

[Roll No. 297]

AYES—399

Aderholt DesJarlais Kean (NJ)  
 Aguilár Diaz-Balart Keating  
 Alford Dingell Kelly (IL)  
 Allen Doggett Kelly (MS)  
 Allred Donalds Khanna  
 Amodei Duarte Kiggans (VA)  
 Armstrong Duncan Kildee  
 Arrington Dunn (FL) Kiley  
 Babin Edwards Kilmer  
 Bacon Ellzey Kim (CA)  
 Baird Emmer Kim (NJ)  
 Balderson Escobar Krishnamoorthi  
 Balint Eshoo Kuster  
 Banks Estes Kustoff  
 Barr Ezell LaHood  
 Barragán Fallon LaLota  
 Bean (FL) Feenstra LaMalfa  
 Beatty Ferguson Lamborn  
 Bentz Finstad Landsman  
 Bera Fischbach Langworthy  
 Bergman Fitzgerald Larsen (WA)  
 Beyer Fitzpatrick Larson (CT)  
 Bice Fleischmann Latta  
 Bilirakis Fletcher LaTurner  
 Bishop (GA) Flood Lawler  
 Bishop (NC) Foster Lee (FL)  
 Blumenauer Foushee Lee (NV)  
 Blunt Rochester Foxx Leger Fernandez  
 Boebert Frankel, Lois Lesko  
 Bonamici Franklin, C. Letlow  
 Bost Scott Levin  
 Boyle (PA) Fry Lieu  
 Brecheen Fulcher Lofgren  
 Brown Gaetz Loudermilk  
 Brownley Gallagher Lucas  
 Buchanan Garamendi Luetkemeyer  
 Bucshon Garbarino Luna  
 Budzinski Garcia (TX) Luttrell  
 Burchett Garcia, Mike Lynch  
 Burgess Garcia, Robert Mace  
 Burlison Gimenez Magaziner  
 Calvert Golden (ME) Malliotakis  
 Cammack Goldman (NY) Mann  
 Caraveo Gomez Manning  
 Carbajal Gonzales, Tony Massie  
 Cárdenas Gonzalez, Mast  
 Carey Vicente Matsui  
 Carl González-Colón McBath  
 Carson Gooden (TX) McCaul  
 Carter (GA) Gottheimer McClain  
 Carter (LA) Granger McClellan  
 Carter (TX) Graves (LA) McClintock  
 Cartwright Graves (MO) McCollum  
 Casar Green (TN) McCormick  
 Case Green, Al (TX) McGarvey  
 Casten Greene (GA) McHenry  
 Castor (FL) Griffith Meeks  
 Castro (TX) Grijalva Menendez  
 Chavez-DeRemer Grothman Meng  
 Cherfilus-McCormick Guest Meuser  
 Chu Guthrie Mfume  
 Ciscomani Hageman Miller (IL)  
 Clark (MA) Harder (CA) Miller (OH)  
 Clarke (NY) Harris Miller (WV)  
 Cleaver Harshbarger Miller-Meeks  
 Cline Hayes Mills  
 Cloud Hern Molinaro  
 Clyburn Higgins (LA) Moolenaar  
 Clyde Higgins (NY) Mooney  
 Cohen Hill Moore (AL)  
 Cole Himes Moore (UT)  
 Collins Hinson Moore (WI)  
 Comer Horsford Moran  
 Connolly Houchin Morelle  
 Costa Houlihan Moskowitz  
 Courtney Hoyer Moulton  
 Craig Hoyle (OR) Mrvan  
 Crawford Hudson Murphy  
 Crenshaw Huffman Nadler  
 Crockett Huizenga Napolitano  
 Crow Hunt Neal  
 Cuellar Issa Neguse  
 Curtis Ivey Nehls  
 D'Esposito Jackson (IL) Newhouse  
 Davids (KS) Jackson (NC) Nickel  
 Davidson Jackson (TX) Norcross  
 Davis (IL) Jackson Lee Norman  
 Davis (NC) James Norton  
 De La Cruz Jeffries Nunn (IA)  
 Dean (PA) Johnson (GA) Obernolte  
 DeGette Johnson (LA) Ogles  
 DeLauro Johnson (OH) Owens  
 DelBene Johnson (SD) Pallone  
 Deluzio Jordan Palmer  
 DeSaulnier Joyce (OH) Panetta  
 Joyce (PA) Pappas

Pascarella Schweikert Timmons  
 Payne Scott (VA) Titus  
 Pelosi Scott, Austin Tokuda  
 Pence Scott, David Tonko  
 Perez Self Torres (CA)  
 Peters Sessions Torres (NY)  
 Pettersen Sewell Trahan  
 Pfluger Sherman Trone  
 Phillips Sherrill Turner  
 Pingree Simpson Underwood  
 Plaskett Slotkin Valadao  
 Porter Smith (MO) Van Dwyne  
 Posey Smith (NE) Van Orden  
 Quigley Smith (NJ) Vargas  
 Raskin Smith (WA) Vasquez  
 Reschenthaler Smucker Veasey  
 Rodgers (WA) Sorensen Velázquez  
 Rogers (AL) Soto Wagner  
 Rogers (KY) Spanberger Walberg  
 Rose Spartz Waltz  
 Ross Stanton Wasserman  
 Rouzer Stauber Schultz  
 Ruiz Steel Watson Coleman  
 Ruppersberger Stefanik Weber (TX)  
 Rutherford Steil Webster (FL)  
 Ryan Teube Wexton  
 Sablan Stevens Wild  
 Salazar Stewart Williams (GA)  
 Salinas Strickland Williams (TX)  
 Sánchez Strong Wilson (FL)  
 Santos Swallow Wilson (SC)  
 Sarbanes Sykes Wittman  
 Scalise Takano Womack  
 Scanlon Tenney Yakym  
 Schakowsky Thanedar Zinke  
 Schiff Thompson (CA)  
 Schneider Thompson (MS)  
 Scholten Thompson (PA)  
 Schrier Tiffany

NOES—31

Adams Good (VA) Perry  
 Auchincloss Gosar Pocan  
 Biggs Jacobs Pressley  
 Bowman Jayapal Ramirez  
 Buck Kamlager-Dove Rosendale  
 Bush Kaptur Roy  
 Correa Lee (CA) Taib  
 Crane Lee (PA) Van Drew  
 Espallat McGovern Waters  
 Frost Ocasio-Cortez  
 Garcia (IL) Omar

NOT VOTING—9

Evans Moylan Radewagen  
 Gallego Mullin Stansbury  
 Kelly (PA) Peltola Williams (NY)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).  
 There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1413

So the en bloc amendments were agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. BOST). There being no further amendments, pursuant to the rule, the committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LAWLER) having assumed the chair, Mr. BOST, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2670) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2024 for military activities of the Department of Defense and 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, had come to no resolution thereon.

#### NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 583 and rule

XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2670.

Will the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) kindly resume the chair.

□ 1420

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 2670) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2024 for military activities of the Department of Defense and 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, with Mr. BOST (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today pursuant to House Resolution 582, the fifth set of en bloc amendments, printed in House Report 118-141 offered by the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ROGERS) has been disposed of.

Pursuant to House Resolution 583, no further amendment to the bill, as amended, shall be in order except those printed in House Report 118-142 and amendments en bloc described in section 3 of House Resolution 583.

Each further amendment printed in the report shall be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

It shall be in order at that time for the chair of the Committee on Armed Services or his designee to offer the amendments en bloc consisting of amendments printed in the report not earlier disposed of. Amendments en bloc shall be considered as read, shall be debated for 30 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services or their respective designees, shall not be subject to the amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MRS. LUNA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 118-142.

Mrs. LUNA. Mr. Chair, I rise to offer amendment No. 1 as the designee of Mr. WILLIAMS of New York.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add at the end of subtitle C of title XVIII the following:

**SEC. 1859. PROHIBITION ON FUNDING RESEARCH IN CHINA.**

The Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Energy,

the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, or any other Federal agency may not directly or indirectly conduct or support, through grants, subgrants, contracts, cooperative agreements or other funding vehicles, research that will be conducted by—

(1) the Government of the People's Republic of China or any agent or instrumentality of the Government of the People's Republic of China or any entity owned by or controlled by the People's Republic of China; or

(2) the Chinese Communist Party or any agent or instrumentality of the Chinese Communist Party or any entity owned by or controlled by the Chinese Communist Party.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 583, the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. LUNA) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

Mrs. LUNA. Mr. Chairman, to protect American interest, safety, and intellectual property, this amendment will end the corrupt practice of sending taxpayer dollars to the Chinese Communist Party.

