

HONORING DR. NICHOLAS F. ROBERTS, SR.

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

Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor an extraordinary individual whose legacy has left an unforgettable mark on eastern North Carolina and the Nation—Dr. Nicholas F. Roberts, Sr.

Recently, we unveiled a historical marker, a testament to the remarkable life of Dr. Roberts, a man of significant influence. Dr. Roberts, a Shaw University alumnus, pastor, editor, and public servant, hailed from the town of Seaboard in Northampton County, North Carolina.

His dedication to education, faith, and community service set a standard that still inspires us today. I am glad to add that Dr. Roberts is also the great-grandfather of my esteemed colleague, the gentleman from Virginia, Representative BOBBY SCOTT.

As we commemorate Dr. Roberts, let us reflect on the tremendous impact one individual can have on the community and a nation. His contributions are a guiding light, reminding us that our community is only as strong as its people and our future is shaped by those who came before us.

#### ILLINOIS HISTORY MADE AS IT ELIMINATES CASH BAIL

(Mrs. RAMIREZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the proud Representative of a congressional district in Illinois, a State committed to progress, justice, safety, and human rights.

Yesterday, Illinois made history as the first State in the Nation to eliminate cash bail, a standard used to punish poverty instead of upholding justice. A standard that kept those without means, especially Black and Brown Illinoisans, in jail for months as they awaited trial, while letting slip those who could afford bail independent of the crime that they were accused of.

Some may say we are reforming our criminal justice system, but we are doing more than that. I especially thank Senator Robert Peters, who led the effort in the Illinois General Assembly. We, unlike other States, are creating a justice system that protects the victims, ensures equal due process for everyone independent of their means. The Pretrial Fairness Act is a historic win for civil rights advocates across our Nation, and it is time Congress followed Illinois' lead toward progress.

□ 1215

#### COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE PRAMILA JAYAPAL, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable PRAMILA JAYAPAL, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, September 19, 2023.

Hon. KEVIN MCCARTHY,  
Speaker, House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MISTER SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I, the Honorable Pramila Jayapal, U.S. Representative for the 7th Congressional District of Washington, have been served with a third-party subpoena to produce documents in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Georgia.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that only partial compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the privileges and rights of the House.

Sincerely,

PRAMILA JAYAPAL,  
Member of Congress.

#### PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1435, PRESERVING CHOICE IN VEHICLE PURCHASES ACT; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4365, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2024

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 680 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 680

*Resolved*, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 1435) to amend the Clean Air Act to prevent the elimination of the sale of internal combustion engines. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 2. At any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4365) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations or their respective designees. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as

read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived.

SEC. 3. (a) No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, amendments en bloc described in section 4 of this resolution, and pro forma amendments described in section 5 of this resolution.

(b) Each amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules 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 except as provided by section 5 of this resolution, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole.

(c) All points of order against amendments printed in the report of the Committee on Rules or against amendments en bloc described in section 4 of this resolution are waived.

SEC. 4. It shall be in order at any time for the chair of the Committee on Appropriations or her designee to offer amendments en bloc consisting of amendments printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution not earlier disposed of. Amendments en bloc offered pursuant to this section shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations or their respective designees, shall not be subject to amendment except as provided by section 5 of this resolution, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole.

SEC. 5. During consideration of the bill for amendment, the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations or their respective designees may offer up to 10 pro forma amendments each at any point for the purpose of debate.

SEC. 6. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Oklahoma is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ), my very good friend, pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 680.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, last week the Rules Committee met and reported out a

rule, House Resolution 680, consideration of H.R. 4365, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2024, under a structured rule.

It provides 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking member of the Committee on Appropriations or their designees. It also makes in order 184 amendments; more than 75 percent of those eligible for consideration. Finally, it provides for a motion to recommit.

I rise today in support of the rule and the underlying legislation.

Mr. Speaker, our democracy remains a beacon of hope to the entire world. Billions of people across the globe look to the United States as a leader in freedom and liberty and as a protector of peace. From the very moment our Nation was conceived, a strong national defense has been a differentiator of democracy. Essential to protecting the homeland, international order, and the American people from those who would seek to do us harm, we must never lose sight of the need to maintain a strong defense.

Although our men and women in uniform give of themselves every day, they cannot do their jobs unless Congress does its job. Only Congress can provide the funding our military needs to fulfill its duties. That is our responsibility. Today we move forward with that commitment as we take up H.R. 4365, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2024. We must do our duty and make sure that our brave military members can move forward with theirs.

With evolving threats, we continue to face a struggle seen throughout time. The contest between freedom and tyranny is not far from us. From Vladimir Putin's unjust and illegal invasion of Ukraine, to China's posturing in the South China Sea, to continued threats posed by extremists and terrorists, hostile actors are looking for weakness. Yet, America's Armed Forces remain ready to meet any challenge wherever it may arise. Continuing to meet those threats requires an appropriate investment of national resources. With today's measure, we fulfill that commitment and ensure that our Armed Forces will have the resources they need to meet any foe anywhere in the world at any time.

The bill before us provides full funding for the national defense. It appropriates \$826 billion in new discretionary spending, which is a modest increase of \$300 million over the President's budget request and nearly \$29 billion, or 3.6 percent, over the fiscal year 2023 enacted level.

H.R. 4365 makes targeted investments that support critical priorities. Perhaps the most important of these priorities is to reinvest in our servicemen and -women. The bill provides a 5.2 percent pay raise for our servicemembers. For junior enlisted servicemembers, we provide an historic pay increase of an average of 30 percent, en-

suring that we not only offset the effects of President Biden's inflationary crisis for these younger and most junior servicemembers, but also ensuring that we can retain servicemembers who are at the beginning of their military careers.

I would be remiss, Mr. Speaker, not to give credit to the gentleman from California (Mr. MIKE GARCIA), my good friend and fellow defense appropriator, for this particular measure, both in the appropriations bill and, frankly, in the NDAA, as well. His work on behalf of younger servicepeople has been exemplary, relentless, and effective.

The bill also makes continued and necessary investments to ensure that we will continue to have the best equipped and best-trained fighting force now and into the future. We fund continued expansion of the Navy, making sure that we will be able to continue to protect freedom of the seas around the globe and fund development and acquisition of next-generation weapons systems.

However, it doesn't stop there, Mr. Speaker. H.R. 4365 also ensures that the Biden administration cannot continue to put politics ahead of national security. It preserves existing and longstanding bipartisan bans on taxpayer funding for abortions. It also ensures that Federal dollars cannot be used to indoctrinate our troops with progressive ideology like critical race theory training, and instead ensures that the Pentagon's focus is where it should be: on military readiness and preparedness so that our warfighters can defeat aggression and defend freedom anywhere in the world.

All in all, there is much to like in today's bill, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to advancing this measure through a robust amendment process on the floor and onward to final passage. I urge Members to support both the rule and the underlying legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chair COLE for the dignity and respect that he shows each of his colleagues on the Rules Committee. It is a great honor to be debating this rule with him this afternoon.

I must, however, rise in opposition to the rule because we only have six legislative days left to fund the government, and we are considering only one of the eleven bills that we must pass to fully fund our Federal Government.

I completely agree with our chair that our country is a beacon of hope and that we must, indeed, fund our military in the way that they need in order to continue to provide that beacon of hope and that strength that we must communicate both to our allies and those who would do us harm.

