the author of "Roots."

11. Bobby C. Wilks

In 1957, Captain Bobby Wilks became the first African American Coast Guard aviator. He later became the first African American to reach the rank of Captain and the first to command a Coast Guard air station. He accumulated over 6,000 flight hours in 18 different types of aircrafts.

Twenty-five percent of the today's military is comprised of persons of color, of which 17.8% are African American.

In 2017, blacks made up 17% of the DOD active-duty military—somewhat higher than their share of the U.S. population ages 18 to 44 (13%). Blacks have consistently been represented in greater shares among enlisted personnel (19% in 2015) than among the commissioned officers (9%).

NATIVE AMERICANS

The amendment I offered during House consideration of the NDAA was expanded to include Native Americans.

It is without doubt that the military has a storied history of Native American contributions to

the securing our nation since colonial times to the present.

One famous example of their contributions occurred during World War II when the U.S. military developed a specific policy to recruit and train Navajo speakers to become code talkers.

A code talker is the name given to 29 Navajo Natives who used their tribal language to send secret communications on the battlefield.

The Marines formed the Navajo Code Talkers, who created a code based on the complex, unwritten Navajo language.

The code primarily used word association by assigning a Navajo word to key phrases and military tactics.

This system enabled the Code Talkers to translate three lines of English in 20 seconds, not 30 minutes as was common with existing code-breaking machines.

The Code Talkers participated in every major Marine operation in the Pacific theater, giving the Marines a critical advantage throughout the war.

During the nearly month-long battle for Iwo Jima, for example, six Navajo Code Talker Marines successfully transmitted more than 800 messages without error.

Marine leadership noted after the battle that the Code Talkers were critical to the victory at Iwo Jima.

At the end of the war, the Navajo Code remained unbroken.

Our Native American brothers and sisters are more than worthy to be so honored by having their names considered for military bases and installations.

BOOGALOO AND PROUD BOYS

A Jackson Lee Amendment included in the House version of the NDAA directed the Secretary of Defense to report to Congress the extent, if any, of the threat to national security posed by domestic terrorist groups and organizations motivated by a belief system of white supremacy, such as the Boogaloo and Proud Boys extremists is reflected in the Conference bill.

The NDAA conference identified that the FBI is under statutory obligation, established by Section 5602 of the NDAA FY 2020 (Public Law 116-92), to complete a report that would better characterize the domestic terrorist threat by requiring the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security in consultation with the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), to produce a set of comprehensive reports over 5 years.

The report is to include: a strategic intelligence threat internal to the United States; metrics on the number and type of incidents, coupled with resulting investigations, arrests, prosecutions, and analytic products, copies of the execution of domestic terrorism investigations; detailed explanations of how the FBI, DHS and NCTC prioritize the domestic terrorism threats and incident; and descriptions regarding the type and regularity of training provided by the FBI, DHS, or NCTC to other Federal, State, and local law enforcement.

The conferees note that the report has not been delivered to the appropriate committees and they urge the FBI Director to deliver the report without delay.

The Jackson Lee Amendment to the NDAA FY 2021 sought the same information that is required under the NDAA FY 2020 because of the threat posed by accelerationists and militia extremists who comprise a range of violent

anti-government actors, movements, and organizations, some of which branch out of decades-old ideologies and others of which are relatively new has led to violent engagement of law enforcement.

My concern is that in the aftermath of a historic national election, the activity of violence influencers like Boogaloo Boys or Proud Boys will increase and lead to attacks becoming more frequent.

In 2018, we saw too many instances of violent extremists searching for opportunities to sow violence and disrupt democratic processes.

Boogaloo and Proud Boys are targeting constitutionally protected activity for cooption or to provide cover for attacks.

Jackson Lee Amendment 179 implements a recommendation made by the Cyberspace Solarium Commission to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop a strategy to implement Domain-based Message Authentication, Reporting, and Conformance (DMARC) standard across U.S.-based email providers to increase the security of email.

I thank my colleagues Congressmen LANGEVIN, GALLAGHER, KATKO, and JOYCE for joining this bipartisan amendment to the FY 2021 NDAA.

The security of email has grown in importance as it has become in many ways the primary way that businesses, consumers, government communicate.

The Senate bill also addressed this important issue and the language of the final Conference concurs.

I urge my colleagues to support the Conference for the NDAA FY 2021.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I understand that the chairman has no further speakers.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Correct.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I would begin by expressing my gratitude and admiration for Chairman ADAM SMITH and our ability to work together over a number of years, as well as to the members on both sides of the Armed Services Committee and our colleagues in the Senate, Chairman INHOFE and Ranking Member REED.

Like Chairman SMITH, I also want to pay particular attention, gratitude, and honors to our professional staff. They started this conference process in July, and they have been working all these months to make sure that every detail was as right as we could make it. I particularly want to thank Dan Sennott, who had the responsibility of answering my phone calls on nights and weekends and so forth. Our staff worked with the professionalism and patriotism that would make all Americans proud if they could see it.

I also appreciate the generous words of my colleagues and having my name attached to this bill. This bill is one of which I am very proud. It strengthens our country's security in many ways. But as grateful as I am, I do not lose sight of the fact that this bill is not—and this bill has never been in 60 years—about any of us. It is not about

us or our political agendas or our political grievances.

