Mr. Chairman, I'm very proud to join with my

colleague from California (Ms. Lee) and Mr. Smith, the ranking member

on the Armed Services Committee, in support of this amendment.

This amendment is, in fact, different than every other amendment that

has been offered on this bill. This amendment is very simple and very

clear in its purpose: it's to make sure that this Congress complies

with the Budget Control Act agreement that was set by this body on a

bipartisan vote just last year.

I would just refer my colleagues to the Budget Control Act and refer

them to section 302, Enforcement of Budget Goals. It's right there in

plain English what the 050 number will be, the Defense appropriation

number will be. That was the Budget Control Act that was supported and

voted on by the chairman of the Budget Committee, by the chairman of

the Armed Services Committee, by the chairman of the Appropriations

Committee, and by the chairman and the ranking member of the Defense

Appropriations Subcommittee.

In fact, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Mr. Rogers,

said last year, when we passed it:

He went on to say:

That was August 1 of last year. The chairman of the full

Appropriations Committee was right last year, but the bill that's

coming to the floor today is in violation of that bipartisan agreement.

As a result of that violation, while the Defense appropriation bill

exceeds significantly what was requested by our own Defense Department

as what was necessary to meet our national security needs--because this

bill dramatically increased that level above what was requested--the

reality is the other bills that are coming through the Appropriations

Committee are taking very deep cuts--deep cuts to education, deep cuts

to health care programs. In fact, the ranking member of the

subcommittee, Mr. Dicks, described that Labor-H bill as one of the most

partisan bills that he has seen. That's true, and that is a direct

result of the fact that this bill that's before us today dramatically

explodes the Budget Control Act agreements.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I would just refer the body to the statements made

by Admiral Mullen recently, who of course was the chairman of the Joint

Chiefs of Staff, pointing out that our military strength depends on our

economic strength and our economic strength depends on our long-term

fiscal health and the soundness of our fiscal policy. And I quote

Admiral Mullen, who said:

He went on to say:

He said:

That is why this body, on a bipartisan basis, agreed to the Budget

Control Act. So it's very unfortunate that this bill now comes to the

floor in violation of an agreement, in violation of an understanding

that in order to get our fiscal house in order, we had to make tough

decisions on defense and nondefense alike.

By violating the agreement in this regard, what the committee is

saying is they're willing to make really tough decisions. In fact, they

make irresponsible decisions with respect to the nondefense domestic

spending, and we doubt we'll even see a Labor-H bill on the floor of

this House, it's so bad. The reason it's so bad is because, in part,

that Budget Control Act was violated and so much was added to the

Defense Department, again, as my colleagues have said, more than

requested by our military leadership and more than requested by the

Defense Department.

I agree with Admiral Mullen, who said we all need to share in this

responsibility. I agree with what my Republican colleague said just

last year when we passed the Budget Control Act. Let's stick to an

agreement and let the people know that when this body comes to an

understanding after a hard compromise, we stick with it for the public

good.

I yield back the balance of my time.