Indeed, America is facing significant security threats from a rampaging Russia, the Chinese Communist Party, and a soon-to-be nuclear North Korea. Instead of uniting us, however, against those very real threats, extreme MAGA Republicans are putting Americans at

war with each other with this divisive Defense appropriations bill.

Extreme MAGA Republicans are weakening our military readiness. In the Senate, Republicans are refusing to allow votes on flag officers, so we don't have the generals, admirals, and top military officers we need to lead our troops. Here in the House, instead of passing what should be and has historically been a bipartisan Defense appropriations bill, extreme Republicans are inserting the kitchen sink of culture war issues that we have seen too often.

Indeed, when we talk about women, this bill is another step in their march toward a national abortion ban. If this bill is enacted, a servicewoman in a State with a total abortion ban that doesn't have exceptions for rape would not be able to take leave and get help to travel to a place like New Mexico where a woman's right to receive the full access to reproductive healthcare is honored. Fourteen States have a total ban on abortion. In each of those 14 States, we will find servicewomen who are honorably serving our Nation.

In addition, this bill sets up minorities and our servicemembers who are gay, lesbian, and all individuals of the LGBTQ community to harassment.

At a moment when we know that some of our bases are under threat from climate change, this bill cuts \$714 million from climate resiliency programs. I have been to our bases in the Pacific islands, and I recognize that we must have climate resilience if we don't want our bases to be under water. By giving up on preparing for climate resiliency, we are giving up a strategic military advantage that we should take advantage of.

□ 1230

Instead of focusing on how we can improve recruitment from our diverse communities in America when we are failing to meet our recruitment goals, this appropriation prohibits funding for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

We know that people of color answer the call to service at disproportionately higher rates, and those numbers are not reflected in military leadership. This bill tells my Latino and Native American communities they are not valued.

Congressman NEGUSE asked the Defense Subcommittee chair why he would cut funding for the chief diversity officer, a position that he had voted to create. The chair responded that it was the best way to get attention.

That is how we legislate now, to get attention?

Last week, in the Rules Committee, we tried to remedy some of these awful and unnecessary riders. Republicans voted our amendments down.

All of these divisive riders harm our military readiness and hurt our servicemembers, servicemembers who put their lives on the line to protect us. It is never enough to just thank our servicemembers for their service. We need

to provide them with the benefits, quality of life, and respect that all of them deserve.

These extreme provisions are a trend this year, however. Perhaps that is the reason we have passed only one appropriations bill under Republican leadership in the House this year.

This Defense appropriations bill is the only one that we appear to be considering today. We are not considering a short-term funding package to ensure our government doesn't shut down. We are not considering something to cover all the appropriations bills.

Today, we are considering the Defense appropriations bill, and it should be focused solely on national security. It should be about making sure our Nation has the best and brightest force. It should be about serving all the individuals who protect us.

We should be unified in making sure our servicemembers have the resources they need and the respect they deserve. Instead, this bill attacks access to reproductive healthcare for our service-women and their families. It devalues the minorities, the Latinos, Black Americans, Native Americans, who serve and are looking for us to help them address the racism that still exists, unfortunately.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose this rule, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I begin by returning my deep respect, my deep regards, to my good friend from New Mexico. It has been a delight to have her on the Rules Committee, and we have found a lot of common ground working on Native American issues, where, frankly, she is an acknowledged national expert. I look forward to a long and good relationship with my friend.

When it comes to this rule and bill, obviously, we have disagreements. Let me talk first about the point my friend makes about timing and how many bills have gotten done and where we are in the process. There is actually a great deal that I agree with her on.

Sadly, we ought to also remember the Democratic Congress of last year didn't finish the appropriations process until December. If you looked at it the year before, it didn't finish until March the next year, after the end of the fiscal year. Being late around here is not new for either party, but our friends set the standard last time, I think. We will see how we end up.

My friend made a comment that we had only done one bill. I will say that is one more than the Democratic United States Senators managed to do.

The reality is the Senate didn't produce, under Democratic control, any bills for the last 2 years—none out of subcommittee, none out of full committee, none across the floor.

We are dealing with a very difficult body on the other side of the rotunda. These timing issues, hopefully, we can all get better at this and work to-

gether. I actually think we have something this year in the debt ceiling agreement that will be helpful in that regard.

The reality is if we don't get our work done by January 1, which is about the time Democrats got their work done last year, we will have a yearlong CR with a 1 percent across-the-board cut.

I don't know any appropriator on either side of the aisle who wants to see that happen. I don't think most people who care deeply about the defense of the United States do. We have some forcing mechanisms in place. Hopefully, we will continue to make some better progress there.

In terms of my friend's point about divisive social policy, I will point out where this started. It is the executive branch that made decisions to do things much differently than we have done before, and usually with no consultation with the Congress of the United States.

Most of the things my friend disagrees with we consider corrective of executive overreach, including violation of the Hyde amendment, which is essentially, in my view, what the Department of Defense has decided on its own to do without discussion or consultation with the Congress of the United States. That is unfortunate. That is something, hopefully, we can work through and resolve in the months ahead.

I will also say that we are just very different in terms of where we think the focus ought to be. This bill focuses on weapons acquisition, training, and readiness. We live in a very dangerous world. We think there is a big difference, for instance, between climate resilience and actively pushing climate change legislation, which we believe the original administration budget does.

We want to refocus on the things that we think matter. We are not going to beat our adversaries if, God forbid, we find ourselves in a contest with any of them and our forces aren't well trained, aren't well armed, and aren't well prepared for the challenges they are going to face. That should be the main focus of the Department of Defense. We think the administration has lost its focus. We see this bill as a useful corrective.

Finally, I point out to my friends on both sides of the aisle that, quite frankly, whatever we pass, we are going to sit down and negotiate with the United States Senate and with the President of the United States. As my friends know, the Democrats control the United States Senate, and we have a Democrat as the President of the United States. Wherever we end up, it is going to be a process of give-and-take and discussion, but it is important that the House have an opening position.

The last point to make on this is if we get this bill across the floor—and I do say "if" because there is some con-

troversy about whether or not we will make it, even on our own side. Even though nobody disagrees with the rule or disagrees with the bill, they have other points sometimes they want to make. Sadly, it shouldn't be with this bill. However, my friends never got the Defense bill across the floor by themselves when they were in the majority. There were too many divisions and splits within their Caucus to even bring it to the floor.

If we manage to get this bill across the floor, we will actually, in that single action, have moved across the floor a larger percentage of the discretionary budget of the United States than my friends were ever able to do when they were in the majority.

It is a complex bill, over half of the discretionary spending of the United States. There are lots of barriers and flash points where we disagree, but it is important that we continue the dialogue and the motion forward.

I think we have the opportunity, in passing the rule and the underlying legislation, to do that today, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote accordingly.

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

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am also thinking about last week's committee hearing and this discussion about the history of where we were with regard to the appropriations process. I think there is a very different mood this year than we had in the last cycle, and that is the fact that Democrats have never called to shut it down. That is exactly what we are hearing from Republicans on the other side of the aisle.

We never took that position. We were always trying to work it out, not shut it down. Even though we might not have passed all the bills by September 30, we were working across the aisle with our colleagues, working with the Senate on the other side, so we never had a shutdown. What we had was constant movement toward an agreement.

Indeed, the passed appropriations bills passed with overwhelming bipartisan support, both in the Senate and the House. We had hundreds of Republicans voting with the Democrats to pass the last appropriations bills.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), the ranking member of the Committee on Rules and my good friend, who I hold in high regard.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of a bipartisan amendment that is made in order and will be offered by Representatives GAETZ and JACOBS to prohibit the transfer of cluster munitions.