This bill is about the men and women who risk their lives to protect and defend us and our freedoms and their families. This bill is about American national security. We have been able to come together on those things for 60 years, whatever other differences we may have had.

Without this bill, both the troops and America's national security will be hurt. Now, Members need to understand that and accept responsibility for the consequences of their vote. That damage that would happen without this bill cannot be papered over with some executive order or any appropriation bill, and it won't or it can't be repaired by a new bill in a new Congress with a new administration.

I know we can always find an excuse to vote against a bill, especially an excuse about what is not in it. So I will admit right here that this bill does not fix healthcare. This bill does not fix immigration. It does not raise or lower taxes. And it does nothing regarding the legal liability of social media companies. All of those things need attention and some kind of action.

But our troops should not be punished because this bill does not fix everything that needs to be fixed or it doesn't have a provision exactly the way we would want it.

The main reason this bill has been signed into law every year for 59 straight years is because of its substance. But like the chairman, I just want to add a note about process.

This committee started collecting proposals in January in a database that would be ultimately included in this bill. It went through all the subcommittees, the full committee, a conference process, and hundreds of amendments have been considered one way or another.

Every step of the way, Members shape it. In fact, we could easily identify close to 200 Members of the House that have a provision that can be linked to them in one way or another that are in this bill, and I think that is unique, frankly, in Congress today. If the 6-decade legacy of having this bill signed into law ends with us after 59 years, then I am afraid that process of having hundreds of Members contribute would end as well.

A very strong vote will help prevent that. The stronger the vote, the smoother the process from here on out. A strong vote will show the troops that we support them. A strong vote will show the adversaries that we can stand together to support this Nation, and that is what this bill is really all about.

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

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

Mostly, I would like to associate myself with Mr. THORNBERRY's remarks. I think that was the perfect statement

of why it is so important to vote for this bill and why every Member of this body should vote for this bill. It contains incredibly important provisions, and the excuses for not doing those provisions just don't hold up.

As Mr. THORNBERRY points out, every year near the end of the process, because we are the only bill that actually makes it through the process, people who have been working on issues for a long time are desperate to get them taken care of. We respect that, we honor that, and we are the last vehicle to find.

Many times we are able to help, but not always. That is not a reason to not do the bill because of all the other issues, as Mr. THORNBERRY laid out, that we have not addressed.

Then, as people want to find reasons to oppose the bill, they start saying things that aren't terribly accurate. I think Mr. GAETZ wins the award for that one this year in his remark on Afghanistan.

Our bill says that if the President wants to go below 2,000 troops in Afghanistan—he said he is going to go to 2,300. So this bill doesn't have anything to do with what President Trump said he is going to draw down in Afghanistan. If he wants to go below 2,000 or a future President wants to go below 2,000, then he has to file a report. It doesn't say that he can't do it. He has to file a report.

I actually agree with Mr. GAETZ on where we need to go in Afghanistan. And I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, this bill does nothing to prohibit the next President, President Biden, from completely drawing down in Afghanistan. That is a policy debate he will have.

So anyone who comes to the floor and says they are voting against this bill because of that is really not telling the truth. That is not what this bill does.

I also want to mention the top line because that is a favorite argument on our side to not vote for the bill. I will let you in on a little secret: the defense policy bill does not control how much money we spend at the Pentagon.

I know that sounds a little odd, but it doesn't. The budget process does that. And when we don't have a budget process because of how much things have broken down, which has happened frequently, then the Appropriations Committee decides how much we spend. What we do is we decide how that gets spent and the oversight of it.

A few years ago, Mr. COURTNEY pushed us to do two submarines a year, a great provision that saved a lot of money. We can control that. But if you think the Pentagon should spend more than it is spending, or less, then your beef is on the appropriations side. We could take the tables out in terms of the amount of money that we have in this bill, and it wouldn't change the amount of money that is spent at the Pentagon.

So, again, if you have a reason to vote against the bill, that is great. But

the top line, Afghanistan, those are not valid reasons. This is an important piece of legislation that has been unduly complicated by the fact that, of all people, the President is one of the people this year who, near the end of the process, said: I want to fix that.

He wanted to fix something about section 230 having to do with social media platforms, and he went looking for the only possible vehicle. Let me just say to people on that issue, that section is not going to be addressed in this bill. You can not address section 230 and pass a defense bill; or you can not address section 230 and not pass a defense bill. There is no choice here where you can do both, Mr. Speaker.

So please make the right choice. Please recognize all of the incredibly important bicameral, bipartisan provisions that are contained in this bill. This is one thing in a very tumultuous time that we ought to be able to agree on. There are enough provisions and good policy in here for everyone in this body.

Mr. Speaker, I want to close by thanking everyone in this body. We have worked together in this process. I am now finishing up my 2 years as chairman. My caucus, in their infinite wisdom, has given me another 2 years to do the job, but these first 2 years I really enjoyed the process.

Members keep coming up to me and saying: You have a terrible job, it must be difficult, you have all these people making all these demands.

I love what I do. I am in a position with all the other team here to help people. We don't always succeed and we don't always get it done, but we have a chance. Every Member of the House and Senate, I think, have worked together, and we have produced an outstanding product. Let us reward ourselves for our work. Let us take care of the troops, as we are supposed to do, and pass this bill.

