I rise to make just a very brief announcement.

For years and years in the past when presenting the Defense

appropriations bill, it has always been my policy, if any amendment is

out of order and is subject to a point of order, to allow the

introducer of that amendment at least 5 minutes to discuss it before

raising a point of order. I hope we can do that today and expedite the

process. I would like to move this bill a little quicker than maybe we

had anticipated.

So I just make that announcement. We will continue to allow you to

have your debate time before raising the point of order, but I would

hope that everybody would be respectful of the time.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. Chairman, this is another amendment that

slashes large amounts from our overall Defense appropriations bill.

I would say that this subcommittee is not adverse to reducing defense

spending when we can do so without having an adverse effect on

readiness or without having an adverse effect on our troops, their

medical care, and their families. I understand the gentlelady does

protect some of those issues in her amendment.

This committee has already proven that we are willing to cut defense.

In the last 2 fiscal years, this subcommittee, on a bipartisan basis

and in a bipartisan way, was able to reduce $39 billion, and we did so

very carefully by looking at every account, every project, every place

that we could find weakness in the spending, in the contracting, in

programs that were terminated or about to be terminated, and we can do

that, but just an across-the-board cut is not smart.

Here's what could happen. We could actually, with this amendment and

this reduction, we could require that we reduce or cancel training for

troops returning home from the battlefield or cancel Navy training

exercises because they are running very tight on funding already, or

reduce Air Force flight training or delay or cancel maintenance of

aircraft, ships, and vehicles. All of this relates to readiness: to

make sure that the men and women in the military are ready, that they

are trained properly, that they have the equipment, and that the

equipment is ready.

Now something new here, interesting for this year: the CBO--and

everyone understands that CBO is a nonpartisan, nonpolitical

organization--has just issued their analysis of the Department's Future

Year Defense Programs, the FYDP, and determined that Department plans

will actually cost $123 billion more than they actually project, which

means what they say we will get for the money, we won't get that for

the money.

Further cuts would make it very difficult to meet the requirements of

the Department of Defense, the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and the Air

Force. We just don't want to do that.

This is not the only amendment. We have dealt with similar amendments

numerous times yesterday, and I expect that we will again numerous

times today. This is not a good amendment, and it's one that I would

hope that the Members reject.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. Chairman, this actually may be the most

critical amendment that we will consider on this bill today. There

should be no secret deals on our missile defense with a Russian

President or any other person not involved with the security of our own

Nation. This amendment precludes that.

Mr. Brooks has pointed it out extremely well and Mr. Turner has

certainly made a very strong case. But let me add, our national defense

interests have got to be our interests, not somebody else's. Our

national defense investments must be made based on what is the threat

to our Nation, and missile defense in particular. The Iranians have

just shown a massive arsenal of missiles--short-range, medium-range,

and some long-range capability. Those missiles would have the ability

to target our troops wherever they might be in the Persian Gulf region.

They can even reach to Israel, one of our very best partners and

coalition allies.

We just can't let this happen. We can't let anyone make a secret deal

with a Russian President on missile defense. The threat is too great.

The threat is growing not only from Iran, but from North Korea. The

North Koreans have invested a lot of time, a lot of money, and a lot of

technology in developing their missiles, and I don't suspect that they

are for peaceful purposes.

We have to be always on guard that we protect Americans and our

interests

and our troops, wherever they might be, from hostile attacks by

somebody's missile.

So this is a critical amendment, and I think it is important that we

have a very large vote and send the message that we are not going to

toy with the defense of our Nation, especially missile defense.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlelady for

yielding, and I want to thank her for the attention and the hard work

that she does to ensure that our military service members and their

families have the very best information and resources regarding health

care.

That is only fair. One of our highest priorities has always been to

take care of the health of our men and women in uniform and their

families.

I thank the gentlelady again, my neighbor in Florida, for her

advocacy on this issue and guarantee that we will be very happy to work

with her and the Department to make sure that all relevant health care

information is available to our service members, our retirees, and their

families.

Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman would yield, I

would say to him that today, spectrum is a commodity, and the efficient

management of that commodity is critical. I agree that understanding

the Department of Defense's plans and budgets for research and

development and deployment of these capabilities is critical.

I look forward to working with Mr. Walden and the Department of

Defense

to understand the technologies and techniques being employed to improve

government spectrum efficiencies. I thank the gentleman for raising

this important issue.

Mr. Chairman, first, I would like to say that I

really respect Ms. Lee's tenacity and her determination. There's no

doubt that she is sincere, but I just disagree with her amendment.

Actually, except for the numbers that have changed, this is basically

the same amendment that has been offered before even today. And so

rather than repeat the arguments, I will just say the arguments are the

same.

This is not a good amendment, and I would hope that the membership

would oppose this amendment as we have others similar to this.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Thank you for yielding.

I appreciate the gentleman's attention to this matter, and I support

his efforts to prioritize spending within the Defense Department. I

look forward to working with him to ensure that our scarce defense

dollars are spent in a responsible manner, and I thank the gentleman

for raising this issue.