Since 2009, the United States has refused to use, produce, transfer, or sell cluster munitions. As a Nation, we could take pride in this decision.

Cluster munitions are indiscriminate weapons. They explode when touched

by a soldier, a farmer, or a child. They contaminate an entire field of combat, and they remain a deadly threat long past the end of a conflict. Rain and other events can move them from where they first landed to who knows where.

Yet, the Biden administration recently chose to send cluster munitions to Ukraine. I condemn Russia's use of cluster munitions on Ukraine, but two evils do not add up to a greater good. The United States should not have provided cluster munitions to Ukraine, and this amendment is necessary to ensure such a transfer does not happen again.

I also support this amendment because it is not specific to Ukraine. Now that the United States has opened the door to using cluster munitions, we have no idea where else the U.S. might decide to send them.

An international treaty exists to ban cluster munitions. Mr. Speaker, 112 countries have ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions since May 2008, and 12 more have signed. Nigeria ratified the convention on February 28, and South Sudan did so on August 3.

The United States and Russia are not parties to the treaty, and now each of us has brought these terrible weapons into play inside Ukraine.

Mr. Speaker, the only thing that can undermine the ban on cluster munitions is the willingness of governments to use or transfer these terrible, indiscriminate weapons.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the Gaetz-Jacobs amendment and prohibit the United States from any further transfers of cluster munitions.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I both agree and disagree with my friend from New Mexico about shutting down the government. I personally could not agree more with her. I think it is a dumb thing to do. I think it is a dangerous thing to do.

I have never favored shutting down the government, and I have argued against it. The tactic doesn't work. I think it won't work this time. The American people expect us to keep the essential services of government going while we negotiate and get to a final solution.

I will correct my friend on one thing. The Democrats have shut down the government. Frankly, they shut it down over DACA in 2017.

Now, I always hand the Democrats this: When they shut it down or do something stupid, they are pretty quick to realize it, and they back off. I think they shut it down on a Friday and reopened it on a Monday, but they did indeed shut it down.

It is simply an inappropriate tool in the toolbox, in my opinion. I have seen both sides use it. My side, sadly, has used it more. I hope we don't do it this time.

Certainly, the great majority of our Members and the Speaker do not want

to see a shutdown, and I think they have made that apparent over and over again.

I hadn't particularly intended to comment on the ranking member's amendment because I know how passionately my good friend feels about this. I respect those feelings. Honestly, I respect the feelings of all those who hold that view.

I find myself in the unusual position of agreeing with President Biden when my good friend, the ranking member, is disagreeing with him. It shows it is not really a partisan issue. I think it is an issue of judgment.

I have no doubt the President of the United States agonized before making this decision. It was clearly a decision he did not want to make, but I think he was compelled by two factors that probably decided the case for him, although I don't presume to speak for the President.

Number one, we ought to always remember the enemies of Ukraine, Russia, introduced these weapons on the other side first and was using those weapons indiscriminately.

Second, Ukraine is using these weapons in defense of its own territory and its own people in its own territory. That is not what the Russians are doing. They are aggressively, on the other side, using these in another country.

Finally, again, just to be fair about the President's dilemma, we have used an extraordinary amount of ammunition trying to support Ukraine. I think we have some strains on our own stockpiles, and I suspect that was part of the decisionmaking. When you are in a war, you are in it to win it.

Frankly, it was not the Ukrainians or the Americans that introduced this first. It was not the Ukrainians or the Americans or the European allies, who were there in vast numbers, that started this conflict. It is to the advantage of all that it ends as quickly as it can. The level of casualties on both sides is horrific, but the person who bears responsibility is Vladimir Putin. Frankly, the country that is the aggressor is Russia, and I am not going to begrudge the Ukrainians for getting what they need.

As critical as I can sometimes be of President Biden, I will certainly not criticize him in this case because I think, in this case, he reluctantly made a tough decision, a decision he probably didn't want to make, but I think he made it for the right reasons. Therefore, I won't be supporting my friend's amendment later on today.

□ 1245

Although, again, I am glad we were able to make it in order. I think it is an important issue for us to discuss, and I look forward to a very vigorous debate on that later this afternoon.

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

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As we just noted, the chair of the committee has once again showed both his dignity and respect to his colleagues.

I do want to point out that you are right, I did forget about that 72-hour shutdown because it was very brief, and I agree with you, it is a stupid thing to do. No, I am sorry, I think you said it is a dumb thing to do, and it is because it causes so much pain for the people back home. They expect us to do our job, and the primary thing we are supposed to do is fund our government because it is not just the really hard-working employees who keep our airplanes flying in the air, who make sure that our food is inspected so we don't get sick, it is also the teachers in our schools who receive Title I funding in New Mexico.

So many of my schools receive Title I funding. Those are the schools that have the fewest resources, so the Federal Government helps them out to make sure all our children, wherever they live, can get a good education. Those are the things that will be lost if we shut down the Federal Government.

I point out that in contrast to the 72 hours, in 1995 under Republican leadership, 21 days the government was shut down; in 2013 the government was shut down for 16 days; and then in 2018 they shut it down for 35 days. This is a refrain we hear over and over again. It happens under House Republican leadership so often as we just saw.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. SALINAS), a wonderful Member of our freshman class this year.

Ms. SALINAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good colleague from New Mexico for her leadership and for yielding me some time.

Mr. Speaker, each year, hundreds of Oregonians die after overdosing on fentanyl. This drug has torn communities apart, from Salem to Sheridan and everywhere in between. It is not just our State. It is all across the U.S.

Fentanyl and other synthetic opioids account for more than 85 percent of all opioid-involved deaths in the U.S. This is an issue that harms all of us, and I think Members of both parties can agree that stemming the flow of these drugs into our communities is a bipartisan imperative.

The appropriations process is one of our best opportunities to deliver critical funding to the organizations and agencies on the front lines of this fentanyl fight.

Yet sadly, this process has been needlessly politicized by far-right politicians who would rather notch political victories than policy ones—and this shameful Defense appropriations bill is a prime example of that.

By attaching anti-LGBTQ2SIA+ and anti-choice riders to this bill, extremists in this body have turned what should be a straightforward funding package into a political wedge issue.

That needless politicization is especially concerning, given that this piece

of legislation contains critical funding to stop the flow of fentanyl into our country.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot afford to let politics stand in the way of our fight against the fentanyl epidemic. As a new Member of this esteemed body, I did not come here for political gamesmanship. We should all be prioritizing people over partisanship.

This is an all-hands-on-deck emergency, and I urge my colleagues to dispense with their partisan antics and focus on passing government funding legislation that meets the moment and delivers for all of our communities.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Again, there are some areas where I agree with my good friends and some areas where I disagree. Nobody disagrees on the importance of the fentanyl crisis and the importance of dealing in any way we can through whatever means we have with those who engage in trafficking that illegal drug that has killed tens of thousands of Americans.

Quite frankly, I suspect later this week or next week we will give our friends the opportunity to work with us on homeland security measures that will deal with just that.

I would point to, frankly, the abject failure of the Biden administration to defend the southern border. The green light that has been put out there is a huge cost for this massive influx of drugs into our own country.