Our hard-earned money is going to Chinese research, infrastructure, and education, and these are the only destinations that we currently know about. American dollars are lost with no recuperation or retaliation.

Mr. Chairman, I ask my colleagues across the aisle to support this commonsense amendment and support Mr. WILLIAMS' legislation.

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

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Madam Chair, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR (Ms. GREENE of Georgia). The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, I oppose this broad reactionary and irresponsible amendment because it would harm U.S. interests and undermine scientific progress for the American people and the world.

There is no question that the PRC poses real challenges to the United States and that it is engaged in technological and economic competition with us. We know that the PRC is engaged in harmful research to boost its military, that it engages in technology and IP theft. These are challenges worth tackling, and the Biden administration and Congress have taken steps to protect ourselves against these activities in effective and responsible ways.

This amendment, however, goes entirely too far. When a careful and scalpel-like approach is needed to ensure we are not contributing to China's military or providing China with advanced and sensitive technology and know-how, this amendment uses a guillotine to cut off support for any form of research collaboration between the United States and China.

As drafted, this amendment would prevent any U.S. funding of, con-

tracting with, or partnership with any individual or entity connected to the PRC government. Let's be clear about what that would mean. This would prohibit collaboration with all the major public universities in China, endangering academic collaboration and research partnerships between U.S. and Chinese institutions.

We should be worried about AI and supercomputing. This amendment would cut off collaboration on completely harmless and often very beneficial social science research on things such as poverty reduction and economic development.

This amendment would make it harder for American academics and researchers to partner with the Chinese people, many of them who may not have any love for the CCP and would benefit from talking directly to and working with an American and learning about the freedoms and values that Americans enjoy.

More critically, this amendment would cut off collaboration on medical research that could literally save lives of Americans and people around the world. Let me give you one example. Right now doctors and researchers at the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York are collaborating with the Chinese Thoracic Oncology Group to conduct shared clinical trials in hospitals in the United States and China to develop modern cancer drugs. We need to make sure this research collaboration happens in a safe and secure way, but why would we prohibit it? Why would we not want to work together to find a cure for cancer?

Ultimately, we cannot and must not follow the Chinese Communist Party's example and close ourselves off to the world and the Chinese people. That is what they do. That is not what America does.

Madam Chair, I oppose this amendment, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. LUNA. Madam Chair, Communism, as well as any country that embraces that ideology, is a cancer upon this world and sometimes a guillotine is the only solution.

Madam Chair, I urge my colleagues across the aisle to support this incredible piece of legislation, and if you don't, that is on you.

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

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Madam Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Chair, I think the comments made by my colleague were perfectly appropriate. We have to deal with China and a whole series of issues, but to say that we should not collaborate with them on basic scientific research, that as was bluntly stated, could literally help us cure cancer is not something that is in our best interest.

We also have to realize that China is a major factor in the world. We would

like to get to a more peaceful relationship with them. Cutting off all contact doesn't make sense. Even at the height of the Cold War when we were aggressively trying to stand up to the Soviet Union, a bipartisan group of legislators kept dialogue up between the two countries.

Madam Chair, I agree with my colleague that this amendment goes too far and I urge opposition.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Madam Chair, may I inquire as to how much time I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman has 1½ minutes remaining.

□ 1430

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Madam Chair, I yield the balance of my time to the gentlewoman from San Diego, California (Ms. JACOBS).

Ms. JACOBS. Madam Chair, this is another amendment that is fearmongering about China when Republicans are continuing to actually undermine our national security by restricting and banning abortion.

Our servicemembers volunteered to serve in our armed services. They didn't volunteer to give up their reproductive rights.

I am thankful that DOD has taken steps to support servicemembers and their dependents' reproductive freedom by covering the travel and transportation costs for abortion and fertility care in the post-Roe era.

Let's be clear: DOD's travel policy is consistent with the law. We shouldn't reverse this progress and take away our servicemembers' freedom when they have already sacrificed so much for us.

In the 1 year since the Supreme Court struck down the constitutional right to an abortion, 20 States have restricted or banned abortion. This decision has disproportionately burdened our military families, who don't often choose where they are stationed. They can't freely take off days from work. Many can't afford to travel thousands of miles and pay out of pocket to receive the care they need and deserve, all because of the current statutory ban on DOD providing abortion services, which I strongly oppose.

That is why DOD's travel policy has been so important. As one of the few women of reproductive age in Congress, I know how important access to abortion and fertility care is to our health, freedom, economic security, and empowerment.

Taking away these fundamental rights doesn't just hurt these individuals. It hurts our military readiness, recruitment and retention, and morale, putting our national security in jeopardy.

With many people having zero access to abortion services where they are stationed, our military's ability to adapt to evolving conflicts and challenges has been very compromised.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. LUNA).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair understands that amendment No. 2 will not be offered.

The Chair understands that amendment No. 3 will not be offered.

The Chair understands that amendment No. 4 will not be offered.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. JACKSON OF TEXAS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in House Report 118-142.

Mr. JACKSON of Texas. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the appropriate place in subtitle A of title VII, insert the following:

**SEC. 7. PROHIBITION ON PAYMENT AND REIMBURSEMENT BY DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OF EXPENSES RELATING TO ABORTION SERVICES.**

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) consistent with section 1093 of title 10, United States Code, the Department of Defense may not use any funds for abortions except where the life of the mother would be endangered if the fetus were carried to term or in a case in which the pregnancy is the result of an act of rape or incest;

(2) the Secretary of Defense has no legal authority to implement any policies in which funds are to be used for such purpose; and

(3) the Department of Defense Memorandum titled “Ensuring Access to Reproductive Health Care”, dated October 20, 2022, is therefore unlawful and must be rescinded.

(b) REPEAL OF MEMORANDUM.—

(1) REPEAL.—The Department of Defense memorandum titled “Ensuring Access to Reproductive Health Care”, dated October 20, 2022, shall have no force or effect.

(2) PROHIBITION ON AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS TO CARRY OUT MEMORANDUM.—No funds may be obligated or expended to carry out the memorandum specified in paragraph (1) or any successor to such memorandum.

(c) PROHIBITION.—Section 1093 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c) PROHIBITION ON PAYMENT OR REIMBURSEMENT OF CERTAIN FEES.—(1) The Secretary of Defense may not pay for or reimburse any fees or expenses, including travel expenses, relating to a health-care professional gaining a license in a State if the purpose of gaining such license is to provide abortion services.

“(2) In this subsection:

“(A) The term ‘health-care professional’ means a member of the armed forces, civilian employee of the Department of Defense, personal services contractor under section 1091 of this title, or other individual who provides health care at a military medical treatment facility.

“(B) The term ‘license’ has the meaning given that term in section 1094 of this title.”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 583, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. JACKSON) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. JACKSON of Texas. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, on behalf of myself, my fellow Texan CHIP ROY, and over 70 cosponsors, I urge all of my colleagues to vote in strong support of my amendment to repeal the Department of Defense’s illegal and immoral abortion policy.

In the wake of the Supreme Court’s historic Dobbs decision overturning Roe v. Wade, the Biden administration immediately set out to sidestep the Court’s ruling and circumvent the law wherever possible.

The Biden administration has encouraged every Federal agency to create rules and adopt policies that not only expand abortion access but also leave American taxpayers on the hook to subsidize abortion services.

As evidence of this, in October of last year, the Secretary of Defense released a memo titled: “Ensuring Access to Reproductive Health Care.” This memo outlined the steps taken by the Department in order to use taxpayer dollars to provide servicemembers and their dependents access to abortions and allows for taxpayer dollars to be used so that healthcare providers can obtain the licensing required to perform such procedures.

According to its illegal policy, which is now in place, DOD can and will reimburse travel expenses for servicemembers and their dependents who travel specifically to obtain an abortion in another State. The Department of Defense will also reimburse any associated fees for healthcare professionals seeking to be licensed in another State for the purpose of performing abortions—all on the taxpayers’ dime.

Last year, immediately after DOD started this unconstitutional and illegal process, Congressman ROY and I got to work on addressing this issue and developed a bill to right this wrong.

This illegal Biden-endorsed policy has no place in our military. Taxpayer money provided to DOD is intended to provide for our national defense and our national security, not to promote and support the Biden administration’s radical and immoral pro-abortion agenda.