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

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021. It is a fitting tribute to the years of dedication and work that Congressman THORNBERRY has done in this body and, in particular, on national security issues.

In particular, this legislation contains Section 3510 that addresses and corrects a regulatory mismatch of the manner in which a small passenger vessel that operates in Southeast Alaska is measured. Specifically, the *M/V Liseron* (United States official number 971339), a converted minesweeper that conducts overnight passenger cruises in the eco-tourism trade in Southeast Alaska, should be classified as having the same regulatory tonnage for licensing its crew as is used for its safety inspection category (i.e., 100 gross tons), and the other vessels in the same trade. For construction and safety, the vessel meets all Coast Guard standards. This section in essence aligns and makes licensing requirements consistent with all the other safety and inspection regulations that apply to the *M/V Liseron* as a small passenger vessel by deeming the *M/V Liseron* to

be less than 100 gross tons for the purposes of licensing and credentialing subject to some conditions.

Operationally, the *M/V Liseron* has ten staterooms and is limited to about 20 passengers. More critically, the vessel is currently inspected by the Coast Guard as a small passenger vessel in the 100 gross regulatory tonnage category. Notwithstanding that, the vessel has a larger tonnage entered on its certificate of inspection due to the arcane nature of the U.S. vessel admeasurement laws, rules that govern the volumetric size of vessels. Larger competitor vessels can be nearly 100 feet longer and carry 5 times the number of passengers, yet they are considered to be in the smaller 100 GT small passenger vessel category for both licensing and inspection purposes.

Needless to say, the *M/V Liseron* suffers from the inequitable situation as the vessel must compete with similar or larger vessels in the eco-tourism trade that carry five times the number of passengers. While the vessel is inspected and regulated for all safety purposes in a lower tonnage category (i.e., 100 GT), due to the higher tonnage rating entered on its certificate of inspection, the *M/V Liseron* must source crew from seafarers with deep water credentials (i.e., 500 GT) rather than for the shallower and protected waters of Southeast Alaska. The inequity is underscored by the fact that the *M/V Liseron* physically can fit within the volumetric profile of its competitors, yet the rules say it should be assigned a measurement of being larger. This is a classic example of the matryoshka principle. Further, the vessel carries far fewer passengers than its competitors.

This legislation prohibits the *M/V Liseron* from undergoing any alteration of its size. It also limits the operation while carrying passenger to inland waters of the United States so it will not go on deep sea oceangoing cruises. Further the section permits 100 GT licensed crew members operate the vessel while allowing the Coast Guard to add additional credentials in a justifiable case if the experience and training of the individual warrant it. This does not mean additional credentials must be required or are warranted in every instance. My understanding is that the Coast Guard already has authority to do this in existing regulation so no rulemaking is required that would delay the implementation of this provision. If the master and first mate can hold 100 GT licenses it should result in less turnover and more appropriately experienced personnel that will ultimately contribute to even safer and more consistent operation of the vessel. Only two positions are affected by this legislation.

During the cruising season in Southeast Alaska this vessel brings significant job opportunities and needed economic activity in local businesses by the company and its customers. The vessel enables tourists from around the world to come and enjoy the fishing and unparalleled scenic and natural beauty that Alaska has to offer. This year the vessel suffered the economic impact of the cancellations due to the COVID-19. As a result, the *M/V Liseron* has lost an entire season of revenue due to cancellations. Continuing an artificial barrier such as having to hire crew in a mismatched licensing category will only add to the vessel's difficulties to recover from this economic loss when they are able to resume operations.

In summary, I urge all of my colleagues to join me to enact this legislation. By adjusting the tonnage rating for licensing the *M/V Liseron's* crew to be consistent with its safety inspection category, the *M/V Liseron* would be able to hire and retain more appropriate experienced crew familiar with Southeast Alaskan waterways and small passenger vessel operations.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Conference Report associated with H.R. 6395, the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (NDAA), which supports our troops and includes critical provisions to remove Confederate symbols from our military. The legislation also ensures our country retains its leadership in artificial intelligence (AI), cybersecurity, and semiconductor manufacturing. I'm proud that the conferenced NDAA includes several provisions I authored or cosponsored.

The Global AI Index quantifies the AI arms race among nations, and it has found that the U.S. is ahead of China today but "experts predict China will overtake the U.S. in just five to 10 years." This is why it's so critical we continue to invest in AI, especially as it relates to national security.

The conferenced NDAA includes my bipartisan and bicameral legislation, H.R. 7096, the National AI Research Resource Task Force Act, which establishes a task force of experts from government, academia, and companies (large and small) to develop a roadmap for a national AI research cloud to make available high-powered computing, large data sets, and educational resources necessary for AI research. The national AI research cloud expands access so that American universities and companies can participate in AI R&D. My bill appears as Section 5106 of the conferenced NDAA.

My legislation is supported by Chairman Eric Schmidt and Vice Chairman Bob Work of the National Security Commission on AI; 12 leading public and private research universities, including Stanford, UC Berkeley, Princeton, UCLA, and Ohio State; research and tech nonprofits Mozilla, Open AI, and the Allen Institute for AI; standards body IEEE-USA; leading technology companies, including Google, Amazon, Microsoft, Oracle, and IBM; and startups, including Calypso AI and Scale AI. I thank Representatives ANTHONY GONZALEZ and MIKIE SHERRILL, and Senators PORTMAN and HEINRICH, for their partnership in advancing this highly important legislation.