We passed H.R. 2 on this floor, Mr. Speaker, to try and deal with that, and we are going to provide our friends with some opportunities where maybe we can find some common ground. You can be pro-immigration and pro-border security at the same time. I think this administration has had a hard time doing that, and quite frankly, most of the policies that it reversed—whether it was building the wall or remain in Mexico—from the last administration were effective. You can tell by the record numbers of illegal entries we have, the record amount of trafficking we have in drugs, and sadly, in human beings across the border to know that the Biden border policy, which my friends have supported, has been a disaster. It is one that, again, we hope they not only recognize that disaster, but will work with us to correct some of those measures.

Again, I am going to agree with my friend from New Mexico. I don't believe in shutting down the government. I know we occasionally have some people who believe that, although it is a very small number, it can be a very influential number in a House that is very narrowly divided.

We are going to provide some opportunities both to our own Members and to our colleagues on the other side to avoid that and to negotiate in good faith, but again, I just reiterate a point where I know my friend and I agree: It is not an appropriate tool. It does not work. I would hope that we can avoid that.

We also need to sit down and work together where we can, and there are a lot of areas in this bill that we can work on.

The last point I will make—my friends talk about the conflicts that we have in the Defense bill—remember, we had a conflict in the last Congress when my friends in the House tried to unilaterally overturn the Hyde language, a bipartisan agreement that goes all the way back to 1975 or 1976, as I recall, Mr. Speaker, and when that was struck, there were less than 150 Republicans in the House, so it was genuinely bipartisan. It wasn't just something we crammed down.

My friends have changed their mind over the issue of using Federal dollars for abortion over the years. We have not changed our position, and we were able to beat that back even when we were in the minority because, at the end of the day, they couldn't pass the bills without Republican support.

I think the administration has tried to go around Congress in this case and use Federal dollars without congressional consent to facilitate abortion, other than in cases where we are talking about rape, incest, or the life of the mother. We have no debate over the appropriate use of Federal dollars in those cases. We do in others. It doesn't mean people can't travel; we just shouldn't be using Federal dollars in this area. That is a longstanding principle that I would argue the Biden administration is trying to subvert.

By the way, it is a principle that President Biden, until 2019 when he was running for President, accepted throughout his entire career. He was a champion of that until 2019 when his own party moved so far left he had to change his longstanding position in pursuit of the nomination.

Again, this is politics, people are allowed to do what they want, but please don't chastise us for being consistent with a position we assumed in 1975 and have not changed. It is our friends who have changed their mind on this issue, and frankly, it is the administration that tried to subvert the will and the authority of Congress by moving around it.

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

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The concern that we have with the bill with regards to a woman's right to be able to determine for herself in conversation with her own faith, her own family, and her own doctors what kind of reproductive healthcare she wants access to is the fact that this bill would prevent servicewomen and their families from taking paid leave or traveling to obtain an abortion or related services if those services are not provided where she is assigned.

Remember, servicewomen don't get to choose where they live and where they work. There have already been multiple legal opinions that using paid

leave and traveling and getting assistance to get to a State where you can get medical care does not violate the Hyde amendment.

Indeed, the Hyde amendment would allow you to get that kind of care if you were raped. Well, guess what? In 14 States if you were raped, you cannot get that care. That would violate the Hyde amendment in a sense when you cannot get access to it.

Last week in the Rules Committee, Representative MCCOLLUM told the story of a woman in Texas who was told by her doctor that she would not perform a surgical procedure to remove a dead fetus because of the State's abortion ban. That servicewoman did not have the options she was entitled to.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to enter into the RECORD the 2023 New York Times article: "As Abortion Laws Drive Obstetricians From Red States, Maternity Care Suffers."

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

There was no objection.

[From the New York Times, Sept. 6, 2023]

AS ABORTION LAWS DRIVE OBSTETRICIANS FROM RED STATES, MATERNITY CARE SUFFERS  
(By Sheryl Gay Stolberg)

One by one, doctors who handle high-risk pregnancies are disappearing from Idaho—part of a wave of obstetricians fleeing restrictive abortion laws and a hostile state legislature. Dr. Caitlin Gustafson, a family doctor who also delivers babies in the tiny mountain town of McCall, is among those left behind, facing a lonely and uncertain future.

When caring for patients with pregnancy complications, Dr. Gustafson seeks counsel from maternal-fetal medicine specialists in Boise, the state capital two hours away. But two of the experts she relied on as backup have packed up their young families and moved away, one to Minnesota and the other to Colorado.

All told, more than a dozen labor and delivery doctors—including five of Idaho's nine longtime maternal-fetal experts—will have either left or retired by the end of this year. Dr. Gustafson says the departures have made a bad situation worse, depriving both patients and doctors of moral support and medical advice.

"I wanted to work in a small family town and deliver babies," she said. "I was living my dream—until all of this."

Idaho's obstetrics exodus is not happening in isolation. Across the country, in red states like Texas, Oklahoma and Tennessee, obstetricians—including highly skilled doctors who specialize in handling complex and risky pregnancies—are leaving their practices. Some newly minted doctors are avoiding states like Idaho.

The departures may result in new maternity care deserts, or areas that lack any maternity care, and they are placing strains on physicians like Dr. Gustafson who are left behind. The effects are particularly pronounced in rural areas, where many hospitals are shuttering obstetrics units for economic reasons. Restrictive abortion laws, experts say, are making that problem much worse.

"This isn't an issue about abortion," said Dr. Stella Dantas, the president-elect of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. "This is an issue about access to

comprehensive obstetric and gynecologic care. When you restrict access to care that is based in science, that everybody should have access to—that has a ripple effect.”

Idaho doctors operate under a web of abortion laws, including a 2020 “trigger law” that went into effect after the Supreme Court eliminated the constitutional right to abortion by overturning *Roe v. Wade* last year. Together, they create one of the strictest abortion bans in the nation. Doctors who primarily provide abortion care are not the only medical professionals affected; the laws are also impinging on doctors whose primary work is to care for expectant mothers and babies, and who may be called upon to terminate a pregnancy for complications or other reasons.

Idaho bars abortion at any point in a pregnancy with just two exceptions: when it is necessary to save the life of the mother and in certain cases of rape or incest, though the victim must provide a police report. A temporary order issued by a federal judge also permits abortion in some circumstances when a woman's health is at risk. Doctors convicted of violating the ban face two to five years in prison.

Dr. Gustafson, 51, has so far decided to stick it out in Idaho. She has been practicing in the state for 20 years, 17 of them in McCall, a stunning lakeside town of about 3,700 people.

She sees patients at the Payette Lakes Medical Clinic, a low-slung building that evokes the feeling of a mountain lodge, tucked into a grove of tall spruces and pines. It is affiliated with St. Luke's Health System, the largest health system in the state.

On a recent morning, she was awakened at 5 a.m. by a call from a hospital nurse. A pregnant woman, two months shy of her due date, had a ruptured membrane. In common parlance, the patient's water had broken, putting the mother and baby at risk for preterm delivery and other complications.

Dr. Gustafson threw on her light blue scrubs and her pink Crocs and rushed to the hospital to arrange for a helicopter to take the woman to Boise. She called the maternal-fetal specialty practice at St. Luke's Boise Medical Center, the group she has worked with for years. She did not know the doctor who was to receive the patient. He had been in Idaho for only one week.

“Welcome to Idaho,” she told him.

In rural states, strong medical networks are critical to patients' well-being. Doctors are not interchangeable widgets; they build up experience and a comfort level in working with one another and within their health care systems. Ordinarily, Dr. Gustafson might have found herself talking to Dr. Kyle Cooper or Dr. Lauren Miller on that day.