As mentioned, regardless of your political or personal stance on abortion, this policy is in direct violation of Federal law, specifically 10 U.S.C. 1093, which restricts funds made available to the DOD from being used for abortions.

No doubt, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will insist that taxpayer dollars are not directly funding abortions, thereby rendering the current policy legally sound. This is an absolutely misleading claim. This taxpayer money is going directly to support abortions, and anyone in this Chamber who says differently is blatantly lying to the American people.

Taxpayer funding of travel for abortion is, in fact, taxpayer-funded abortion. Abortion is the sole reason for these travel expenses, and this is in clear violation of existing law.

My Democratic colleagues want to blame me, Senator TUBERVILLE, and my colleagues like Congressman ROY for jeopardizing readiness. However, it is the Biden administration that has sidestepped existing law and given the Department permission to take this illegal action.

This has left us with no choice but to take corrective measures and pass additional legislation. The days of the radical left ignoring the law and pushing their destructive social agenda in the military are done.

I absolutely will not waver in my defense of the rule of law, therefore ensuring that taxpayer money is not used to kill innocent babies and, in doing so, also ensuring that our military servicemembers can focus on their jobs that they have in front of them and their families instead of being used for the political gain of the Biden administration.

This amendment has over 70 cosponsors because we all recognize that the DOD is carrying out an illegal policy that is divisive, immoral, and does nothing to provide for our national defense or promote our national security.

Madam Chair, I thank my friend, Congressman CHIP ROY, for co-leading this amendment with me, for being a relentless defender of the law, and for being a true warrior in protecting the life of the unborn.

I also thank the Military Personnel Subcommittee chairman, JIM BANKS, for his support of my amendment and his work on readying our servicemembers for the real threats that they face.

Lastly, I thank Chairman ROGERS for creating the strongest defense bill I have seen here in my time in Congress.

Madam Chair, I strongly urge my colleagues to support this amendment to repeal this outrageous and illegal policy and prevent any similar policy in the future.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SHERRILL. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

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

Ms. SHERRILL. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, I rise today in vehement opposition to the amendment proposed by Representative JACKSON.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle like to thank the troops and talk about honoring their sacrifice, and that is all, frankly, empty words and broken promises if this amendment passes.

This amendment puts servicewomen and military families’ lives at risk by denying the basic right to travel for healthcare that is no longer available where they are stationed.

Now that Iowa passed anti-abortion restrictions, 46 percent of servicewomen do not have access to abortion care. This would enact a dangerous healthcare travel ban.

Servicemembers signed up to put their lives on the line for our freedoms, our national values, and our constitutional rights. They did not sign up to put their lives on the line or their spouses' lives on the line because they cannot get access to basic care.

I was an officer in the Navy. What I learned was that good leaders protect their squadron. They don't abandon them in favor of their own politics or agenda.

How am I supposed to recommend to young girls in my district that they should attend a service academy like I did when we know this amendment would mean that they would be signing away their right to basic healthcare?

This amendment makes our servicewomen pawns in the majority's extreme agenda and is a steppingstone to larger bans, restrictions, and wholesale disregard for women's healthcare in America.

Madam Chair, I yield to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HOULAHAN), my good friend and a tireless champion for servicewomen.

Ms. HOULAHAN. Madam Chair, I thank Representative SHERRILL for yielding me time.

Madam Chair, I rise today in opposition to this harmful and dangerous amendment, a back door to a national ban on abortion.

I also rise saddened and frustrated that we find ourselves here in this legislative body deciding whether or not we trust our women in uniform and our military families to make healthcare decisions for themselves.

Let me say loud and clear, as someone who has worn the uniform, who had a child as an Active-Duty member, and who has a uterus, unlike many who are opining on this subject, I trust women to make the best decisions that they are able to for their own health and their families' health.

It is insulting that we have to stand here and ask our colleagues to acknowledge our servicemembers' and military family members' bodily autonomy.

I grew up in a military family, moving dozens of times. When I graduated and when the time came, I also raised my right hand.

Today, that same woman stands before you perplexed. Why would any woman want to enlist when her fundamental freedoms and those of her family are no longer her own?

The percentage of Active-Duty servicemembers who have no or severely restricted access to abortion is now 46 percent. I strongly urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment.

Ms. SHERRILL. Madam Chair, I thank Ms. HOULAHAN for her comments, and I strongly associate myself with the gentlewoman's remarks.

Madam Chair, I yield to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. SLOTKIN), one of our strongest advocates for women's healthcare.

Ms. SLOTKIN. Madam Chair, I rise today with my colleagues in opposition

to this amendment, and I want to make sure that everyone understands what this amendment means. This amendment, plus other amendments that are the exact same in the Appropriations Committee, plus the same hold that is going on by Senator TUBERVILLE, are putting culture wars ahead of national security.

We understand that Mr. JACKSON, the author of this amendment, is from Texas and that he supports an outright ban on all abortions, including for rape and for incest. We understand that he doesn't trust women. He certainly can't claim to care about recruitment into the military.

What we cannot miss, though, is that this is part and parcel of a goal from a party that wants a Federal ban on abortion. It wasn't enough that we overturned Roe in our Supreme Court, and it doesn't matter if States like Michigan vote on their ballot to preserve Roe. The majority will not stop until there is a Federal ban where it won't matter what happens in States.

Madam Chair, I stand in strong opposition to this amendment.

Ms. SHERRILL. Madam Chair, I couldn't agree more with the gentlewoman, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JACKSON of Texas. Madam Chair, may I inquire how much time remains.

The Acting CHAIR (Ms. TENNEY). The gentleman has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. JACKSON of Texas. Madam Chair, I yield to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ROGERS).

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

DOD's abortion travel policy is a flagrant violation of the congressional intent and our Nation's moral principles. This policy is part of the Biden administration's politicization of the military. It is completely unnecessary, and it is clearly unlawful.

Madam Chair, I urge all Members to support this amendment.

Mr. JACKSON of Texas. Madam Chair, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. LUNA).

Mrs. LUNA. Madam Chair, I want to start out by saying that I am a United States Air Force veteran and a woman who has been elected to Congress while pregnant who supports this because of the fact that not only does it completely attack our ability to be military ready, but when you are advocating for a servicemember to have a child ripped from their womb, they can't deploy.

To say that this is constitutional in their argument and to say that Republicans are somehow attacking women in service because we support this is not only a lie, but it completely just destroys everything that this military stands for.

Not only are there religious objections to taxpayers funding this type of stuff, but to say as a military servicemember that you would be somehow

hurting someone's rights in the military because you stand with life is pretty bizarre to me.

Ms. SHERRILL. Madam Chair, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. ESCOBAR), who is someone who not only fights for women in Congress but fights against her home State's draconian laws.

Ms. ESCOBAR. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to this amendment, which, make no mistake about it, is the Republican Party's backdoor effort to create a national abortion ban.

I represent El Paso, Texas, which is home to Fort Bliss, one of our country's premier military installations. I serve on the House Armed Services Committee, and I am a mother of two.

My colleagues want to ensure that the enlisted women of the United States military and their family members who live in Republican States where abortion has been banned are forced to carry a pregnancy to term, even in the case of rape and incest.

Unlike my Republican colleagues, I trust women, and unlike my Republican colleagues, I believe women have a place in the United States military and that it is our job to support them.

Ms. SHERRILL. Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from New Jersey has the only time remaining.

Ms. SHERRILL. Madam Chair, I yield the remaining time to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. CROW), who is my friend and a valued colleague and partner in this effort.

Mr. CROW. Madam Chair, I rise today in opposition to this extreme and misguided amendment.

In Iraq and Afghanistan, I fought alongside servicemembers from every race, gender, and political affiliation, and we had each other's backs. We still do. So, I will not sit quietly while people attack the rights of women who have stood up to serve this country. We owe them better than this.

It is extreme, misguided, and inconsistent with the values of our Nation and our military.

Madam Chair, as a standard-bearer of those values, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Chair, I rise to express my outrage at the far-right minority in this Congress attempting to force their extreme anti-abortion agenda onto what should be a bipartisan bill.

We all know the Dobbs decision last year decimated abortion access, including for over half of active-duty female servicemembers. In response, the Department of Defense announced important changes to safeguard reproductive health care access.

Amendment No. 5 aims to revoke those protections and push reproductive care further out of reach.

It is a shame that MAGA Republicans can trust women to defend our nation on battlefields but refuse to trust them to make their own healthcare decisions.