I'm proud to be a cosponsor of H.R. 6216, the National Artificial Intelligence Initiative Act, comprehensive and bipartisan legislation which establishes an initiative to accelerate and coordinate investments and partnerships in AI research, standards, and education. This legislation appears as Division E of the conferenced NDAA, and it is a major investment in our country's future that will pay dividends for decades to come.

The conferenced NDAA also includes language based on two AI-related amendments I offered and the House adopted on July 20th. House NDAA floor Amendment No. 131 requires the Joint Artificial Intelligence Center (JAIC) of the DOD to report on its contribution to the development of AI standards in multi-stakeholder bodies. House NDAA floor Amendment No. 132 requires the JAIC to report on the assignments servicemembers re-

ceive after they complete their duty with the JAIC. Both were adopted as part of H. Amdt. 841 to H.R. 6395 and appear in Section 231 of the conferenced NDAA.

I also cosponsored key technology provisions of the conferenced NDAA. The CHIPS for America Act, introduced by Reps. MATSUI and MCCALL, restores American leadership in semiconductor manufacturing and appears as Title XCIX of the conferenced NDAA. I thank conferees for retaining a provision I authored to ensure that small businesses are given preference for grants authorized by the legislation (Section 9902(a)(2)(C)(ii)(IV)). A provision establishing the role of the National Cyber Director within the Executive Office of the President, based on the National Cyber Director Act, which I cosponsored, appears as Section 1752 of the conferenced NDAA. This legislation is critical to help coordinate cybersecurity at the highest levels of government.

I urge my colleagues to vote 'YES' on the Conference Report for H.R. 6395.

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6395, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021. This legislation authorizes the funding for a national defense strategy that is built on Democratic principles and advances American values.

As Dean of the Texas Congressional Delegation, I would be remiss if I did not briefly take a moment to recognize and acknowledge Congressman MAC THORNBERRY—a longtime colleague of mine and the namesake for this bill—for his service to our country. I wish him and his family a fruitful retirement.

This year's National Defense Authorization Act reflects the priorities of the American people. As an appointee on the NDAA conference committee, I was proud to fight for the inclusion of key bipartisan provisions like a pay raise for our servicemembers, expanded paid parental leave for civilian DOD employees, and new investments to combat climate change in the final version of the bill.

The Congressional Black Caucus played a critical role in the shaping of this legislation. Among the several bold initiatives ushered through the House, Senate, and conference deliberations by the CBC is the establishment of a commission to rename military installations that honor Confederate officers. This proposal, paired with the required modification or removal of any symbols, monuments, and paraphernalia that commemorate the Confederacy, is a necessary step in achieving racial equity in the military.

Mr. Speaker, despite the President's veto threat, I look forward to the passage and enactment of this legislation.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the conference report to the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2021.

Combating illicit finance and targeting bad actors is a nonpartisan issue. However, Congress' actions must be thoughtful and data-driven.

An example of this is H.R. 2514, the COUNTER Act, which is included in this conference report. Division G is a compilation of bipartisan policies that will modernize and reform the Bank Secrecy Act and anti-money laundering regimes. These policies will strengthen the Department of Treasury's financial intelligence, anti-money laundering, and counter terrorism programs. I would like to thank Chairman CLEAVER and Ranking Mem-

ber STIVERS for their work on this bill and the language included in Division G.

In addition to Division G, the conference report contains an amendment replacing the text of H.R. 2513, the Corporate Transparency Act, with new legislation. H.R. 2513, which passed the House on October 22, 2019, and again as an amendment to H.R. 6395 on July 21, 2020, attempted to establish a new beneficial ownership information reporting regime to assist law enforcement in tracking down terrorists and other bad actors who finance terrorism and illicit activities. But, it did so to the detriment of America's small businesses.

Beneficial ownership information is the personally identifiable information (PII) on a company's beneficial owners. This information is currently collected and held by financial institutions prior to a company gaining access to our financial system.

However, bad actors and nation states, such as China and Russia, are becoming more proficient in using our financial system to support illicit activity. As bad actors become more sophisticated, so to must our tools to deter and catch them. One such tool is identifying the beneficial owners of shell companies, which are used as fronts to launder money and finance terrorism or other illicit activity. Beneficial ownership information assists law enforcement to better target these bad actors.

Although well-intentioned, H.R. 2513 had numerous deficiencies in its reporting regime. First, H.R. 2513 placed numerous reporting and costly reporting requirements on small businesses. It lacked protections to properly protect small businesses' personal information stored with a little-known government office within the Department of Treasury—known as FinCEN. The bill authorized access to this sensitive information without any limitation on who could access the information and when it could be accessed. Finally, it failed to hold FinCEN accountable for its actions.

The text of H.R. 2513 is replaced with new language that I negotiated, along with Senate Banking Committee Chairman CRAPO. This substitute, which is reflected in Division F of the conference report, is a significant improvement over the House-passed bill in three key areas.