But Dr. Cooper left St. Luke's in April for Minnesota. After “many agonizing months of discussion,” she said, she concluded that “the risk was too big for me and my family.”

Dr. Miller, who had founded the Idaho Coalition for Safe Reproductive Health Care, an advocacy group, moved to Colorado. It is one thing to pay for medical malpractice insurance, she said, but quite another to worry about criminal prosecution.

“I was always one of those people who had been super calm in emergencies,” Dr. Miller said. “But I was finding that I felt very anxious being on the labor unit, just not knowing if somebody else was going to second-guess my decision. That's not how you want to go to work every day.”

The vacancies have been tough to fill. Dr. James Souza, the chief physician executive for St. Luke's Health System, said the state's laws had “had a profound chilling effect on recruitment and retention.” He is relying in part on temporary, roving doctors

known as locums—short for the Latin phrase *locum tenens*, which means to stand in place of.

He likens labor and delivery care to a pyramid, supported by nurses, midwives and doctors, with maternal-fetal specialists at its apex. He worries the system will collapse.

“The loss of the top of a clinical pyramid means the pyramid falls apart,” Dr. Souza said.

Some smaller hospitals in Idaho have been unable to withstand the strain. Two closed their labor and delivery units this year; one of them, Bonner General Health, a 25-bed hospital in Sandpoint, in northern Idaho, cited the state's “legal and political climate” and the departure of “highly respected, talented physicians” as factors that contributed to its decision.

Other states are also seeing obstetricians leave. In Oklahoma, where more than half of the state's counties are considered maternity care deserts, three-quarters of obstetrician-gynecologists who responded to a recent survey said they were either planning to leave, considering leaving or would leave if they could, said Dr. Angela Hawkins, the chair of the Oklahoma section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

The previous chair, Dr. Kate Arnold, and her wife, also an obstetrician, moved to Washington, D.C., after the Supreme Court overturned *Roe* in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. “Before the change in political climate, we had no plans on leaving,” Dr. Arnold said.

In Tennessee, where one-third of counties are considered maternity care deserts, Dr. Leilah Zahedi-Spung, a maternal-fetal specialist, decided to move to Colorado not long after the *Dobbs* ruling. She grew up in the South and felt guilty about leaving, she said.

Tennessee's abortion ban, which was softened slightly this year, initially required an “affirmative defense,” meaning that doctors faced the burden of proving that an abortion they had performed was medically necessary—akin to the way a defendant in a homicide case might have to prove he or she acted in self-defense. Dr. Zahedi-Spung felt as if she had “quite the target on my back,” she said—so much so that she hired her own criminal defense lawyer.

“The majority of patients who came to me had highly wanted, highly desired pregnancies,” she said. “They had names, they had baby showers, they had nurseries. And I told them something awful about their pregnancy that made sure they were never going to take home that child—or that they would be sacrificing their lives to do that. I sent everybody out of state. I was unwilling to put myself at risk.”

Perhaps nowhere has the departure of obstetricians been as pronounced as in Idaho, where Dr. Gustafson has been helping to lead an organized—but only minimally successful—effort to change the state's abortion laws, which have convinced her that state legislators do not care what doctors think. “Many of us feel like our opinion is being discounted,” she said.

Dr. Gustafson worked one day a month at a Planned Parenthood clinic in a Boise suburb until Idaho imposed its near-total abortion ban; she now has a similar arrangement with Planned Parenthood in Oregon, where some Idahoans travel for abortion care. She has been a plaintiff in several lawsuits challenging Idaho's abortion policies. Earlier this year, she spoke at an abortion rights rally in front of the State Capitol.

In interviews, two Republican state lawmakers—Representatives Megan Blanksma, the House majority leader, and John Vander Woude, the chair of the House Health and Welfare Committee—said they were trying

to address doctors' concerns. Mr. Vander Woude acknowledged that Idaho's trigger law, written before *Roe* fell, had affected everyday medical practice in a way that lawmakers had not anticipated.

“We never looked that close, and what exactly that bill said and how it was written and language that was in it,” he said. “We did that thinking *Roe v. Wade* was never going to get overturned. And then when it got overturned, we said, ‘OK, now we have to take a really close look at the definitions.’”

Mr. Vander Woude also dismissed doctors' fears that they would be prosecuted, and he expressed doubt that obstetricians were really leaving the state. “I don't see any doctor ever getting prosecuted,” he said, adding, “Show me the doctors that have left.”

During its 2023 session, the Legislature clarified that terminating an ectopic pregnancy or a molar pregnancy, a rare complication, would not be defined as abortion—a move that codified an Idaho Supreme Court ruling. Lawmakers also eliminated an affirmative defense provision.

But lawmakers refused to extend the tenure of the state's Maternal Mortality Review Committee, an expert panel on which Dr. Gustafson served that investigated pregnancy-related deaths. The Idaho Freedom Foundation, a conservative group, testified against it and later called it an “unnecessary waste of tax dollars”—even though the annual cost, about \$15,000, was picked up by the federal government.

That was a bridge too far for Dr. Amelia Huntsberger, the Idaho obstetrician who helped lead a push to create the panel in 2019. She recently moved to Oregon. “Idaho calls itself a quote ‘pro-life state,’ but the Idaho Legislature doesn't care about the death of moms,” she said.

Most significantly, the Legislature rejected a top priority of Dr. Gustafson and others in her field: amending state law so that doctors would be able to perform abortions when the health—not just the life—of the mother is at risk. It was almost too much for Dr. Gustafson. She loves living in Idaho, she said. But when asked if she had thought about leaving, her answer was quick: “Every day.”

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Because what has changed is that now we have 14 States that have total bans on abortion, so we must do more to honor our commitment to our servicewomen.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding. This is a question, Mr. Speaker, of readiness. That is what we believe in. That is what a Defense appropriations bill is. It is grounded in the readiness of the most powerful Armed Forces in the world. It is to ensure that they are ready.

Unfortunately for the Defense appropriations, we are being forced to put this bill on the floor today by the majority. It is unbelievable that they would cut vital civilian positions when the department is struggling to meet its readiness goals.

Civilians are a crucial part of ensuring that our men and women, our combat soldiers, are ready to serve around the world.

These are hateful policies. They want to undermine and attack the LGBTQ+ community, who have served in valor. We know them well. They have served without question. They have worn the uniform without question.

It is to stop a logistical provision that has nothing to do with abortion. It is to allow for that military person to receive reproductive medical services, which may come to be in many different facets; to ensure that someone is able to ensure the reproductive life that they may desire to have.

How ludicrous is it in this emerging, wonderful, diverse Nation that many look to as a place and a bastion of freedom, that we would eliminate funding for diversity, equity, and inclusion; that we eliminate climate change to ensure that our vehicles are well equipped for the new generation; that we would not ensure, again, that our personnel, our families get the medical care that they desire?

Mr. Speaker, what have we done in years past? We have provided Defense appropriations to be able to support our military. We now have a bill on the floor that is undermining our military. I am saddened by this. I am grateful for the 'Triple-Negative amendment that has been allowed to be in providing for breast cancer, and I look forward to that amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the rule governing House consideration of H.R. 4365, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act of 2024.

I oppose the rule, and the underlying legislation, for the following reasons:

1. The bill, which should be earnestly attempting to best support the Department of Defense, is being used by Republicans to sneak partisan and damaging policies under our noses.

2. The underlying bill does not reflect the input of nearly half the Members of this body and is strongly opposed by the ranking members who sit on the very committee this bill originated from.