The military offers vast healthcare and educational benefits to service members. Women

continue to be the fastest growing demographic in the military, but restricting their rights tells them they're not welcome.

If my colleagues care about personal freedom, they will vote NO on this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. JACKSON).

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

Ms. SHERRILL. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

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

□ 1445

The Chair understands that amendment No. 6 will not be offered.

The Chair understands that amendment No. 7 will not be offered.

The Chair understands that amendment No. 8 will not be offered.

The Chair understands that amendment No. 9 will not be offered.

AMENDMENT NO. 10 OFFERED BY MR. ROSENDALE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 10 printed in House Report 118-142.

Mr. ROSENDALE. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

In subtitle A of title VII, add at the end the following:

**SEC. 714. PROHIBITION ON COVERAGE OF CERTAIN SEX REASSIGNMENT SURGERIES AND RELATED SERVICES UNDER TRICARE PROGRAM.**

Chapter 55 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1076f the following new section (and conforming the table of sections at the beginning of such chapter accordingly):

**“§ 1076g. TRICARE program: prohibition on coverage and furnishment of certain sex reassignment surgeries and related services**

“(a) PROHIBITION.—The medical care to which individuals are entitled to under this chapter does not include the services described in subsection (b) and the Secretary of Defense may not furnish any such service.

“(b) SERVICES DESCRIBED.—The services described in this subsection are the following:

“(1) Sex reassignment surgeries furnished for the purpose of the gender alteration of a transgender individual.

“(2) Hormone treatments furnished for the purpose of the gender alteration of a transgender individual.”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 583, the gentleman from Montana (Mr. ROSENDALE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Montana.

Mr. ROSENDALE. Madam Chair, today I rise in support of my amendment No. 10.

Amendment No. 10 is a very simple amendment. It would prohibit TRICARE from covering sex reassignment surgeries and hormone treatment for transgender individuals. The most

recent numbers tell us that the Department of Defense has performed over 240 gender reassignment surgeries, costing taxpayers approximately \$3.1 million.

Unfortunately, that is just a small part of the cost associated with this transaction. The Department has spent over \$11.5 million on psychotherapy. That is it; psychotherapy for servicemembers with gender dysphoria.

The amount of funds paid out for this psychotherapy shows that the surgery alone cannot solve the root issue for these individuals. This does nothing to help our troops continue to be the most effective fighting force on Earth and is nothing but a distraction and a waste of valuable taxpayer dollars. The government has no business funding these procedures on the taxpayer's dime.

The question that must be asked is whether having trans individuals makes the United States a more lethal force and whether it helps recruit the best and most effective talent for the United States military. The answer to that is a clear and resounding no.

A report commissioned by General Mattis found that servicemembers with claims of gender dysphoria are eight times more likely to attempt suicide than other servicemembers. It also found that these individuals are nine times more likely to have negative mental health episodes than other servicemembers.

As Thomas Spoehr, a former Army Lieutenant General put it, if those with gender dysphoria are at a much higher risk of suicide, crippling anxiety, or mental breakdowns, then their peers, those serving next to them, will be reluctant to rely on them.

Permitting them to serve also violates the principle of not placing individuals at greater risk of injury in harm's way.

Madam Chair, to summarize this, anything that does not contribute to making our fighting force the most effective fighting force on Earth is nothing more than a distraction, and I will not ask the people of Montana or the United States to pay for it.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JACOBS. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The ACTING Chair. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACOBS. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to this amendment. Trans servicemembers have served and served successfully for years.

In fact, trans people are even more likely to serve in the U.S. military than cisgender people, so it is mind-boggling that we would want to deter and discriminate against a group of people who have proven their patriotism and deep commitment to our country.

All of us are well aware that we are facing steep military recruitment and retention challenges. This amendment will worsen this crisis by pushing transgender servicemembers out of the

military. That is because gender-affirming care is necessary and medically backed.

Care that gives you the ability to be your true, authentic self is primary care, and it is not something that should be easily dismissed.

If our servicemembers constantly worry about their right to exist, their ability to serve our country is jeopardized, and it harms our readiness and ability to respond quickly and effectively to national security challenges.

I am not alone on this. Secretary Austin agrees that allowing people to serve as their authentic self is the right and the smart thing to do for our military operations.

That is why I urge my colleagues to do the right thing for our values and our readiness and oppose this harmful amendment.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSENDALE. Madam Chair, let me reiterate these numbers again. These individuals are eight times more likely to attempt suicide—eight times more likely to attempt suicide—and nine times more likely to have negative mental health episodes than other servicemembers.

United States military veterans are experiencing 21 suicides a day, and we are doing everything we can in the Veterans' Affairs Committee to reduce that number. Why in the world are we considering bringing individuals in that are going to increase that number?

If these individuals are that troubled on an ordinary day without the pressures of war, why would we risk our Nation's security on them in wartime? It just simply does not make sense.

Allowing this radical trans agenda to infiltrate our military will put our servicemembers and my constituents in harm's way and will make our country more vulnerable than it has ever been in modern history.

My commonsense amendment would save the taxpayers millions of dollars and help protect our servicemembers, as well as our country, and maybe save a lot of lives as well.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JACOBS. Madam Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH), the distinguished ranking member of the Armed Services Committee.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Chair, the ignorance contained in these comments is really breathtaking. Transgender people who have normal, regular healthcare are no more likely to commit suicide than anybody else.

Basically, the statistics he is showing say once somebody identifies as having a problem, they are more likely to have a problem.

I mean, that would be like saying, we have identified that servicemembers who complain of PTSD symptoms are more likely to commit suicide.

The point is to get proper care for transgender people, and you won't have

these issues. It is the ignorance that has prevented them from getting that proper care.

By the way, the overwhelming majority of transgender people don't need any of this any more than any of us do, but when they need it, they need it, just like when anybody else does.

To Ms. JACOBS' point, we need to recruit people. Being bigoted against transgender people takes a huge population out of the recruitment.

This is a very simple, easy thing to do and deal with. Again, I really want to emphasize not every transgender person needs this care.

If you have a problem, yes, you are more likely to have a problem, but that is true of anybody regardless of your gender. We need transgender people to serve in the military. This amendment will make that more difficult and should be defeated.

Mr. ROSENDALE. Madam Chair, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining.

The ACTING Chair. The gentleman from Montana has 1¼ minutes remaining.

Mr. ROSENDALE. Madam Chair, I yield myself the balance of my time.

What this is, it just shows the extent to which the Biden administration has been pushing this agenda into our military, and it is weakening our military. It is not making it stronger.

We have drag shows taking place at Malmstrom Air Force Base. There are 150 ICBM missiles being controlled by that Air Force base and by these individuals. I don't want someone who doesn't know if they are a man or a woman with their hand on a missile button.

We have explicit library books on display for children at Malmstrom Air Force Base and the U.S. Navy's digital ambassador program featuring drag queens posting on TikTok.

The Department of Defense is paying for travel expenses and is offering up to 21 days of leave for soldiers and their dependents to get abortions.

Again, let me tell you that anything that is not focused on making the United States military the most effective fighting force on Earth is nothing more than a distraction, and we should not be paying for it.

I won't ask the people of Montana to pay for it, and I will not ask the people across the United States to pay for it. Madam Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACOBS. Madam Chair, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining.

The ACTING Chair. The gentleman from California has 2¾ minutes remaining.

Ms. JACOBS. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank Ranking Member SMITH for his comments, and I will emphasize that transgender people are people.

They are much more than statistics. They are people serving our country. They are people who care and are patriotic.

They are more likely to harm themselves and suffer from mental health challenges due to the harmful rhetoric they hear from elected officials denying their right to exist.

My youngest sibling, my brother, is trans, and he is one of the most responsible people I know. I would be thrilled if he wanted to serve our country, and you should be, too.

Madam Chair, I yield 1½ minutes to my colleague from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Chair, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding time.

I am on the floor again holding up the Constitution, which should not be eliminated for the fighting force of Americans who have been declared by nations around the world as the strongest, most powerful fighting force in the world.

Whatever my friend says on the other side of the aisle, I have no basis for his statistics. No one has undermined the force of the men and women.

Let me pay tribute to them. Equal protection of the law says basically a healthcare issue is a healthcare issue. Trans people have healthcare issues. Trans children have healthcare issues. It is an outrage that we should deny Americans who want to die on a battlefield the right to get TRICARE.

Black maternal mortality is more prone to African-American women. Should they be in the military and denied healthcare because they have a Black maternal mortality and are more apt to have babies that die? No. They want to die on the field, too. They want to be able to wear the uniform.

