

become a South Asia specialist, while simultaneously working as a children's librarian at the Berkeley Public Library in Berkeley, California. However, after finding her true passion with the public library, Ms. Parikh changed her educational focus to library science and has since been serving as a librarian and administrator in Pierce County.

Ms. Parikh has become a leader in providing early learning, training, and support for families, childcare providers, and library staff both locally and across the state. While Parikh believes that early learning is a critical service for all public libraries, she maintains that teen services are equally important. She supported Pierce County Library System in becoming one of the first Libraries of Promise, which seeks to encourage people to build the character and competence of children by providing them access to additional educational outlets.

Ms. Parikh's leadership as a strong community collaborator is a testament to her success for advancing early learning forward throughout Pierce County. She has collaborated with social service organizations, schools, and community leaders to build services for young learners.

Ms. Parikh is a founding member and chair of the Early Learning Public Library Partnership, a consortium created with the vision that public libraries are full, essential partners in the early learning movement in Washington State. The consortium puts public libraries at the table with other early learning organizations. Under her leadership, the partnership has grown to include 27 public libraries across the state.

In addition to her library responsibilities, Ms. Parikh has been active in the Association for Library Service to Children, served on the Public Library Association Board of Directors, and held a seat on the Executive Committee of the Washington Library Association.

Parikh is the seventh winner of this award, provided by former American Library Association President Peggy Sullivan.

Madam Speaker, I congratulate Neel Parikh on this impressive achievement, and celebrate her commitment to furthering children's education through positive library experiences.

DOD AND DEBT/DEFICIT

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 30, 2010

Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today because we can no longer afford to ignore defense spending as our deficit rises.

The unprecedented federal stimulus package and two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have put the FY 2009 federal deficit at 10 percent of GDP, its highest level since 1945.

As the federal deficit grows and we look for places to cut, we must be able to scrutinize every part of the federal budget—including defense spending.

Defense spending has more than doubled since September 11, 2001, and at \$719 billion, the current defense budget, is the highest it has been since World War II.

Our discretionary spending has also grown by \$583 billion since 2001, and defense spending accounts for 65 percent of that growth.

Accounting for close to 20 percent of the federal budget, defense spending simply cannot be ignored as we look for places to cut.

For too long we have followed policies that assume more spending automatically means more safety and more power.

But new critics of this unquestioned defense spending argue cuts to the defense budget can and should be made; and these cuts can be done without compromising our safety.

A new report by the Sustainable Defense Task Force, comprising security experts from across the country, finds that we could save up to \$960 billion over the next ten years, without jeopardizing our national security.

The report outlines a whole menu of reform options ranging from reducing our oversized nuclear stockpiles to cutting our bloated force structure in Europe and Asia—all of which are possible due to the U.S.'s current security posture: We no longer face the traditional opponents we once did.

We still operate as if we are at war with an opponent as powerful as the former Soviet Union; but today the U.S. does not face a threat that even remotely compares to the Soviet Union.

Not even China, which spends barely one-fifth as much on military as the U.S., can compete.

The U.S. spends more on research and development than Russia does on its whole military.

Today, the U.S. spends more than two and half times as much on its military as the group of potential opponents, including Russia and China.

In other words, the U.S. could cut its defense spending in half and we would still be spending more than our current and potential adversaries.

As the Task Force points out in its report, our military strength far outweighs any threat from our adversaries, and can easily be reduced while still maintaining our military superiority.

However, while we are building up our capacity to fight traditional opponents, such as China, we are failing to build a defense force capable of combating nontraditional opponents such as Al Qaeda.

We have spent \$1 trillion and lost 5,500 American lives on large-scale military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan with little progress to show for it.

As Benjamin Friedman, of the Cato Institute, points out, our principal enemy Al Qaeda "has no army, no air force and no navy."

And the military assets most useful for counterterrorism are relatively inexpensive such as surveillance technologies, special operations forces and drones.

As the threats to America evolve, so too must our military structure.

But over the years, rather than realigning our military to meet current threats, we have simply added more requirements to our military, growing our defense budget by 9 percent on average every year.

There has never been a better time to reinvent our defense budget.

We are facing a growing deficit, forcing us to make cuts, and we have a defense budget ripe for reform.

Now all we need is the political will to make tough choices.

With limited resources we must choose, because the real ramification of overspending on

defense is not simply that we will have too many unnecessary ships, aircrafts or missiles—but that we won't have enough resources to support vital domestic investments such as health care, education, and infrastructure needed to remain a superpower.

Military power is not simply about spending more than our adversaries.

Real military power, argues Kori Schake, a top foreign policy advisor for John McCain, is "fundamentally premised on the solvency of the American government and the vibrancy of the U.S. economy."

But in order to maintain that vibrancy we must get our fiscal house in order, and in doing so reexamine our defense spending and make cuts and reforms where necessary.

Secretary Gates said it best while paraphrasing President Eisenhower, "The United States should spend as much as necessary on national defense, but not one penny more."

Let's hold him to his word. Let's reinvent the defense budget.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL DANCE DAY ON JULY 31

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 30, 2010

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating National Dance Day on July 31.

National Dance Day, in the Nation's Capital and throughout the United States, will celebrate dance as an artistic form and will promote the health benefits of dance. Here in the Nation's Capital, I will be joined by "So You Think You Can Dance" co-creator, executive producer, and judge Nigel Lythgoe, by Dominique Dawes, the well-known U.S. Olympic gymnast and a member of the President's Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition, and by the Dizzy Feet Foundation to promote dance as an avenue for physical fitness. Our partners, in addition to the President's Council, and Dizzy Feet, include the Kennedy Center, the Smithsonian Institution, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Dance Association, and the National Council of Negro Women.

In addition to being an art form, dance can be an aerobic activity that helps to improve heart health, strengthen muscles, increase flexibility, and burn calories. Our country has a national adult and childhood overweight and obesity epidemic. Keeping with the spirit of the First Lady's "Let's Move!" initiative to combat childhood obesity and the work of the President's Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition, we will promote physical activity among children and adults, and have fun dancing, the exercise that many of us most enjoy!

On July 31, we will gather on the National Mall from 3 to 7 p.m. to watch, learn and dance, and to recognize dance expression, with "Flash Dance" instructors, Fluria Flamenco, Step Afrika, Beat Ya Feet Kings, Capitol Movement Project, DCypher, Baneker Ball Room Dancing Club, and many more. We will encourage physically active lifestyles by promoting all forms of dance for physical fitness.

Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating National Dance Day on July 31.