First, Division F limits the burdens on small businesses. Unlike H.R. 2513, the language included in the conference report protects our nation's small businesses. It prevents duplicative, burdensome, and costly reporting requirements for beneficial ownership data from being imposed in two ways. It rescinds the current beneficial ownership reporting regime set out in 31 CFR 1010.230 (b)–(j), which is costly and burdensome to small businesses. Rescinding these provisions ensures that it cannot be used in a future rule to impose another duplicative, reporting regime on America's small businesses. In addition, Division F requires the Department of Treasury to minimize the burdens the new reporting regime will have on small businesses, including eliminating any duplicative requirements.

House Republicans ensured the directive to minimize burdens on small businesses is fulfilled. Division F directs the Secretary of the Treasury to report to the House Committee on Financial Services and the Senate Committee on Banking annually for the first three years after the new rule is promulgated. The report must assess: the effectiveness of the new rule; the steps the Department of Treasury

took to minimize the reporting burdens on reporting entities, including eliminating duplicative reporting requirements, and the accuracy of the new rule in targeting bad actors. The Department of Treasury is also required to identify the alternate procedures and standards that were considered and rejected in developing its new reporting regime. This report will help the Committees understand the effectiveness of the new rule in identifying and prosecuting bad actors. Moreover, it will give the Committees the data needed to understand whether the reporting threshold is sufficient or should be revised.

Second, Division F includes the strongest privacy and disclosure protections for America's small businesses as it relates to the collection, maintenance, and disclosure of beneficial ownership information. The new protections set out in Division F ensure that small business beneficial ownership information will be protected just like an individual's tax return information. The protections in Division F mirror or exceed the protections set out in 26 U.S.C. 6103, including:

1. Agency Head Certification. Division F requires an agency head or designee to certify that an investigation or law enforcement, national security or intelligence activity is authorized and necessitates access to the database. Designees may only be identified through a process that mirrors the process followed by the Department of Treasury for those designations set out in 26 U.S.C. 6103.

2. Semi-annual Certification of Protocols. Division F requires an Agency head to make a semi-annual certification to the Secretary of the Treasury that the protocols for accessing small business ownership data ensure maximum protection of this critically important information. This requirement is non-delegable.

3. Court authorization of State, Local and Tribal law enforcement requests. Division F requires state, local and tribal law enforcement officials to obtain a court authorization from the court system in the local jurisdiction. Obtaining a court authorization is the first of two steps state, local and tribal governments must take prior to accessing the database. Separately, state, local and tribal law enforcement agencies must comply with the protocols and safeguards established by the Department of Treasury.

4. Limited Disclosure of Beneficial Ownership Information. Division F prohibits the Secretary of Treasury from disclosing the requested beneficial ownership information to anyone other than a law enforcement or national security official who is directly engaged in the investigation.

5. System of Records. Division F requires any requesting agency to establish and maintain a system of records to store beneficial ownership information provided directly by the Secretary of the Treasury.

6. Penalties for Unauthorized Disclosure. Division F prohibits unauthorized disclosures. Specifically, the agreement reiterates that a violation of appropriate protocols, including unauthorized disclosure or use, is subject to criminal and civil penalties (up to five years in prison and \$250,000 fine).

Third, Division F contains the necessary transparency, accountability and oversight provisions to ensure that the Department of Treasury promulgates and implements the new beneficial ownership reporting regime as intended by Congress. Specifically, Division F requires each requesting agency to establish and maintain a permanent, auditable system of records describing: each request, how the

information is used, and how the beneficial ownership information is secured. It requires requesting agencies to furnish a report to the Department of Treasury describing the procedures in place to ensure the confidentiality of the beneficial ownership information provided directly by the Secretary of the Treasury.

Separately, Division F requires two additional audits. First, it directs the Secretary of Treasury to conduct an annual audit to determine whether beneficial ownership information is being collected, stored and used as intended by Congress. Separately, Division F directs the Government Accountability Office to conduct an audit for five years to ensure that the Department of Treasury and requesting agencies are using the beneficial ownership information as set out in Division F. This is the same audit that GAO conducts as it relates to the Department of Treasury's collection, maintenance and protection of tax return information. This information will ensure that Congress has independent data on the efficacy of the reporting regime and whether confidentiality is being maintained.

Division F also requires the Department of Treasury to issue an annual report on the total number of court authorized requests received by the Secretary to access the database. The report must detail the total number of court authorized requests approved and rejected and a summary justifying the action. This report to Congress will ensure the Department of Treasury does not misuse its authority to either approve or reject court authorized requests.

Finally, Division F requires the Director of FinCEN, who is responsible for implementing this reporting regime, to testify annually for five years. This testimony is critical. For far too long FinCEN has evaded any type of congressional check on its activities. Yet, it has amassed a great deal of authority. Now, Congress will shine a light on its operations. It is my expectation that FinCEN will provide Congress with hard data on its effectiveness in targeting bad actors, including the effectiveness of this new authority to collect, maintain, and use beneficial ownership information.

One final comment about the importance of FinCEN's annual testimony. In the months leading up to the House's consideration of H.R. 2513 last October, I sought data from FinCEN and from the Treasury Department, along with the Department of Justice, to better understand the need for this legislation. No such data was forthcoming. Rather, FinCEN gave anecdotes of very scary stories to justify the need for a new reporting regime. It is my expectation that FinCEN will provide Congress with the necessary data to justify this new reporting regime and the burdens it is placing on legitimate companies.