I have never been able to understand how you can deny people healthcare. It is healthcare. Let me say it again: It is healthcare.

For trans children, it is more your denial, your denunciation, your contempt, your hatred that drives them to do anything toward themselves.

It could be a heterosexual, and you condemn them, and they may be prone to suicide. This is not apt to those who happen to be trans.

Please, I beg of this floor, do not pass these amendments because the Constitution will be trampled on. Healthcare, Madam Chair, is healthcare.

Ms. JACOBS. Madam Chair, I yield 1 minute to my colleague—

The ACTING Chair. The gentleman from California has 45 seconds remaining.

Ms. JACOBS. Madam Chair, I yield 45 seconds to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY).

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Chair, looking at this amendment, if you just boil it down, what it is doing is degrading the scope of coverage for military servicemembers covered by TRICARE for themselves and their dependents.

What we are doing is we are basically saying if you wear the uniform of this country, your level of insurance is

going to be less than Americans in the civilian sector or in other forms of employment-based insurance.

We have been fighting on the Armed Services Committee to raise the level of coverage and to create parity with the civilian sector as a way of recruiting people in the military. This goes backward.

This will be a first for the NDAA to degrade the TRICARE health insurance coverage for military members, people who wear the uniform of this country. Oppose this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Montana (Mr. ROSENDALE).

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

Ms. JACOBS. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

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

The Chair understands that amendment No. 11 will not be offered.

The Chair understands that amendment No. 12 will not be offered.

The Chair understands that amendment No. 13 will not be offered.

The Chair understands that amendment No. 14 will not be offered.

The Chair understands that amendment No. 15 will not be offered.

The Chair understands that amendment No. 16 will not be offered.

The Chair understands that amendment No. 17 will not be offered.

The Chair understands that amendment No. 18 will not be offered.

The Chair understands that amendment No. 19 will not be offered.

AMENDMENT NO. 20 OFFERED BY MR. NORMAN

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 20 printed in House Report 118-142.

Mr. NORMAN. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title VI, insert the following:

**SEC. 6. PROHIBITIONS ON PROVISION OF GENDER TRANSITION SERVICES THROUGH AN EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY MEMBER PROGRAM OF THE ARMED FORCES.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—No gender transition procedures, including surgery or medication, may be provided to a minor dependent child through an EFMP.

(b) REFERRALS.—No referral for procedures described in subsection (a) may be provided to a minor dependent child through an EFMP.

(c) REASSIGNMENT.—No change of duty station may be approved through an EFMP for the purpose of providing a minor dependent child with access to procedures described in subsection (a).

(d) EFMP DEFINED.—In this section, the term "Exceptional Family Member Program" means a program under section 1781c(e) of title 10, United States Code.



The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 583, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. NORMAN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

□ 1500

Mr. NORMAN. Madam Chair, it is really an embarrassment for those in the balcony and those watching on TV to even have to put up listening to amendments to deal with what MATT ROSENDALE was talking about and to deal with what my amendment is doing, which is similar to his, which is dealing with surgeries using taxpayer dollars for those who don't know whether they are a man or a woman.

It is total insanity. If you don't know if you are a man or a woman, you shouldn't be going into war.

We have got China building ships and airplanes, and here we are debating on the House floor whether taxpayer dollars should cover medical care for that person who thinks they ought to be another sex than what they are.

My amendment prohibits the provision of gender transition procedures, including surgery or medication, through the Exceptional Family Member Program.

Let me tell you what the Exceptional Family Member Program is. It provides resources to military families with special needs children. The program is designed for military spouses, children, or other dependent family members who require ongoing medical or educational services, such as individuals with asthma, autism, chronic respiratory illnesses, and others.

Recently the military has tried to politicize this valuable program for transgender procedure purposes. I almost think this administration is trying to use something insane, like what we are having to do here, to take the focus off the things that are happening in America, like the invasion at the border, crime in the streets, or an economy that is sinking, that we are having to talk about this. I am glad to do it, though. Somebody has to stop it.

For example, last year the Air Force suggested using the EFMP for families who want to help their child transition. Representative PANETTA introduced a bill to expand the EFMP to include transgender dependents and specifically lists gender dysphoria as a qualifying medical need for the program.

If you put this out to the everyday American, would they want their tax dollars used for this type of surgery? Would they want their tax dollars—and, by the way, spending money we don't have—going for this.

My amendment ensures that we reserve this valuable program for its original intent, to help families with special needs, and prohibits the use of the program for the provision of or referral for gender transition procedures, such as a gender surgery or for medica-

tion. This amendment also prohibits the change of duty station simply for the purpose of providing a child with easier access to these procedures.

Hopefully, we can all agree we should not be using taxpayer dollars to help children get transgender procedures, but, rather, reserve these resources for military families that have children with special needs, chronic illnesses, and educational needs.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Chair, I claim the time in opposition.

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Chair, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Let's be clear on what this amendment is doing. It is taking healthcare services away from servicemembers and their families. That is what this is doing. It is denying them access to healthcare.

The only way this amendment makes sense is if you believe that transgender people do not exist. That is the only way this makes sense. Unfortunately for the makers of this amendment, transgender people absolutely exist. This denial of their existence hurts certainly transgender people, but if you are a servicemember and you have somebody in your family who needs this care, you are going to get out of the service now because the military is saying that your child doesn't actually exist, doesn't actually need the same healthcare that every other child needs.

Again, it is repeated over and over again, oh, this has nothing to do with defending the country. Making sure that we have the best people serving in the military is the number one thing to do with defending this country. We are now taking a huge chunk of the population, anyone who has a transgender family member or even anyone who thinks they might at some point, and saying: You are out, don't serve. No matter how capable, no matter how qualified you are, we are going to make it impossible for you to serve primarily because of the colossal ignorance that a lot of people have about what transgender means.

You can listen to the sarcasm in their voices: They don't know if they are a man or a woman. That is not what transgender is, okay? It is both a very legitimate psychological and physical issue that some people have to deal with, just like in the special needs services. I have met with servicemembers who had a child who had any manner of different problems. They were able to stay in the military because their child could get the care they needed. We are taking all those people and kicking them to the curb because we are ignorant of what transgender is and the importance of dealing with it.

Madam Chair, I urge my colleagues to please oppose this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NORMAN. Madam Chair, what he just said, I don't think his facts are

right. You could take everybody in this balcony and ask if they know members who fall into two classes of people, those with special needs and those where a man wants to be a girl. Line them up. The numbers of the group with special needs would far exceed the numbers of the other, and they are the ones that need the tax dollars, not the ones that want to change their sex.

Now, let me tell you some of the chronic life-threatening conditions that this money should go for and did go for until this idiotic idea of using dollars for the trans. It is life-threatening conditions or chronic, including current chronic mental health conditions, asthma or other respiratory-related diagnosis with chronic recurring symptoms, attention deficit disorder, chronic conditions that require adaptive equipment, including technology and environmental or architectural considerations.

I mean, it is idiotic for him to say that the needs of a huge group of people all over this country will be trumped by the needs for a very few. The trans, I think if you do the math, it is less than 1 percent.

No, I think this is a diversion tactic to just get people away. They are weakening the military. That is why we are down 30 percent in recruitment.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Chair, families care about their children, and it stuns me that the gentleman on the other side has indicated that he wants to take health decisions out of the hands of parents who are serving in the United States military, committed to laying their life down for America, and eliminate it to the point that the parents who love the military must leave the military and diminish our fighting force.

Let me be clear. As relates to trans children and medical care, every major medical and mental health association in the United States, representing more than 1.3 million U.S. doctors, support age-appropriate gender-affirming care for transgender people.

In addition, in the special needs of the soldiers and others in the United States military, there is no indication that money would be taken away from special needs children as relates to the particular needs of trans children. What it does say is that parents who love their children would be discriminated against depending on what their health need is.

Therefore, I rise today in opposition to this ill-thought-out and ill-fated, I hope, amendment that clearly divides us as Americans, as members of the United States military, in that it goes against science and medicine because this affirming medical care has been accepted.

I am struck, as I end, by someone suggesting that someone who has their hand on a nuclear weapon or they are in some strategic assignment is diminished because they have a life that is different from someone else, that they are no more of a soldier than someone else. They are a soldier. They are part of the military, and families should be allowed to make decisions for their children.

Madam Chair, these health decisions are life-changing and needed, and medical doctors and science affirm it. I oppose this amendment.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Chair, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. JACOBS).