Mr. Chairman, I take this time to advise

Members of something that they might be exposed to here shortly.

Recently, I had an opportunity to experience what I call ambush

journalism on an issue that--I really found it hard to believe that

this investigative reporter would raise the issue.

He was very upset because of the amount of money we spend to return

our ``killed in action'' heroes back to their families at their home

bases after they arrive in the United States at Dover. I was really

shocked that that would be a concern to anybody because I believe that

those heroes should be treated with the utmost respect.

I told this distinguished gentleman that I would do everything that I

possibly could to make sure that the proper respect and dignity were

awarded these heroes as their remains return home to their families.

This gentleman thought that Congress actually set the schedules and

decided which airplanes fly the soldiers back home. I explained the

law. I explained that that was not the case. I explained that the

Pentagon had a lot of people who did administrative things like that,

including scheduling.

I expect that many of you might also face this same investigative

reporter and be asked the same question. I just want you to be aware

that that is the issue. I don't understand why anybody would want to

deny a hero killed in action dignity and respect as he returns home to

his family. It is just exasperating to me, I will say, Mr. Chairman. I

just wanted Members to be aware. You may be faced with this very same

question, with this very same issue. I hope you're not, but you might

be; so I bring this to your attention just in case.

I yield back the balance of my time.

I thank the gentlelady for yielding, and I

thank the gentlelady for raising this issue.

The attention and hard work to ensure the proper equipping of Humvee

ambulances in units of our National Guard is extremely important. In

today's wars, because we have these increased benefits, we have better

training, we have better medicines, we're able to move soldiers from

the battlefield almost as soon as they're hurt. Lives are being saved.

Troops are surviving who in previous wars would not have survived. So

the gentlelady's work is a very important part of this capability.

I agree that the Humvee ambulances and National Guard units should be

outfitted with proper medical equipment to effectively accomplish the

assigned missions, and that any new purchases of Humvee ambulances

should include the equipment necessary for mission accomplishment. The

capability assessment that the National Guard will soon conduct will

greatly assist this effort. I thank the gentlelady for her advocacy in

this extremely important issue of saving the lives of our heroes on the

battlefield.

Mr. Chairman, I have had the opportunity to

discuss this amendment numerous times with Mr. Moran and with our

colleagues on the Armed Services Committee, and I would like to say

that I am here to support this amendment.

However, I would like to engage Mr. Moran and ask if he would be

willing, as we move forward--I know we can't do it on the floor today--

to include a national security waiver in this language when we get to

conference. As we go through the process, would the gentleman have any

difficulty supporting us in that effort to get a national security

waiver?

I yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

I also thank her for her strong support of the C-17, and she is right

on with regard to the vital role it plays in our Nation's defense.

This committee has been a strong advocate for the C-17. Our bill

fully funds the C-17 and ensures that no action can be taken by the Air

Force to reduce the C-17 fleet.

I again thank the gentlelady for her very timely comments on this

important issue.

Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from

California for bringing this to our attention and for supporting

innovative and cost-effective ways for our government to protect our

people and their possessions from wildfires. I, too, believe the

Department of Defense should seriously consider promising and cost-

effective firefighting technologies where appropriate.

I thank the gentlelady for yielding, and I

thank her for calling attention to the fact that the subcommittee in

our report said

this is an issue worthy of attention. Our language in the report said:

urges the services, and specifically our Special Operations Forces, to

conduct effective outreach and recruitment programs to minority

populations to improve diversity in the military.

Absolutely. We agree with you totally. That is the intent of our

committee. It becomes the intent of the Congress. We will continue to

work with you to make sure that we do better at every opportunity.

I thank you for raising this issue today.

I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank

him very much for bringing up this issue. I believe that the Berg

amendment recognizes the world as it really is, the threats that we

potentially face. I think he has done the Congress a real service today

by emphasizing this issue with his amendment, and I support his

amendment.

Mrs. LUMMIS. WY I'm pleased to work with Representative Berg on this

amendment, which will protect our nuclear triad from the reductions

scheduled under this treaty for the term of this 2013 budget year. Each

leg of our nuclear triad--bombers, submarines, and land-based

missiles--complement each other and they strengthen each other.

As a lifelong resident of southeast Wyoming, I have come to

understand and appreciate the role of our intercontinental ballistic

missiles. The 90th Missile Wing in Cheyenne keeps 150 of our ICBMs at

nearly 100 percent alert. The bombers and subs have their own unique

strengths, but no other leg of the triad comes close to this alert

level. The constant alert, wide geographic dispersion and immediate,

global response capability of our ICBMs make them an indispensable part

of our triad.

ICBMs are the most cost-effective leg of the triad as well. At less

than $3 million per ICBM, they are less than a third of the cost of a

sub-launched missile or a nuclear bomber. It's because of ICBMs that we

can say with confidence that we are fielding a nearly unbeatable

nuclear force.

Those that want to slash our nuclear force forget that it was

American strength that ended the Cold War. It was American strength,

including the Peacekeeper and Minuteman III missiles, that allowed us

to negotiate landmark reductions in American and Russian nuclear

arsenals. Remember, we were able to retire the Peacekeeper missile

silos in Wyoming. It was a victory for global stability; but we did it

through American strength, not through unilateral disarmament.

