Madam Speaker, this week, the House is debating the

Defense appropriations bill, which provides an excellent opportunity to

point out something quite ironic about my colleagues in the majority

because, Madam Speaker, for all of their talk about getting spending

under control, that same rhetoric is surprisingly absent when we are

talking about the Pentagon budget, which we are talking about this

week.

You see, they're eager to slash and burn when it comes to programs

that invest and support middle class working families, but somehow,

when it is time for sacrifice to be shared, the military industrial

complex is nowhere to be found. While we have to fight for every penny

of domestic spending, the Pentagon simply fills in its amount on a

blank check, it appears. So I think we ought to have a dollar-for-

dollar match in spending cuts.

I will be offering a series of amendments to the DOD appropriations

bill that call for defense cuts in the exact amounts by which other

important programs are being reduced.

For example, the proposed Labor-HHS-Education spending bill

eliminates the title X program. Title X, the family planning program

that historically has been passed with bipartisan support, has provided

contraceptive and preventive health services to low-income women for

more than 40 years. The Republicans want the title X $294 million

investment gone. So let's cut the defense budget by an identical $294

million;

The Ag appropriations bill provides $119 million less than the

President requested for WIC--the Women, Infants, and Children's

program--which provides badly needed nutrition assistance for poor

pregnant women, new mothers, and children up to the age of 5. So, if we

are going to shortchange a pillar of our safety net by $119 million,

then I believe the Department of Defense can do without that same $119

million.

Here's the big ticket item: the Republican budget. The budget that

passed this body in March zeroed out all funding for the Social

Services Block Grant, including $1.7 billion in cuts for next year. If

my Republican friends believe that we can't afford $1.7 billion next

year to provide daycare, housing, home health care, home meal delivery,

and other social services, then I say we can also eliminate a

corresponding $1.7 billion in defense spending.

The fact is, Madam Speaker, defense cuts are not only fiscally

responsible and morally defensible; they're widely popular. USA Today

reported yesterday on a new survey that shows that two-thirds of those

living in Republican congressional districts believe that the defense

budget is too large.

It is no secret that military spending is widely out of control.

Let's remember that none of this takes into account the war in

Afghanistan, which isn't funded through the appropriations process. On

top of the bloated defense budget, American taxpayers are shelling out

another $10 billion a month--not a year--for a decade-long war that is

failing to advance our national security objective.

It's time to reverse this course. It's time to bring our troops home

from Afghanistan. It's time for the Pentagon to assume its share of the

shared sacrifice. It's time to do the right and the sensible thing:

stop spending on weapons and warfare and start investing in the

American people.