Mr. Speaker, in order to further promote a culture war, the Members who oversaw this bill are going to put many Americans at risk.

First, they are targeting the many brave servicewomen currently employed by the Department of Defense by directly going against the Secretary of Defense's promises for them to have access to reproductive healthcare regardless of their station.

Women currently make up one in five members of our military.

Denying them their previously promised ability to check their reproductive health is not only dangerous, but also grossly irresponsible.

The loss of these rights also increases the risk for low retention amongst female servicemembers who need these benefits this bill would strip away.

Second, the bill targets the LGBTQ+ community, who are increasingly victimized by Republican agendas around the country.

Regardless of your beliefs, it is important to treat everyone with respect and equality, which this bill does not do.

This bill would prohibit hormone therapy or surgical treatment for gender affirming care, directly affecting those who experience gender dysphoria.

Individuals who feel they do not belong in their own body is a serious issue and has led to one in five transgender and nonbinary young people attempting suicide in the past year.

Our priority as the legislative body of this country is to protect the wellbeing of all citi-

zens, regardless of personal beliefs and ideologies.

The language in this legislation would further embolden those who wish to commit harm and violence against a minority group already facing so much hardship, both socially and legally.

This is unacceptable.

The lives and wellbeing of those who live across the country should not be put at risk simply to push a regressive agenda that does not promote the diversity of our Nation but rather seeks to suppress it.

This brings me to my third point, which is the underhanded way the sponsors of the bill sought to eliminate Critical Race Theory.

Let me be clear: Republicans have a warped understanding of what this term means, and they are using it as a means to remove any diversity in education.

Critical Race Theory is a collegiate field of study that examines the complex ways in which race fits into the structures of our society.

Critical Race Theory is not an attack on white people for their history, just as it does not victimize Black people based on ours.

Based on an incorrect definition, Republican leaders at all levels of government have worked to eliminate all diverse viewpoints providing a complete framework of the history of this country, and instead wash over the negative to present a false narrative.

At the same time, legislation aimed at elementary schools against Critical Race Theory—which again, is only offered at the collegiate level—deprives diverse students of hearing their voice reflected accurately in the history of this multicultural Nation.

Another issue with this bill is the cut of \$714 million to adapt military equipment to be more climate friendly.

Climate change is a crisis that requires global attention and efforts.

The refusal to even allow for updating our military alternative source of energy is regressive and promoted under a false message.

It was not Biden who indicated that he wanted an "all electric" fleet of tanks as is commonly stated, but rather the United States Army.

This part of the bill stands directly in the way of innovation as well as keeping us from doing our part in the world to strive towards a net zero future.

In 2020 alone, the United States military was responsible for 51 million tons of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere; more than most countries.

But now, when the U.S. Army decides for themselves that they want to scale back on their emissions, certain Members in Congress want to limit their choice.

One bright spot of this bill—though it is short-lived—is the Jackson Lee amendment #233 that was made in order by the committee.

The Jackson Lee amendment #233 seeks to allocate \$10 million to fund triple negative breast cancer research.

This issue is extremely important, especially for the brave men and women in the military, who are up to 20–40% more likely to develop breast cancer.

I must offer my appreciation to both the military and the Biden administration for making research into breast cancer a priority, but there is still work to be done.

This amendment would allow for more research so we can one day hopefully learn a

way to reduce the number of military personnel affected by breast cancer.

Several initiatives I have designed in the past have aided active-duty service-men and -women along with veterans, such as enforcing accurate reporting of maternity mortality rates among the Armed Forces, addressing physical and mental health concerns, and securing authorization for triple negative breast cancer as well as post-traumatic stress disorder.

I am very proud of the work that Congress and I have done to address the health concerns of active-duty and veteran service-men and -women, but there are still improvements to be made.

The men and women who are on the front lines or have already completed their valiant service to this country have many pressing issues and challenges they already must face; breast cancer should not be one of them.

While this amendment is important, the negatives of this bill vastly outweigh the positives.

I strongly urge my colleagues to oppose this bill.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Nobody is arguing against diversity in the military. The American military has actually usually been the leader in this area, whether it was desegregation or certainly addressing the inequities between men and women, and we haven't gotten it right, but I think broadly it has worked in the right direction and quite often ahead of the rest of society.

The real problem here is we want to focus on training and weapons, not on culture wars. We think the administration has gone around Congress in some cases—the Hyde amendment being one of them. My friends have their lawyers, we have our lawyers. I guess they will go to court and sort that out.

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There wasn't any consultation with the Congress, any discussion on this. That was a decision made unilaterally by the administration. I think Congress has every right to be consulted. They don't have money by their own right in the executive branch. They have what we give them for the purposes that are specified by the Congress of the United States. They don't get to just make it up on their own.

I know there was at least some discussion back and forth where people warned: Don't open this door without a discussion and without a green light from Congress. That didn't occur, and so we are in this discussion.

Now, over the course of reaching a bill, I suspect we will find some sort of solution or work it through one way or the other. I hope we do, because I don't think anything is more important, in what I think is a very dangerous world, than equipping, training, and preparing the men and women who protect us all.

On that, we have a lot more common ground than division. Again, I think this was a choice by the administration. It provoked a response by Congress. We will try to work it through

by normal legislative means and see where we end up.

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

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Ms. MCCLELLAN).

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up on the negative impact that the restrictions on funding for travel to receive abortion services will have on our servicemembers and their families, women of childbearing years.

Unfortunately, in the South, between New Mexico and Virginia, you have a ban on abortion. In some cases total, and in some cases there are exceptions for rape or the life of the mother, but the mother's life has to be on the verge of death. Unfortunately, in these States, they make no distinction between miscarriage management, and they apply to cases, like you heard, where there has been fetal demise and a miscarriage. If you do not remove the fetal tissue, then the mother can go septic and die. If she loses her amniotic fluid and you do not terminate that pregnancy, she can go septic and die.

I represent a State that has over 170,000 Federal employees and 130,000 Active-Duty military personnel. With the Hyde amendment in place, we are already telling pregnant people in that situation: You have to pay for that service yourself. Their insurance won't pay for it. Many hospitals will consider them uninsured and won't let them have those procedures in the hospital, so they have to go find a clinic which, in many cases, is getting harder.

Now, if they are in a State that has banned abortion in that situation, they have got to, on top of that, pay to travel somewhere where they can get, in some cases, lifesaving care. In addition, we have seen that these abortion bans have led to fewer OB/GYNs in those States.

How are we going to recruit women of childbearing years when we say to them: If you get the worst news ever in your life, that you have suffered a miscarriage or you have to choose between your life or continuing a pregnancy, when you are already willing to make the ultimate sacrifice to keep this country safe, you are on your own. That is what this bill with that amendment will do.

Our servicemen and -women deserve better. In a country that already has an atrocious maternal mortality rate, this will lead to even more maternal deaths. I don't know how we are going to recruit the women that we need.

I don't have enough time to talk about how the anti-DEI amendments will make it harder to recruit a service force that is as fully diverse as the country they serve, but this amendment, in particular, will be dangerous for our military servicewomen or families of our servicemen. That is why I ask that we vote against the rule.

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

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), our ranking member on the Rules Committee.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding so I can vent a little bit.

Mr. Speaker, I just saw a Roll Call story that is reporting that Republicans are pulling their continuing resolution today to weigh more cuts. I mean, are you kidding me? Their crummy CR contained an 8 percent across-the-board cut in almost every program that helps people, everything from medical research, WIC, Head Start, housing. Even border security is cut by 8 percent. The only thing that is exempt is the military budget, the biggest bureaucracy in our government.

