I’d appreciate

that because we have been talking

about so many upbeat messages right

here on what we can do, that I want to

be the downer of the group and present

the fear that we have simply because

the administration budget for missile

defense has been submitted.

And I’m grateful my friend from Arizona

is still here, because in our landbased—

maybe you can add and flush

this out—our land-based interceptors,

we have 30, and as short as nine months

ago, every expert was telling us we

need to have at least 44, and a backup

site from the Alaska site down in California

to be expanded at the same time.

And yet mysteriously in this particular

budget, somehow we have now changed

the expert opinion that we only need 30

of these instead of 44. Even though in

Alaska, where the site is, they are

ready to start in the short construction

period to building the extra silos that

they may need. In fact, one person said

it might be cheaper just to build them

and use them as storage bays until

we’re ready for something else.

But maybe the gentleman from Arizona

can talk about how significant

this issue in the budget is and what

this does to our potential defense, not

just from Iran but from especially

North Korea at the same time.

If I can go

back, though, I want to make this a

little bit worse than it is, because not

only is this program capped at 30 when

we need at least 44, the KEI, kinetic

energy interceptor, a program where

the contracts were let only in 2003,

they have gone through seven static

tests. In fact, they are on the launch

site and ready to do the first flight

tests, and the Secretary of Defense has

decided to cancel that program, even

though the admiral in charge of the

Chiefs of Staff says we need more research

and development.

This is a remarkable idea to try and

catch these missiles coming at us at a

different stage in the game, where with

the technology that is being developed,

it’s working, it has been successful in

the static tests. We should at least go

forward and see how far this program

can go. But this program has also been

chopped, and at the same time, the old

traditional defense of the Minuteman 3

has been stopped and capped. We will

no longer refurbish or rebuild these

particular rockets.

And indeed, what is scary to me is

the Russians have already said they

are going to rebuild and redo their

ICBM projects so that by 2018, 80 percent

of their ICBMs are going to be

brand new with new capability, and we

do not have the capability in our defense

budget to actually meet any of

that future need which may be there.

I appreciate

that, and I’m sorry to be the downer in

this party night. This is one of the ironies.

Not only did the Iranians launch

something today, but when the administration

announced their budget cuts

for the missile defense program, on the

very day, 7,000 miles away, North Korea’s

Kim Jong Il was shooting another

missile. Now, admittedly this one landed

in the Sea of Japan, but it threatens

Japan and it was on a trajectory toward

the United States. They are not

backing down, and they’re not backing

off, and I want to put in perspective

what we’re talking about because all of

the discussion we’ve heard so far is

these are very expensive programs, we

may not be able to afford them.

The entire savings for these programs

in 2010 is $1.7 billion, roughly.

Now, that sounds like a whole lot of

money, until you remember on our

stimulus bill we spent $800 billion, supposedly

to create jobs we’re now cutting

here. And what’s even worse in

that bill is $5 billion for government

organizations like ACORN. Now, I’m

sorry, that’s not my priority list.

That’s what I

said.