Ms. JACOBS. Madam Chair, let's be clear: Every major medical association in the United States, every single major medical association in the United States representing more than 1.3 million United States doctors, has affirmed that gender-affirming care is safe and effective.

Healthcare decisions for children should be between the patient, the parents, and the healthcare provider, not the government, not some politician who has no idea what he is talking about. I wonder what you would do if your kid came to you, sure that they were in the wrong body.

Madam Chair, I have talked to parents. Many of them didn't think they believed in trans issues either. But it should be between a parent, their child, and their doctor what healthcare decisions get made.

By denying servicemembers the ability to provide medically necessary care for their children, including by relocating, this amendment will likely lead to servicemembers leaving the military and will weaken efforts to recruit other people who do or may have transgender family members.

Madam Chair, I urge my colleagues to oppose this horrible amendment.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. NORMAN).

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 21 OFFERED BY MS. GREENE OF GEORGIA

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. DAVIDSON). It is now in order to consider amendment No. 21 printed in House Report 118-142.

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 709, beginning line 18, strike sections 1223, 1224, and 1225.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 583, the gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. GREENE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Georgia.

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I rise today to ask the House to pass my amendment to pull the funding for the war in Ukraine.

I am the proud daughter of a Navy combat veteran who served in the Vietnam war. I am also a grateful American for the freedoms I have the great honor to possess, and I fully respect our country's brave men and women who have fought and those that died so that Americans can be free.

I believe that in order to achieve world peace, America must have the strongest military in the world but only cautiously use our tremendous force when our national security is threatened.

In recent years, we have seen our great military and those who serve our country be used too often for the defense of foreign nations, and we have far too many veterans today who suffer physically and mentally from the foreign wars they were sent to fight. We have seen too many American flag-draped caskets return home to grieving families.

While our troops are not yet on the ground in Ukraine, fighting to defend another country's border that is not our own, most Americans fear that could soon be the case because they know Washington's bloodlust for war is an addiction that seems almost impossible to be undone.

While Americans struggle with the record-high inflation caused by failed government policies, many hard-working Americans can barely pay their bills. After decades of America's last policies that have built up other countries' economies while destroying American manufacturing, sending our jobs overseas, and crippling the middle class, creating the massive divide between the rich and the poor, Americans no longer want to pay for and go fight Washington's forever foreign wars.

Yet, disconnected from the will of Americans just over a year ago, Congress voted to send \$113 billion to Ukraine, a sum of money that is approximately 10 times the cost of building our own border wall. Today, we are debating the National Defense Authorization Act that contains even more money to be sent to Ukraine while the \$113 billion already authorized has not yet even been spent.

The amendment I am offering today will pull the \$300 million in funding to Ukraine from the National Defense Authorization Act.

The National Defense Authorization Act is one of the most important funding bills that Congress passes year after year. This is the funding of our Nation's defense. This is the funding

for the Department of Defense. This is the funding for the good men and women who serve in our military.

□ 1515

The Department of Defense's website makes its mission clear. It says that its mission is to deter war and protect our Nation's national security.

With the Department of Defense mission being very clear in stating what the mission is, no money funding and fueling the Ukraine war belongs in our National Defense Authorization Act because this is for our Nation, not for another nation, not for Ukraine. Ukraine is not the 51st State.

Sending money to fund a war in a foreign country does not deter war, it continues it. It causes it. It enables it and it allows it. Sending money to fund a war in a foreign country against a nuclear-armed nation does not protect our national security, it endangers our national security. It endangers every single American. It endangers the entire world. We do not want World War III.

I rise today to encourage all of my colleagues to consider that they can pass another funding bill to fund money going to Ukraine without it being in our National Defense Authorization Act. I ask my colleagues and urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this amendment.

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

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Chairman, I claim time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As we consider this amendment today, Ukrainians are suffering greatly as Russia's brutal war against their sovereignty continues unabated. Seventy-eight percent of Ukrainians have had either a family member or a friend die because of Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine. Cities have been decimated, families have been broken, and lives have been lost.

But the Zelenskyy government stands, the fight for democracy is alive, and Ukrainian willpower is and has been unflappable, and Putin's so-called "special military operation" has become one of the biggest strategic catastrophes in Russian history as we stand today. Russian generals are disappearing, and the Wagner group was marching on Moscow, not Kyiv, just a few weeks ago.

The United States' security assistance has been absolutely essential for the Ukrainian Army's heroic stand against the invaders of their homeland. We cannot and must not pull back now. The cost of this war on the Ukrainian people has been immense, but their bravery has been even more monumental.

I urge all Members to oppose this amendment, and I am confident that it



will, in fact, be opposed in a strong bipartisan vote.

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

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I again remind Congress that Ukraine is not the 51st State of America. This is not a NATO ally, and this is our National Defense Authorization Act, for our Nation, for the United States of America with 50 States.

I would also like to remind Congress that the Department of Defense has failed its audit every single year, year over year. Last year alone, they could not account for over 61 percent of their assets.

The Department of Defense is not doing a good job with the money that Congress allows for it to have for our Nation's defense, and I think that it is important, again, for everyone in Congress to realize the American people don't work hard every single day to pay for other countries' borders to be defended. They want our border defended.

We have 300 Americans dying every single day from fentanyl poisoning that is coming from China and the Mexican cartels. If our Department of Defense wants to defend America, we should be defending our border and not proclaiming our righteousness talking about a war in Ukraine.

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

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Chairman, I request an Advil, and I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON).

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Chairman, as a 31-year Army veteran myself, and a grateful father of four sons who have served overseas in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Egypt, I believe very much in the principles of Ronald Reagan, peace through strength.

I am very grateful that, in fact, President Donald Trump was the first person to recognize and try to stop the war in Ukraine. He sent javelin missiles to stop Putin, war criminal Putin.

He put American troops in Poland, which had the effect of stopping war criminal Putin. He also warned the Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel and others that Nord Stream 2 should be closed and stopped to avoid the funding of any war by war criminal Putin.

So in that tradition, I would oppose any cutting of the defense because we know this is a worldwide war that we are in of authoritarians versus democracies. This is not a war we chose. War criminal Putin is the person who started the war February 24.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California has 3 minutes remaining.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOULTON).

Mr. MOULTON. Mr. Chairman, let me just start by associating my re-

marks with the remarks of my friend, Mr. JOE WILSON, from South Carolina. It is not often that we get to do that on the floor of this House.

Joe and I come from different places but we believe in America. We believe in America and we want to protect America.

It has been a long time since we have had to stand here and talk about the Republican Party being pro-Russia, the Republican Party being pro-Putin.

Just to be clear, 62 percent of Americans in the last poll want to support Ukraine, so it is just factually inaccurate to say that most Americans are against this.

Why is it important? It is important that we support Ukraine because American lives are on the line. Serving in Iraq in the Marines, it was our allies that saved American marines lives. It was our allies that made a difference.

If you are soft on Russia, by being hard on Ukraine today, you are being soft on China because American lives will be on the line if China thinks they can do what Putin is trying to do in Ukraine.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Washington. President Biden's policy on Ukraine has been clear and it has got two pieces: First, do what we can to support Ukraine, to make sure that a sovereign democratic Ukraine survives; second, don't go to war with Russia.

So it is the red herring of all red herrings to say that U.S. troops are going to be put into this conflict. The conflict has been going on for over 18 months. We have very carefully not dragged U.S. troops, or even NATO troops, into this conflict.

What we are doing is we are supporting a sovereign democratic Ukraine against a tyrannical dictator who is trying to take over that country through violence. If Putin succeeds in Ukraine, he won't stop at Ukraine.

I also am interested in the sponsor of this amendment's remark that the U.S. shouldn't care about what goes on in the rest of the world which, I guess, means we shouldn't care about what is going on in China.

The purpose of all of this is deterrence. We want to deter Russia from going further than Ukraine. We want to deter China from thinking they can use military force to claim sovereign territory.

Deterrence is what will stop U.S. servicemembers from winding up dying in a war. We need to support Ukraine.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Chair, do I have any more time remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California has 1 minute remaining.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chairman, just building off of that is really important. I think the President

and a whole lot of people have over and over explained what we are doing in Ukraine.

We should not fight every war everywhere. I agree with that. That is why I strongly supported getting us out of Afghanistan long before we actually did. There was not a strategic interest there and, also, U.S. lives were being lost in Afghanistan. That was what was at stake.