They are okay with cutting fuel assistance for poor people by 65 percent. Money to help people be able to heat their homes in the winter, they are okay with cutting that, but they believe you can't find one penny of savings in a missile system in the Pentagon with huge cost overruns. I mean, it is pathetic. As the Republican whip said: The patients are running the hospital around here.

The gentleman from Oklahoma said this is about a negotiation. My Republican friends can't even negotiate with themselves, and we have 11 days to go before there is a shutdown, and they are going in the wrong direction. It has become more and more difficult to get to an agreement.

Enough, I mean, enough. The Republican leadership of this House is incompetent. They are so incompetent; it takes my breath away. They are letting the clowns run the circus. It is time the Speaker of the House develop a spine and stand up to the most extreme elements on the Republican side and actually sit down and negotiate an agreement that deals with the reality of our government.

The Republicans only control barely just one branch of our government, the House. The Senate is under Democratic control. The White House is run by a Democrat. You are going to have to negotiate, and you are moving in the wrong direction. Time is running out. Stop this nonsense. Get serious. Get to the negotiating table. Enough of this.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I have great affection and respect for my friend, the ranking member and formerly the chairman of the full Rules Committee.

I will start where I began this debate. Remember, my friends, Democrats didn't finish the appropriations process on their side until December of last year, and Democrats controlled all three parts of government. They had the Senate, the House, and the Presidency, and they didn't get done until December. The year before that, they didn't get done until March of the year after.

I wish the process went easier and smoother as well, but I don't think it

goes much differently, regardless of who happens to be in control. I do think that we are trying to make some progress here.

Now, my friends are worried about what is cut. They ought to be worried about what was spent. We are running a \$1.7 trillion deficit. That deficit is bigger than the entire discretionary budget of the United States of America. It is not just bigger than the defense budget; it is bigger than everything.

It got a lot worse when my friends controlled the executive branch and both houses of Congress. You did over \$3 trillion worth of spending outside the normal appropriations process; \$1.9 trillion for an unneeded American Rescue Plan when we were coming out of COVID, roughly \$700 billion from the much-misnamed Inflation Reduction Act, which even the President now says was misnamed because it really had to do more with climate change. That was money we didn't have, money that fueled inflation that made life worse for every single American.

I don't even get to the knockoffs, like transportation bills that don't pay for themselves. I had voted for every other major transportation agreement in my time here, two of them under President Obama, but they paid for themselves either through gasoline taxes or ticket fees, what have you. Now, we have got a trillion dollars here, but it is not enough. We will just throw another several hundred billion dollars on in debt. We are paying for that now.

I am not going to be critical of my party for trying to push down some of the spending; \$1.7 trillion this year. You guys can't find anywhere to cut.

Now you want to talk about defense? I am happy to talk about defense. My dad was a career noncommissioned officer at the height of the Cold War. You know what we spent on defense then? Fifty percent of the Federal budget, 9 percent of the GDP. You know what we spent during the great Reagan buildup? Six percent of the GDP, about a third of the Federal budget. You know what we spend today? About 3 percent of the GDP and about 15 percent of the budget.

Believe me, there has been an explosion of domestic spending over the decades, largely driven by my friends, and it is unsustainable. We cannot stay on the path we are on.

We can argue about this or that. I have a bill I would invite my friend to look at, try and go back and do with Social Security what we did in 1983 on a bipartisan basis. We need to start getting the spending under control. The spending that is driving us out of balance is largely not in the Pentagon. It is largely in entitlement spending, which I would be the first to say that both sides have been reluctant to deal with. Neither of the last two Presidents have been willing. This President actually voted for a Social Security commission that reformed and stabilized it when he was a Senator. Now,

the White House rules these things out. No, we can't talk about it, can't do it. By the way, his predecessor was exactly the same, my Republican and Democrat alike.

I would love to be more restrained in the spending, and I think that is what my colleagues are trying to do, even when I don't always agree with the tactics they use. They are motivated in the right direction, which is to deal with a \$1.7 trillion deficit.

We are trying to make some appropriate decisions. Again, we work in the legislative process. I remind my friends, they control two-thirds of it. By the way, the Defense bill last year, which was passed almost exclusively with Democratic votes, the omni, to be fair, actually had a larger increase in the defense budget than my friends pushed, \$45 billion—I actually agree with that, by the way—than this year, where we are basically at the President's number.

We can all play this game with numbers and what have you. Let's try to work toward a deal. I think we can get there, but I don't have any illusions it will be easy along the way. I certainly have seen both sides make missteps, in my view, in handling these situations over the years. I hope we don't do that again.

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

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I think what Americans know is that for too long, Republicans have been protecting the rich and the corporations who do not pay their taxes. When we start talking about spending, we need to talk about what we are spending that money for.

Democrats are investing in rural America. They are investing in our children. They are investing in our infrastructure. What are Republicans doing? Yes, they are adding to that deficit. Republicans put \$2 trillion on that credit card in tax cuts for the rich.

The leader they worship, Donald Trump, put \$7.5 trillion onto that deficit. The very first bill they brought to the floor of this Congress, what did it add? \$114 billion to that cut.

That is what we need to talk about, not just how they want to cut investments and important things like heating for our families who need it, our seniors, and our veterans. What are they doing? They are trying to make sure that they don't have to tax the rich and wealthy corporations. Many, as we heard last night, don't pay anything in taxes.

Yes, we do want to talk about Social Security. I am so glad the chair brought this up because, Mr. Speaker, Republicans often swear that they are not going to cut Social Security and Medicare. Last night, when we met on the continuing resolution, there is an 8 percent cut across the board for everything but defense and veterans. Their continuing resolution has a 66 percent

cut to heating assistance. They have said border security is their top priority, but the very CR we are scheduled to consider cuts funding for DHS by over 8 percent.

While they claim they won't cut Social Security and Medicare, their own continuing resolution, the language in the bill itself, demonstrates that nothing is sacred to them.

I am going to offer my friends, my dear friends, a chance to show the American people that they are serious about preserving Social Security and Medicare.

I urge you all to join us in defeating the previous question. If we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to provide for consideration of a resolution which plainly states that the people's House won't cut a single cent from these crucial programs that so many of my constituents, so many of your constituents, rely on.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment into the RECORD, along with any extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1315

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. MULLIN) to discuss our proposal.

Mr. MULLIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the majority's manufactured shutdown threat. For this reason, I ask my colleagues to defeat the previous question so we can bring up legislation that commits to protecting vital programs, like Social Security.

Our most vulnerable communities will suffer as a result of this short-sighted attempt to hold our most important Federal programs hostage. For example, my California bay area district is home to over 127,000 senior citizens, many of whom rely on Social Security.

Under a Republican shutdown, new applicants to the Social Security program wouldn't be able to enroll in this bedrock American program. While Social Security payments would continue during a shutdown, seniors would experience even more delays and lengthy phone queues when contacting the Social Security Administration. Many seniors already struggle to find help, and a Republican shutdown would only exacerbate this problem.

Modern Republicans are playing roulette with essential constituent services and creating yet another manufactured crisis.

I urge the majority to bring a serious bipartisan proposal to the table to prevent this avoidable crisis.

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

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I think what we need to do is look at this appropriations bill, look at where we are in our discussions about funding the government and recognize that nothing exists in a vacuum.

Last night, as we were talking about the Committee on Appropriations, we were talking about the extreme cuts that are being made, and we know that our military, when they sort of show up at our bases, they are not showing up at a base that is not connected to the rest of the places they live in.