I will conclude by thanking Chairwoman MALONEY for her work over the last twelve years on this issue and her willingness to work with me to strengthen this bill. I believe we have a better product.

I urge my colleagues to support the conference agreement.

Mr. SABLON. Mr. Speaker, the conference report to accompany H.R. 6395, the National Defense Authorization Act, includes my bills ensuring my district, the Northern Mariana Islands, and other insular areas are included in additional federal programs as well as improving career education for military spouses.

Businesses in the Marianas will have further access to federal Small Business Administra-

tion programs under the terms of my Northern Mariana Islands Small Business Development Act, included in the final version of the NDAA. My bill, H.R. 6021, makes the Marianas eligible for funding to establish a Small Business Development Center Lead Center. With additional funding, small businesses on Saipan, Tinian and Rota will have improved access to free or low-cost services such as incubator workspaces for entrepreneurs, business planning, operations, and other areas required for small business start-up, growth and success. It will, also, provide technical assistance from the Federal and State Technology program to Marianas small businesses interested in seed funding from the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer programs.

The NDAA also includes the two bills I authored to expand education opportunities in our islands. H.R. 6786 includes the Marianas in the Defense Department's STARBASE education program, which aims to improve students' skills in the STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and math). STARBASE partners military installations with schools having high proportions of economically and educationally disadvantaged students.

Additionally included in the NDAA is my bill, H.R. 4614, adding the Marianas and other insular areas to the national AMBER alert system for finding missing children. AMBER alerts mobilize the community via radio, TV, and text messages and have helped locate almost one thousand children, since the system was created in 1996. My AMBER Alerts Nationwide Act will give law enforcement in the Marianas the financial and technical resources from the U.S. Departments of Justice and Transportation to implement AMBER alerts in our community, hopefully saving lives. My bill also seeks to close gaps in coverage nationwide by specifying airports, seaports, and border crossing areas.

And H.R. 7112, the Military Spouse Career Education Act, will help the spouses of service members finish their college degrees more quickly and get the training needed to relicense in their professions, when they must move to a new location under military orders. The spouses will be able to have the costs reimbursed for national tests like CLEP providing college credit and for required continuing education courses to maintain their career credentials.

I urge the adoption of the conference report, so we can be sure that military spouses have more support in starting and maintaining careers, more small businesses in our country can fully benefit from the SBDC and FAST programs, more students can benefit from STEM education, and more lives can be saved with the help of AMBER Alerts.

I thank Chairman SMITH, Chairwoman VELÁZQUEZ, Chairman NADLER, Chairman DEFAZIO, Senator HIRONO, Senator SCHATZ, and Representatives GABBARD, HOULAHAN, and BANKS for all their support to include into the NDAA these important measures.

I ask my colleagues to support adoption of the conference report to accompany H.R. 6395.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of the fiscal year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). I would like to start by thanking Chairman SMITH, Ranking Member THORNBERRY, and the House Armed Services Committee staff who have worked

tirelessly throughout this past year to get us to this point. It's a good bill and I encourage my colleagues to support the conference report.

As the Chairman of the Readiness Subcommittee, I worked closely with members on and off the committee to ensure the bill addressed key priority areas affecting our military.

First, the bill includes a number of bipartisan provisions aimed at addressing climate change. The bill does the following: requires an update to the Department of Defense Climate Change Roadmap; requires a report on the implementation of provisions from the FY2020 National Defense Authorization Act related to installation master planning, updates to the Unified Facilities Criteria, sea-level rise modeling, and climate assessment tools; includes an alternative fuel vehicle pilot program to require the military departments to expand their use of alternative fuel non-tactical vehicles to increase the use of hybrid and EV vehicles; requires the Department to submit a report on its greenhouse gas emissions for the last 10 years within 180 days of enactment; requires the Department to invest in research and development of advanced water harvesting technologies that would aid in addressing water security issues in areas impacted by drought due to climate change; expands the Department's ability to use installation resilience authorities to support climate resiliency projects at National Guard Facilities owned by the State; and requires the military services to assess their water use at installations in regions experiencing water scarcity, maximize use of landscaping practices that reduce water usage, and improve their water conservation.

The bill also includes provisions that address energy resiliency for military bases, including the following: requires a report on efforts taken to ensure fuel consumption, distribution, and logistics are being considered across the Department and that steps are being taken to reduce consumption of fossil fuels by 30 percent in 25 years to reduce the number of resupply convoys and oilers required in a contested environment; requires the Department of Defense to institute energy metering on critical military facilities to assess the energy requirements and plan to ensure resilient power sources for these facilities; establishes a pilot program to develop microgrids on military installations that integrate emergency diesel generators to demonstrate how microgrid emergency diesel generator backup power could create efficiencies and resiliency while reducing costs and emissions; promotes the use of on-site energy production to promote military installation energy resiliency and energy security; requires an assessment of the Department's installation and operational energy usage; re-establishes the Operational Energy Capability Improvement Fund, which was eliminated in the budget request, and authorizes \$65 million to demonstrate and field technologies that reduce fuel consumption and logistics; establishes an Operational Energy budget line to enhance transparency and congressional oversight of the Department's efforts to reduce fossil fuel usage and make conservation gains on operational platforms; and requires the Comptroller General to assess the Department's progress towards meeting net zero goals for installations to include an assessment of the cultural and legislative barriers to meeting these goals.