In Ukraine, along with 53 other countries in the world, we are supporting an effort to protect a sovereign democracy against a dictatorship. Those are core U.S. interests.

The Ukrainians are doing the fighting. All they are asking for is our support. If we can deter that type of aggression, it does advance U.S. interests. It does protect U.S. servicemembers from having to fight.

We don't want to fight at home. We don't want to fight anywhere in the world, but you have to stand up to dictators who are willing to push that if you are going to get to that place. That is what we are doing in Ukraine in a very effective manner.

Let's not abandon Ukraine at this point. They deserve our support.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

The Acting CHAIR. All time is expired. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. GREENE).

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

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 22 OFFERED BY MR. GAETZ

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 22 printed in House Report 118-142.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the appropriate place in subtitle A of title XVIII, insert the following:

SEC. \_\_\_\_ PROHIBITION ON SECURITY ASSISTANCE FOR UKRAINE.

Notwithstanding any provision of this or any other Act, no Federal funds may be made available to provide security assistance to Ukraine.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 583, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Chairman, this amendment is quite similar to the prior one, but it wouldn't just strip the cash out of the bill; it would not require further security assistance to Ukraine.

I offer this amendment because the Biden administration is sleepwalking our great country into a world war. The American people did not sign up for this, and I believe Congress needs to have the solemnity to be able to stop this madness.

I miss the days when Democrats used to be anti-war. I listened with great interest as the ranking member, who I have great respect for, said the goal of this entire Ukraine-U.S. enterprise is to ensure that we are not going to war with Russia. That is a bit odd to hear, after several Democrats have taken to this floor and media outlets to suggest we are at war with Russia.

It was, in fact, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) who came to this floor and said we are at war with Russia. It was the gentleman from Massachusetts who just spoke on the prior amendment, who said, functionally, the same thing.

I do not want to go to war with Russia, and I don't think the American people do either. That does not make anyone pro-Putin.

I would similarly observe that part of the funding assistance that we are providing to Ukraine has nothing to do with the military. In this country we have cops, we have firemen, we have teachers who wonder whether or not their pension fund is going to be sufficient to cover their life for the service that they have given.

While that is a question in our country, it is no question in Ukraine because the American taxpayer is underwriting all of the pensions for every single government official in Ukraine, and we don't do that for the people who put out our fires and protect our streets.

Similarly, how can we continue to just send all this money when there is a lack of accountability?

The Pentagon has to fess up that they have multibillion-dollar accounting errors in this space.

When we had the inspector general before our House Armed Services Committee, he could not testify that our country had followed our own requirements and our own laws regarding the end-use monitoring of equipment that we are sending into a combat zone.

We have unfunded needs in our own military, and I support the NDAA. I am grateful that we have done a lot of work but, even with this NDAA, in America there will be hangars that are rusting out. In America there will be platforms that need upgrades, and they will go wanting while Ukraine seems to have an unlimited amount of support in this Congress that is unwarranted.

Forty percent of our training aircraft can't even fly in this country because we don't have sufficient parts to be able to get it to them.

This war will end any time those folks in Europe want it to. But they keep buying the Russian gas, and they keep expecting all of us in America to subsidize Europe's defense while they provide some massive social welfare

state. I am not for it, and that is why I would encourage my colleagues to vote for my amendment.

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

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Chairman, I claim time in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment is consistent with certain members of the Republican Party's continued opposition to aiding Ukraine.

Our security assistance to Ukraine over the past year plus has been crucial to Ukrainian efforts to counter Russia's illegal, immoral, and reprehensible invasion of another sovereign nation.

If Vladimir Putin and our foreign adversaries can invade other countries without any response from the United States or our allies around the globe, then every country in the world becomes less safe.

The United States is not fighting a war in Ukraine. We are giving Ukrainians the weapons they need to fight the war for themselves and defend their country from totalitarian invaders.

We must support our friends who are standing on the front lines of the fight for freedom in this world. I oppose this amendment forcefully, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Chairman, I am at a loss when my colleague asks without any response from the United States. It has already been \$115 billion that we have authorized. One hell of a response, I would say.

But there has to be some point in time where we put our country ahead of Ukraine, and that is what this amendment does.

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

□ 1530

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. SPARTZ).

Mrs. SPARTZ. Mr. Chair, I have to say there are things where I agree with my colleagues, the Republicans. It is good to have healthy dialogue and discussion. We are a free institution here. I actually agree that we need to defend our borders, too. I actually agree that we need to have better oversight and go to better security assistance and not some other things, too.

I actually agree with them that we need to have the fiscal issues resolved at the Department of Defense and offered amendments, but I disagree that Ukraine is not a national interest.

Stopping this war and deterring aggressors like China and Russia is in our national interest. Many Americans were killed by Russian-made weapons

around the world, and we need to learn from the mistakes of World War II that weakness invites aggression.

I truly believe this administration didn't do that good of a job deterring it, but now we need to help Ukraine. We need to understand that there are a lot of lives that are going to be lost for Ukrainians. We need to make sure that we don't have never-ending war, and better security assistance will help to restore peace.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chair, the millions of Americans whose families sent loved ones over to the European theater during World War II so liberty could be bequeathed to us understand what an enemy really is and what sacrifice is required.

The Ukrainians are fighting their own war against Russia's invasion. History is clear, however, on what horrors transpire when national leaders appease a virulent enemy of liberty. Appeasement is read as cowardice, acquiescence, weakness, and, even worse, succor to the enemy.

Give no succor nor encouragement to liberty's enemies. We need to defend freedom. Freedom means never surrendering, never acquiescing, never failing liberty.

I ask my colleagues to join me in full support of Ukraine and to defeat any amendments on this floor that in any way would inhibit victory for Ukraine.

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON).

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Chair, Congresswoman VICTORIA SPARTZ is correct. We can learn from the lessons of World War II. There was weakness, and with that weakness, Imperial Japan attacked China. Then, ultimately, on December 7, 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor.

We must be resolved to resist by having peace through strength. I personally can identify. My father served in China and India during World War II with the Flying Tigers to stop the tide of imperialism at that time.

Today, we can learn from history. Today is the 79th anniversary of the liberation of Guam. We don't need to repeat the weakness that has occurred. We need to stop our enemies today. These authoritarians have plans to dissolve the United States, and we need to stop it now.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Chair, they accuse this amendment of being born of weakness. Guess what, Mr. Chair? It does not make America stronger to borrow money from China to give to Ukraine.

Do you know who we are appeasing? China. As we engage in this endeavor, China is doing a leveraged buyout of Russia. We see that in Eastern Russia. We see that in the Russian assets in China.

We are actually helping China weaken ourselves all to figure out which guy in a sweat suit gets to run Crimea, and

that doesn't seem like America's interest to me.

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

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Chair, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Washington State (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Chair, I actually think the gentleman is correct. China and Russia are very closely aligned, and if you are concerned about Chinese aggression in the world, you must also be concerned about Russian aggression.

I also note that when he quoted me on what the policy was, he conveniently left out the first part. He mentioned that we don't want to get into a war with Russia, but he left out the first part, which is "preserve a sovereign, democratic Ukraine." President Biden and his team have done an excellent job of this.

Nobody thought Ukraine could survive this long, but thanks to their courage, their willingness to fight, and 53 nations that have coalesced to help them, they have been able to preserve a sovereign, democratic Ukraine.

I want to place a strong emphasis on that. I know Americans are rightly worried. Is it just us standing up for these principles in the world? In Ukraine, it is not. It is 53 nations that are contributing across the board, 53 nations that believe preserving economic and political freedom requires us to not let an autocrat like Vladimir Putin run over Ukraine. Please oppose this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Chair, may I inquire as to the time remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida has 1¼ minutes remaining.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Chair, the funds sent to Ukraine represent a major investment in war, not national defense or building infrastructure to deter conflict. This is the active engagement in the killing of sons, daughters, husbands, and wives abroad. We shouldn't be funding these actions until the defense of our country can be reflected with some sort of tangible connection.

The money to Ukraine does not fulfill this objective.

There must be a threshold for funding a proxy war. How much will it take to win? What is the return? When will it end?

The Biden administration does not have answers to these questions, and until they do, we should stop sending money to these misadventures.

The United States of America is not the world's police force, and we are not the world's piggy bank, but they would have us become the block captains of Kyiv.

My amendment is going to lose overwhelmingly when it is put up for a vote, but the American people will see who wants to represent them and who wants to represent Crimea.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ).

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

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 23 OFFERED BY MS. GREENE OF GEORGIA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 23 printed in House Report 118-142.