In Clovis, New Mexico, where we have Cannon Air Force Base, and in Alamogordo, where we have an Air Force base, those communities are connected, and we need to recognize that the other bills that they are looking at are going to cut funding in a way that is going to hurt our readiness.

The Agriculture appropriations bill is a good opportunity to talk about this. The bill that they have brought forward would fund world development programs, right? Nope. That is going to get cut. It would also cut nutrition to women, infants, and children. It would cut the funding we need for our ranchers and farmers.

Indeed, the cuts that they are proposing would be \$8 billion in cuts, in the Agriculture appropriations bill. This would bring the funding level for the Agriculture appropriations bill to a level not seen since 2007.

The bill would cut broadband programs by 23 percent. It would hurt something that is incredibly important to my district, which are rural electric co-ops that serve 268,403 residents. Well, those rural electric co-ops, they serve people throughout our districts, and they serve our military bases. We must fight these kinds of threats.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, we cannot talk about readiness; we cannot talk about what we need to do in this country to support our military if we don't talk about our servicemembers and what we must do to protect them and to respect them, because they are protecting us.

So when we are talking about our servicewomen, we must remember the number of servicewomen who are serving. It is about 20 percent right now, and the number of women who are serving in those 14 States which have a total ban on abortion is significant. It is 80,000 women—80,000 women, who, if something happens to them like what Representative MCCOLLUM discussed, they could die of sepsis.

For those of us who have given birth, for those of us who have had to make really difficult decisions about our health and how we are going to deal with the complications of pregnancy, we feel it viscerally, because we know that it is such a wonderful thing to give birth, but it is such a dangerous thing to be pregnant.

And what they would do to our servicewomen is deny them the ability to

go to a State like New Mexico when they want reproductive healthcare services.

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

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

I urge all my colleagues to support the resolution.

Today's rule will make in order the Department of Defense Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2024. It will provide full and complete funding for our national defense needs, ensuring that our servicemembers are fairly paid, and supporting the well-being of military families.

It also makes certain that our troops will never face a fair fight by giving them every advantage possible. We make appropriate investments in the development and acquisition of weapons systems needed to preserve and defend freedom around the globe and restrict the Biden administration from forcing progressive ideology on the Armed Forces and circumventing the authority of Congress when it does so.

Bottom line, the bill targets resources to its new core mission, protecting our homeland and security interests and making sure that our forces are the best trained, the best equipped, and the best prepared in the world.

To my friends, it has been an interesting debate, as always. I enjoy exchanging observations with my good friend from New Mexico, and we strayed sometimes off this bill and off this rule.

I do want to mention a couple of things. The rule, I think even my friends would agree, is a pretty robust rule. We are going to have 184 amendments, a very thorough debate, so I look forward to that.

Second, it is lost sometimes, but we actually basically fund the military at the level that the President requested, so those people who think it is over the top probably should have their argument with the White House as opposed to us. Personally, I would have liked to have done more, but we are going to go with the President's number, essentially.

Finally, we do disagree about the manner in which the administration is using the military. We think they are advancing progressive ideology when they ought to be focused on weapons acquisition, training, and warfighting, and we think that ultimately weakens the country.

We live in a very dangerous world right now. I would actually argue we are not spending enough on defense when we look at what is happening in the Western Pacific with China; when we look at what the Russians are doing, the acts they are engaged in, in Ukraine. I want a robust budget, and I want one that we come together on.

In the end, I think we will be able to achieve that, and I look forward to working with my friends to accomplish that objective.

The material previously referred to by Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 680 OFFERED BY  
MS. LEGER FERNANDEZ OF NEW MEXICO

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 7. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution, the House shall proceed to the consideration in the House of the resolution (H. Res. 178) affirming the House of Representatives' commitment to protect and strengthen Social Security and Medicare. The resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and preamble to adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means or their respective designees.

SEC. 8. Clause 1 (c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H. Res. 178.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROUZER). The question is on ordering the previous question.

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

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

## RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 23 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1425

## AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ROUZER) at 2 o'clock and 25 minutes p.m.

## MOTION TO GO TO CONFERENCE ON H.R. 2670, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FIS- CAL YEAR 2024

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1 of rule XXII, and by direction of the Committee on Armed Services, I have a motion at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Rogers of Alabama moves to take from the Speaker's table the bill H.R. 2670, with the Senate amendment thereto, disagree with the Senate amendment, and request a conference with the Senate thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Alabama is recognized for 1 hour.

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

and I move the previous question on the motion.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Alabama.

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on the motion will be followed by 5-minute votes on:

A motion to close portions of the conference pursuant to clause 12 of rule XXII, if offered;

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 680; and

Adoption of House Resolution 680, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 393, nays 27, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 395]

## YEAS—393

Adams	Cherfilus-	Foster
Aderholt	McCormick	Foushee
Aguilar	Chu	Fox
Alford	Ciscomani	Frankel, Lois
Allen	Clark (MA)	Franklin, C.
Allred	Cleaver	Scott
Amodei	Cline	Fry
Armstrong	Cloud	Fulcher
Arrington	Clyburn	Gaetz
Auchincloss	Clyde	Gallagher
Babin	Cohen	Galleo
Bacon	Cole	Garamendi
Baird	Collins	Garbarino
Balderson	Comer	Garcia (TX)
Banks	Connolly	Garcia, Mike
Barr	Correa	Gimenez
Barragán	Costa	Golden (ME)
Bean (FL)	Courtney	Goldman (NY)
Beatty	Craig	Gomez
Bentz	Crane	Gonzales, Tony
Bera	Crawford	Gonzalez,
Bergman	Crockett	Vicente
Beyer	Crow	Good (VA)
Bice	Cuellar	Gooden (TX)
Biggs	Curtis	Gosar
Billirakis	D'Esposito	Gottheimer
Bishop (GA)	Davids (KS)	Granger
Bishop (NC)	Davidson	Graves (LA)
Blumenauer	Davis (IL)	Graves (MO)
Blunt Rochester	Davis (NC)	Green (TN)
Boebert	De La Cruz	Green, Al (TX)
Bonamici	Dean (PA)	Greene (GA)
Bost	DeGette	Griffith
Boyle (PA)	DeLauro	Grothman
Brecheen	DelBene	Guest
Brown	Deluzio	Guthrie
Brownley	DesJarlais	Hageman
Buchanan	Diaz-Balart	Harder (CA)
Buck	Dingell	Harris
Bucshon	Doggett	Harshbarger
Budzinski	Donalds	Hayes
Burchett	Duarte	Hern
Burgess	Duncan	Higgins (LA)
Burlison	Dunn (FL)	Higgins (NY)
Calvert	Edwards	Hill
Cammack	Ellzey	Himes
Caraveo	Emmer	Hinson
Carbajal	Escobar	Horsford
Cárdenas	Eshoo	Houchin
Carey	Estes	Houlahan
Carl	Ezell	Hoyer
Carson	Fallon	Hoyle (OR)
Carter (GA)	Feenstra	Hudson
Carter (LA)	Ferguson	Huffman
Carter (TX)	Finstad	Huizenga
Cartwright	Fischbach	Hunt
Case	Fitzgerald	Issa
Casten	Fitzpatrick	Ivey
Castor (FL)	Fleischmann	Jackson (IL)
Castro (TX)	Fletcher	Jackson (NC)
Chavez-DeRemer	Flood	Jackson (TX)