The bill continues efforts to address contamination associated with per- and polyfluorinated compounds around military installations, including the following provisions: requires the Secretary of Defense to notify all agricultural operations in an area where covered PFAS has been detected in groundwater that is suspected to originate from use of firefighting foam on a military installation; requires the Department of Defense to notify the congressional defense committees when there has been an uncontrolled release of PFAS-containing firefighting agent; establishes a prize that can be awarded by the Secretary of Defense for innovative research that results in a viable replacement agent for firefighting foam that does not contain PFAS; requires the Department of Defense to survey and report on non-firefighting agent technologies, such as hangar flooring and firefighting equipment, that will help facilitate the phase-out of PFAS-containing firefighting agents; makes technical corrections to the FY2020 National Defense Authorization Act to ensure that all National Guard installations are eligible for funding under the Defense Environmental Restoration Account for PFAS remediation; establishes an interagency coordinating body for PFAS research; prohibits the Department of Defense from procuring certain items containing PFAS, including cookware, carpets, and upholstery with stain-resistant coatings; authorizes the Department to work with private entities to spur research, development and testing of PFAS-free fire-fighting agents; requires the National Institute of Standard and Technology to study the safety of firefighting equipment with respect to protecting fire fighters from PFAS, and conduct research on improving the safety of this equipment; authorizes \$90 million for research lines that support development of PFAS remediation and disposal technologies and firefighting agent replacement; and authorizes a total of \$1.4 billion for environmental remediation and BRAC accounts which support a range of remediation activities, to include those related to PFAS, at current military installations, formerly utilized defense sites, and installations closed by BRAC.

The bill also builds on the Committee's previous legislative and oversight activities to ensure that military personnel and their families live in quality housing and that the Department and private housing partners are responsive to resident concerns. The bill does the following: requires a report on the oversight of known environmental hazards in government owned family housing, including overseas housing; requires the Department of Defense to report on the feasibility of standardizing privatized housing performance metrics to better allow the Department to track trends across the housing enterprise; for future and renegotiated privatized housing agreements, requires that funding for housing maintenance and recapitalization be prioritized ahead of housing management and other fees in the payment structure; updates minimum health and safety standards for all military base housing, requires transparency for private housing company contract performance fees, and requires a report on the status of other military housing reforms; increases transparency by requiring DOD to notify Congress of large expenditures coming from the family housing reinvestment accounts; repeals the provision in Title 10 that allowed the Department of Defense to place families in substandard housing units; requires

the Secretary of Defense to implement Comptroller General recommendations for improvement of military family housing; and authorizes an additional \$60 million for oversight and improvement of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative (MHPI) program and to continue addressing environmental and maintenance issues in government-owned family housing.

Other important provisions that I am pleased are in the conference report include the following: establishes an independent commission to make binding recommendations to the Secretary of Defense for the modification or removal of all names, symbols, displays, monuments, and paraphernalia that honor or commemorate the Confederate States of America or any person who served voluntarily with the Confederate States of America from all assets of the Department of Defense; amends the national emergency military construction authority (10 USC 2808) to set an annual limit of \$100 million for the domestic use of the authority and \$500 million for overseas projects, with an exception for medical projects that may be necessary to support response to a health emergency or pandemic; does not backfill military construction funds stolen for the border wall; makes technical corrections to the Paid Parental Leave benefit provided through the FY20 National Defense Authorization Act to ensure that Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, and certain other civilian employees inadvertently omitted from the legislation receive the paid parental leave benefit; establishes the Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation and codifies in law the Department of Defense entity that runs the Joint Land Use Study, DOD Schools, Defense Community Infrastructure Program, and Defense Manufacturing Community Support Program to ensure stability and effective community engagement; authorizes \$50 million for the Defense Community Infrastructure Program (DCIP) and clarifies congressional intent with respect to the implementation of the program; provides long overdue benefits to Vietnam-Era Veterans, adding hypothyroidism, bladder cancer and Parkinsonism to the Agent Orange Presumptive Conditions List; and prohibits retirement of the RQ-4 or U-2 aircraft until specific certifications or waivers have been provided to Congress.

I'm also pleased this NDAA includes a 3 percent pay raise for our troops and includes several provisions that establish a National Maritime Logistics Fleet to bolster America's maritime sector. This is accomplished by strengthening US-flagged vessel requirements for the transportation of military cargo and fuels, creating a Tanker Security Program to address the shortfall in US-flagged, US-crewed tankers, and requiring the Navy to initiate an affordable, domestic built sealift ship. Strengthening our maritime logistics will bolster our nation's commercial shipping industry and enhance our military's capabilities by improving the overarching defense industrial base that supports each branch of our armed services.

I am also pleased with the inclusion of the remaining provision of my bill, H.R. 2617, the Occupational and Environmental Transparency Health Act, to require DoD to integrate information from the Burn Pit Registry into servicemembers' Electronic Health Records to aid in the collection, documentation, and tracking of any exposures to Occupational Environmental Health (OEH) hazards. The legislative

intent of H.R. 2617 has been fully accomplished through the NDAA as last year's FY20 NDAA required DoD to input any OEH hazards exposure into servicemembers' records while deployed so it is tracked throughout their career and into veteran status.