That's what makes the New START Treaty so troubling. It is bilateral

in name only. The United States bound itself to unilateral reductions

in strategic nukes, but Russia can still expand its strategic arsenal.

Russia can stack their bombers to the hilt with warheads and call it a

single-delivery vehicle. Russia can deploy an unlimited number of the

tactical nuclear weapons under which they hold an advantage. Russia can

develop new, long-range nuclear-tipped cruise missiles. With New START,

we negotiated away American strength and received little in return.

It is dangerous to assume that our nuclear competitors have the same

motives and ideals that we do. If we roll over and capitulate to the

demands of our competitors, we cannot assume that Russia, China, and

Iran will follow. But if we maintain our strengths and our unbeatable

nuclear posture, we will be far more effective at securing the peace

that we all want.

Again, I want to thank Representative Berg and Mr. Rehberg. I

encourage you to vote against unilateral disarmament. Vote for our

amendment.

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

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I appreciate the comments of Mr. Dicks, our former chairman, and

would say that I agree strongly with him, as I do most of the time. We

have a great history of working together for many, many years. We will

be very happy to work together with you on this issue because it is a

very, very important concern to all of us and to all the members of our

committee and I know to all the Members of this House of

Representatives.

I rise to support this very, very popular

amendment.

Mr. Flores offered the same amendment to each fiscal year 2012

appropriations bill, and all were accepted by a voice vote. Also, each

fiscal year 2013 appropriations bill that has already passed the House

includes this amendment. All passed by voice vote, with the exception

of CJS, which had a rollcall and a positive vote of over 250 votes

``yes.'' Fifteen Democrats supported the amendment.

Mr. Conaway offered an amendment to the FY13 Armed Services Committee

bill which has the same effect. The amendment was accepted into the

House bill. This obviously is a very popular amendment, and I'm happy

to be supportive of it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

I thank the gentleman for discussing this with

us earlier on. We have had a very good conversation, and I would say

that I am strongly supportive of what the gentleman has just said.

I believe that the American flag should be made in America, with

American materials, whatever they might be. And so I do share that, and

I guarantee him that we will continue to work with him to find a

workable solution to see that this does happen.

I thank the gentleman for raising the issue. I thank him, again, for

discussing this early on with me, and I'm here to be supportive.

First, I would like to say that I understand

the sincerity of the gentleman's presentation. It is very much like a

number of other amendments that we have had.

Mr. Chairman, in Afghanistan, we are in a very critical position. I

think it's important that we allow the military commanders--those who

are commanding our troops, those who are leading our troops into

combat--to tell us how we achieve our goal and then how we depart from

Afghanistan. We need their advice.

I will tell you that I have been to Afghanistan, but I've seen more

of the war at the hospital at Walter Reed in Bethesda. I've seen too

many young folks--men and women--who are quadruple amputees, triple

amputees, and who have more serious mental issues and traumatic brain

injuries. From my weekly visits there, I can tell you that this is a

mean, mean, nasty war with a mean, mean, nasty enemy.

We have got to let, not politics, but the wisdom, the vision, the

knowledge, the advice of our military commanders in the field who are

responsible for this operation make our decisions. Their advice is not

compatible with this amendment, so I do strongly oppose it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. Chairman, the Stearns' amendment would

prohibit funds from being used to implement an enrollment fee for the

TRICARE for Life program.

The Department of Defense does not currently have the authority to

establish such a fee, but did submit a legislative proposal to do so.

The House-passed National Defense Authorization Act chose not to adopt

the legislative request that would give the Department this authority.

While this Defense Appropriations bill does not have jurisdiction on

TRICARE issues, we support strongly what Mr. Stearns intends to do, so

we accept the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I will not oppose this amendment

because I want to make sure that the Defense Department does not hire

bad contractors. And I agree with Mr. Kucinich strongly on this issue.

The only comment that I would make is we've just seen this amendment

just a few minutes ago, and we have not really had time to analyze it,

so if we could make any further explanation. But I'm not going to

oppose the amendment. I suspect it's going to pass. It probably should

because none of us want the Defense Department to hire bad contractors.

Good job, Mr. Kucinich.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The former chairman of this subcommittee is

absolutely correct.

Current strains on our military and fiscal resources are causing

unprecedented challenges in maintaining a viable, cost-effective

military health care system. He has probably heard me discuss this more

then he has wanted to over the years, but it is a serious, important

issue. It is essential that new, innovative approaches be more quickly

included in military medical practice.

Thank you for yielding, and I wanted to say the

same thing.

Mr. Lewis chaired this subcommittee, as well as the full committee.

He did an outstanding job. Many innovations came about during his 6

years as chairman of this subcommittee. He is with us today, and he

will continue to be with us. The House is losing another great talent,

another great dedicated public official. I thank you for calling

attention to his service.

Again, I just want to thank the gentleman for

highlighting this issue today. Obviously, I plan to continue to work

with him in order to do the best we can to make this happen.