Thank you, Mr. Brooks.

I just want to point out the importance of this amendment and also

reiterate that this amendment says that classified information about

our missile defense system should not be allowed to be provided to the

Russians. We have two areas of concern:

Obviously, one, Iran and their growing ICBM threat to the United

States. I previously wrote a letter with Chairman McKeon to Secretary

Panetta asking about specific information for the rising ICBM threat

with Iran.

The second aspect is that we're all aware that the President is

currently in negotiations on a secret deal with the Russians. We saw

that in the open mike discussion that the President was having with

Medvedev in South Korea, where he said he wanted greater flexibility

until after the election. Some of that flexibility should not be

disclosing classified information concerning our missile defense system

to the Russians. This amendment would say: Mr. President, you won't

tell us what your secret deal is, but that secret deal better not

include sharing classified information of the United States with the

Russians about our missile defense.

Again, Mr. Brooks' amendment is very important because it says: Mr.

President, even though you won't tell us what the secret deal is, we

will not allow you to exchange classified information and weaken the

security of the United States.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Turner-

McKeon-Thornberry amendment. I, as chairman of the House Strategic

Forces Subcommittee, am offering this amendment, along with the House

Armed Services Committee chairman, Mr. McKeon, and the vice chairman,

Mr. Thornberry.

For 66 years, the U.S. nuclear deterrent has kept us and our allies

safe from large-scale war under a remarkably consistent policy

supported by Presidents of both parties. Now, however, President Barack

Obama appears to be unilaterally changing it--for reasons not yet

explained.

House Armed Services Committee Chairman Buck McKeon and 31 other

committee members and I recently wrote to the President, expressing

concern over reports that he is directing a review of U.S. nuclear

weapons strategy that could result in U.S. reductions of up to 80

percent. We asked to understand what the President is doing, and why.

We've received nothing back from the President.

The Obama administration reportedly is weighing at least three

options for reducing U.S. nuclear forces: Cutting to roughly 1,000 to

1,100; 700 to 800; or 300 to 400. Our arsenal now includes about 5,000

warheads, with approximately 2,000 deployed warheads permitted under

the new START Treaty. The remaining 3,000 are kept in storage as a

hedge against advancements by other nations. Russia has 4,000 to 6,500

warheads and China is reported to have more than 300, though no one

outside of the Chinese Communist Party knows for sure how many they

have. These countries, as well as India; Pakistan, which is building a

stockpile expected to soon surpass Britain; Britain itself; France;

North Korea; and perhaps soon Iran have active nuclear weapons

modernization programs. Only the United States does not.

Now, the President may soon seek to have the U.S. make the deepest

reductions in its nuclear forces in history. The new strategic review

could be on the President's desk within the next

month. It is unclear whether he expects the cuts to be unilateral or

within the framework of a treaty with Russia or China and others. At

least one of the President's senior advisers has suggested that these

reductions could be unilateral. It's worth noting that the impetus for

this review is outside the norm. It is unexplainable. Traditionally, a

President has directed his military advisers to determine, chiefly,

what level of our nuclear force is needed to deter a potential

adversary from attacking us or our allies. The answer to that question

should be what drives the strategy, not a President's political

ideology.

For example, this is how Secretary Powell stated that President Bush

looked at the issue. He stated:

The House Armed Services Committee has been asking questions, holding

briefings with the administration, even hearings about the details that

we need to explain what the administration is doing. Unfortunately, the

only information we have at this point is what we're learning from the

media. Why would the administration be unwilling to share even the

basic terms of reference for this review, known as Presidential Policy

Directive 11? Why wouldn't it share other basic instructions from the

Defense Department? The President, after all, is directing a strategic

review that could border on disarmament and significantly diminish U.S.

strength.

It is not even clear that the unilateral reductions to the U.S.

nuclear forces that are currently required by the New START agreement

are in the best interests of our national security. And the Defense

Department refuses to tell Congress how it plans to implement that

treaty. The Senate was ultimately comfortable with those reductions

once the President promised to provide his own plan for modernization

of our U.S. nuclear deterrent. The President's most recent budget,

however, abandons the nuclear modernization funding that he promised.

Case in point is the Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement

Nuclear Facility, the construction of which the President pledged a

little more than a year ago to accelerate and which in this year's

budget he deferred for 5 years, which basically means that this project

will be canceled. Thus, the President leaves the United States with

virtually no militarily significant plutonium pit production capacity,

which other nuclear weapons state still possesses. And he wants to seek

steep new reductions in the U.S. nuclear forces. This can only be

described as a bait-and-switch strategy.

Any further reductions must be met with ample justification for how

U.S. nuclear security will be enhanced. Simply saying that U.S. should

``reduce the roles and numbers'' of its nuclear weapons is nothing more

than putting hope in the place of our strategy.

Our military leaders share these sentiments. General Chilton, in

talking about the number of warheads that we currently have, said:

``The arsenal that we have is exactly what is needed to provide the

deterrent.''