Overall, I am proud of the Readiness Subcommittee's contribution to this year's bill and would like to thank the Readiness staff, Brian Garrett, Jeanine Womble, Melanie Harris, Jay Vallario, John Muller, Dave Sienicki, and Sean Falvey, and my personal staff, Betsy Thompson, Marcus Jones, and Danusia Hubah, for their tireless work. Marcus and Danusia will be departing the Hill after next week, and I would like to personally thank them for their hard work and sharing their expertise with us this past year. Both Marcus and Danusia have been invaluable members of my staff and we will miss them dearly.

This bill helps advance our military's near-term readiness goals and drives the Department to plan for and take action against long-term threats. The conference report also authorizes funding that will strengthen DOD and the country's ability to respond to potential COVID-19 resurgence and other infectious diseases in the future. With that, I urge my colleagues to support the FY21 NDAA.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, section 6308 enhances U.S. law enforcement's ability to access international bank records to help better ensure financial crimes are investigated. I am supportive of this new and necessary provision. This new authority allows the Departments of Treasury and Justice to issue subpoenas requiring production of records relating to accounts held by banks outside of the United States. This new authority would create a secondary mechanism for seeking discovery from foreign banks separate from the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties ("MLATs") or other multilateral or bilateral agreements the United States currently maintains with many foreign governments for this purpose. As the Departments of Justice and Treasury implement Section 6308, I encourage them only to use this new authority where a foreign bank operates in a jurisdiction as to which no MLAT or other information-sharing agreement exists or where the relevant foreign government has not satisfied its obligations under an MLAT or other information-sharing agreement.

Many foreign countries restrict banks operating in their jurisdictions from sharing their customers' financial or personally identifiable information ("PII"). As a result, subpoenas issued under section 6308 may place foreign banks in the difficult position of either violating home country law or being in contempt for failure to comply with a subpoena issued by the United States government. As a result, I believe it is appropriate for the Departments of Justice and Treasury to take into consideration conflict of laws situations to achieve the purposes of Section 6308 while also maintaining a respect for home country requirements.

Finally, I encourage the Departments of Treasury and Justice to issue regulations establishing appropriate protocols to ensure that the authority granted under section 6308 does not supersede or supplant existing MLATs or other multilateral or bilateral agreements between the United States and the relevant foreign government that are available for obtaining records from a foreign bank.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Conference Report for H.R. 6395,

the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021. This bill contains many important provisions that should become law, but unfortunately those laudable policies are outweighed by the staggering cost and I cannot support the bill as a whole.

I am grateful for the Conferees' work to include language increasing treatment and benefits for veterans by expanding the types of diseases that are presumed connected with exposure to Agent Orange. I also strongly support the pay increase for our troops, the removal of names and symbols associated with the racist legacy of the Confederacy, and the bolstering of paid parental leave policies across the federal government. I commend Chairman SMITH for his ongoing work to advance legislation that improves the military's prevention of sexual assault and support for survivors, takes encouraging steps to address climate change, and prevents the misuse of taxpayer money on a wasteful border wall. In response to authoritarian tactics by federal agents in Portland, Oregon, and elsewhere, the Chairman and House Conferees also achieved bipartisan support for a policy I championed requiring that any federal forces responding to a protest or civil disturbance by clearly identifiable.

I cannot ignore, however, the unprecedented amount of military spending that this legislation would authorize. Amid a national crisis precipitated by a global pandemic, voting to allow billions of dollars to be spent on weapons is unjustifiable when our communities desperately need food and housing security, access to childcare, affordable health care, and small business support. We must not accept the notion that annual increases in defense spending are somehow inevitable and can be rationalized as modest when adding just one percent costs billions of dollars that should instead be invested domestically in schools or infrastructure.

I do not take this vote lightly and my commitment to providing for our servicemembers remains steadfast. It is a complex and challenging task to responsibly fund our national defense, but I am confident that we can maintain adequate security while reining in the immense and ever-increasing sums that endlessly pour into the military-industrial complex. I look forward to continued engagement with my colleagues as we address these difficult issues.

□ 1400

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to the order of the House of Thursday, December 3, 2020, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the adoption of the conference report.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3 of House Resolution 965, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question are postponed.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 8, 2020.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on December 8, 2020, at 11:44 a.m.:

That the Senate agreed to Relative to the death of the Honorable Roger William Jepsen, former United States Senator for the State of Iowa S. Res. 795.

That the Senate passed with an amendment H.R. 1503.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 4761.

That the Senate passed with amendments H.R. 5273.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

CHERYL L. JOHNSON,
Clerk.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. MCCOLLUM). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2020

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1811) to make technical corrections to the America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1811

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Water Resources Development Act of 2020".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Secretary defined.

TITLE I—GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 101. Budgetary treatment expansion and adjustment for the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund.
Sec. 102. Authorization of appropriations for navigation.
Sec. 103. Annual report to Congress on the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund.
Sec. 104. Additional measures at donor ports and energy transfer ports.
Sec. 105. Construction of water resources development projects by non-Federal interests.