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 385, beginning line 3, strike section 750.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 583, the gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. GREENE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Georgia.

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I rise today to again strike funding out of the National Defense Authorization Act.

The National Defense Authorization Act is an important funding bill for the United States of America, not for any other country. The American people are fed up and tired of the hard-earned tax dollars that they pay to our government being spent in foreign lands and foreign countries for foreign causes and foreign people.

To be against funding for war is not pro-Russia. It is pro-America, pro-Americans, and pro our own American border.

I would like to talk about this feasibility study for creating a center of excellence in Ukraine by reminding the House today that there are approximately 40,000 homeless veterans in America today. These are men and women who served our country, served to defend our national security, but yet they are living homeless on the streets.

Our National Defense Authorization Act should only fund the Department of Defense for the defense of our country. I will state the mission statement on the Department of Defense website: The mission stands to deter war and to protect our Nation's national security.

Engaging and paying for a feasibility study on creating a center of excellence in Ukraine does not deter war, nor does that protect our national security interest.

I would like to talk about the people that we should care about, the people we should be spending our American tax dollars on. One of them is a man named Mike Reynolds. Mike lives in

my district and is a veteran who served our country. Mike has a brain injury, a brain injury that he sustained while serving the United States of America in our military.

Mike did not get help from Veterans Affairs. Mike is not receiving help from a feasibility study in the Department of Defense funding in the NDAA. Mike had to establish his own way of helping himself by creating a very important and incredible organization to help other veterans who also don't receive help. It is called HERO Ag.

Mike is a farmer, and he learned to become a farmer because he found that farming was a way that he could heal not only his brain but he could also heal the pain inside of him that he sustained from serving and fighting in another foreign war, not America's war.

What Mike does now is he spends his time rehabbing other veterans who are also injured in all kinds of ways, some of them not visible by our own eyes because their injury is inside and inside their brains.

Mike is a great American, and I am so proud that he lives in my district. I am honored and always grateful to visit his farm and do anything I can to help HERO Ag and help the veterans that go there.

Our National Defense Authorization Act should be funding our Department of Defense for our Nation's military, and that doesn't have anything to do with another nation.

There is a lot of talk in the House today coming from both sides of the aisle, talking about what the NDAA is for, but too much of the time, I am hearing it talk about a war in Ukraine.

Again, I will remind everyone here that Ukraine is not the 51st State. Ukraine is another country in another land. American lives are not being risked. They are not being killed in Ukraine because Ukraine, again, is not part of the United States of America.

Our tax dollars come from America. They come from hardworking Americans, and they very much want their money only to be spent for the defense of our border, of our States, and of our national security interest.

This is a feasibility study that should not be in our NDAA. This should be in a separate funding bill, just like \$300 million going to Ukraine should be in a separate funding bill because it doesn't make sense for the NDAA. This feasibility study for creating a center of excellence in Ukraine should be in a separate funding bill, and that would be the important way to handle it.

Now, I will ask the House today: Is it our job to be the world's police? Is it our job to create feasibility studies on how to help injured people all over the world?

While the NDAA has a proposed center of excellence for Ukraine, the NDAA does not have a proposed center of excellence for countries in Africa that have civil wars going on where there are people there dealing with amputations or brain injuries. This

doesn't have a feasibility study to help any other country but Ukraine. Again, I will reiterate: Ukraine is not the United States of America.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Chair, I claim the time in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Mrs. SPARTZ). The gentleman from Connecticut is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Chair, I will begin by injecting some facts into this discussion.

We debated this measure in the Armed Services Committee. The amendment was adopted to extend the feasibility study from the U.S. Center of Excellence at Walter Reed Hospital, which was created by the NDAA in 2009, to help maybe advise the Ukrainians in terms of setting up their own center of excellence within their own country to treat victims of traumatic brain injury and also other horrible injuries that are happening in real time.

There were drone attacks on Kyiv last night where four Ukrainians were injured severely, and when committee members had a chance to actually vote on this, the amendment was adopted 49-10, which was actually the largest bipartisan vote of the entire markup for this year's NDAA.

I want to be clear: This does not establish a center of excellence in Ukraine. It basically talks about the feasibility of advising healthcare officials within Ukraine in terms of best practices from the over decade of experience that we have at Walter Reed, which has helped thousands of U.S. veterans who suffered TBI in the Middle East.

I applaud the gentlewoman's constituent, who is doing great work. Some of those individuals do it on their own, in terms of setting up their own services, but there is no question that this center has provided great direct healthcare for people suffering from this wound of war. It has also helped create best practices as we have learned more about this type of injury because of the hard experience that took place in Iraq and Afghanistan.

□ 1545

There are probably, as calculated now, well over 100,000 Ukrainians who are wounded and suffering injuries, civilians in most cases, from indiscriminate bombing by Russia, who is conducting an illegal, unprovoked invasion of Ukraine. This is the ultimate, in terms of humanitarian assistance to victims of war, to victims of aggression, using, again, the well-honed skills and healthcare expertise of our country to help an ally who is fighting the fight in terms of protecting their democratic self-rule from an invasion by Russia.

We had very strong bipartisan support to support this effort. I hope that we will vote in a resounding fashion for political reasons, for military reasons, and for just simple decency to help people who have suffered injuries.

Madam Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE).

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Madam Chair, in Ukraine, since day one of this war, attacks have been aimed at civilian structures, hospitals, energy infrastructure, and urban centers. In the battlefield, Russia has brutally murdered prisoners of war as their Wagnerites occupied Ukraine's towns and territory.

Allied military sources say that Russia has landmined Ukrainian territory at an unprecedented rate, making it one of the largest minefields in the world. These minefields in war zones and in agricultural areas will likely cause civilian death and require billions of dollars to safely remove in the coming years. The World Bank estimated the cost to be at \$37.6 billion.

Ukraine is paying for their freedom with their lives as we speak, but the mental, emotional, familial, and social scars will be there for generations to come. Ukrainian citizens are living through a nightmare because of their push toward democracy during the Revolution of Dignity in 2014.

This amendment prohibits a feasibility study on centers for treatment of traumatic brain injuries to improve the lives of individuals affected by traumatic brain injury experienced in Ukraine as a result of Russian aggression and to improve the lives of the family members of such an individual.

Honestly, we should be funding centers across the world because that is a better expression of democracy than what is often exhibited.

This amendment is callous, and America and our partners' support of Ukraine's fight for freedom is better than that.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman has the only time remaining.

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Chair, may I inquire as to the time remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Connecticut has 30 seconds remaining.

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Chair, again, really quickly, I would just note that this builds on an amendment which was adopted in last year's NDAA to establish a partnership between the DOD and Ukraine. Again, that is still sort of working its way through the system.

Again, this is really about trying to explore the value of the Center of Excellence for TBI, which, again, I think, is something that all of us should support just for simple decency reasons.

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

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

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

Ms. GREENE of Georgia. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Ms. GREENE of Georgia) assumed the chair.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A further message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Deirdre Kelly, one of his secretaries.

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

#### NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024

The Committee resumed its sitting.

AMENDMENT NO. 24 OFFERED BY MR. DAVIDSON

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. BENTZ). It is now in order to consider amendment No. 24 printed in House Report 118-142.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title XII, add the following:

#### SEC. \_\_. REPORT AND STRATEGY FOR UNITED STATES INVOLVEMENT IN UKRAINE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State, shall develop and submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains a strategy for United States involvement in Ukraine.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required by subsection (a) shall contain the following elements:

(1) A strategy stating the explicit United States national interest at stake with respect to the conflict in Ukraine, including an annex of specific objectives and benchmarks to measure the success or failure of continued United States involvement with respect to Ukraine.

(2) A plan detailing a diplomatic pathway, including any personnel involved in diplomatic communications, by which the United States can facilitate a negotiated cessation of hostilities in Ukraine.

(3) An assessment of the costs to the United States and to Ukraine if the conflict is allowed to continue for an additional 1 year, 5 years, or 10 years.

(c) FORM.—The report required by subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(d) BRIEFING.—Not later than 45 days after the date of the submission of the report required by subsection (a), the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State shall provide to the appropriate congressional committees, and other Members of Congress that wish to participate, a briefing on the United States strategy with respect to Ukraine and plans for the implementation of such strategy.

(e) LIMITATION ON FUNDS.—None of the amounts authorized to be appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be made available for Ukraine until the report required by subsection (a) is submitted to the appropriate congressional committees.