Clearly, any further reductions will undermine the deterrent that has

kept our country safe. Our nuclear weapons provide for the safety of

this Nation and our allies around the globe. A number of countries with

the capability and resources to do so have not pursued this.

We ask for support for this in Ronald Reagan's ``peace through

strength'' policy.

Sir, thank you for yielding me time. And I know

you certainly do know about this topic, which is why I know that you

also know that we use our nuclear deterrent every day. While we stand

on this floor and speak with the freedoms that we have, our nuclear

deterrent keeps us safe. Abandoning our nuclear deterrent would not

make us safe.

To respond to the gentleman, again, our nuclear

deterrent is used every day. Every day, it keeps us safe because it

ensures that our country----

The reality is that our nuclear deterrent is used

every day. And when you say that nuclear weapons won't be used, you can

only say that with respect to our heart, the heart of this country, the

heart of this country that wants to make certain that freedom is safe

and our allies are safe.

We can't say that for others. Iran and North Korea are pursuing

nuclear weapons not because they just want the increased power, they

want that technology. They want that ability to have weapons of mass

destruction.

I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for his

work on this on the appropriations side.

This is an important issue, and this really goes to the heart of our

national security. My amendment does nothing, by the way, to prohibit

the implementation of New START. But the thing that is important here

is that there are those who talk about nonproliferation, and I think we

are all wanting nuclear weapons to be restricted and to stop their

growth. But there's a difference between nonproliferation and

disarmament of the United States. Only the United States is reducing

our nuclear weapons. In New START, Russia wasn't required to reduce at

all. Only the United States was reduced.

You have India, you have Pakistan, you have Iran and North Korea.

North Korea already is a recognized nuclear weapons state. Iran is

seeking nuclear weapons. And both of those nations are seeking ICBM

technology for the purposes of placing the United States at risk.

Secretary Gates, upon his departure, was saying that North Korea is

becoming an absolute threat to mainland United States with its nuclear

weapons and its ICBM technology.

We can only be confident that others will not use nuclear weapons to

the extent that we can stand strong as a nuclear weapons state. That

needs to be derived from what is the threat and the number of weapons

to ensure that we have both survivability and the ability to place

their assets and their nations at risk.

A couple of hundred--and all due respect to the ranking member--is

based upon no science whatsoever. Our commander of U.S. Strategic

Command, General Chilton, who has been through this science and who is

charged with keeping the United States safe, said that the arsenal that

we have is exactly what is needed today to provide the deterrent.

Our concern is that the President, on his road to zero, has made it

clear that even though it will have no effect on reducing the nuclear

arsenals of other nations, he would move to unilaterally reduce ours.

That's why we're on this floor, not as the Senate, but as the House to

say we are going to restrict funding to prevent the President from

unilaterally disarming us.

If the President is committed to a road to zero, show us any evidence

that he is able to persuade anyone else to reduce their nuclear

weapons, because we don't have any evidence of anyone else reducing

except the President's trying to reduce ours.

I rise in agreement with the ranking member on

the issue of this amendment.

The subject matter of this amendment is really wholly inappropriate.

It is the movement of brigades. From a policy perspective, we should

not, on this bill or on any bill, be dictating the movement of

brigades.

Should we get out the map of the world and see where all of our

brigades are and have a debate in Congress as to how they be moved

about? No. That is something that is supposed to occur in consultation

with the experts in full, and participation of the Department of

Defense, the Secretary of Defense. And no disrespect to the authors,

but they have no expertise or experience in how the positioning of our

brigades should go for our overall national security.

Mr. Coffman has previously authored an amendment that was on the

National Defense Authorization Act that used language of permit the

reassignment or the removal of brigades. But this is directive. This

says these brigades shall be moved, and it does so under the assumption

that there will be cost savings. But we all know that when you actually

move a brigade, there are a number of costs that are incurred that are

greater than any savings that you would have in offset.

It's been said that the Soviet Union no longer exists. You're right;

the Soviet Union no longer exists. But we have commitments in the

Middle East and our assistance to Africa and our relationship with

Israel. These troops are not there standing guard against the Soviet

Union that's not there anymore. They're in active deployment under the

Secretary of Defense with the current threats that we have for our

national security.

Certainly, as the ranking member has indicated, there's ongoing

assessments as to where these brigades should be assigned and where

their responsibility should be, and those should be left to our

oversight of the Department of Defense and the Secretary of Defense,

not to our directive of the moving of brigades.

There are some concerns that even the language of this and the

directing of movement of brigades might be logistically implausible.

One of the reasons we don't direct these things is that we don't really

have the ability to understand all of the cascades of effects that

occur.

Now, I certainly understand the call for increased spending from our

NATO partners. That is certainly something that this body should do;

but in calling for our NATO partners to increase their participation in

the expenditures of NATO in their own defense, we should not be

directing the Secretary

of Defense to actually move brigades. It is an expertise we don't have

in a debate that should not be happening from a policy perspective on

this floor.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.