Mr. Chairman, I would like to engage the chairman, Mr.

Young, in a colloquy if he will so engage.

Mr. Chairman, I commend you and your committee for your hard work

putting together this bill. The efforts

by your committee and your staff to provide our warfighters with the

tools they need to keep our Nation secure are our first priority, and I

thank you for your service doing just that.

I applaud your work also to mitigate risk associated with shrinking

budgets. I believe this bill shows your leadership to make the tough

decisions to fund our Department of Defense at the appropriate levels

even during this time of fiscal austerity.

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to thank you

specifically for your work addressing the wasteful pursuit by the

Department--specifically the Navy--to stand up an alternative energy

industry. These efforts go against the primary mission of the

Department and are a colossal waste of taxpayer money, especially as we

are scrubbing every penny inside the Pentagon.

The Navy claims that its pursuit of a green fuel source that is

produced in the United States would help protect it from price shocks

and volatility within the oil markets. I have yet to hear an argument

that supports how spending, on average, $26 a gallon for biofuels would

protect our fuel budgets when we could be paying $3.60 a gallon. This

argument simply doesn't add up.

Prices, Mr. Chairman, would have to rise eightfold for this equation

to work.

The Navy claims that development of biofuels will limit the number of

deaths associated with fuel convoys in theater. Yet, this is a specious

argument. Convoys will still be needed to haul biofuels across

dangerous areas to supply our needs, just like conventional fuels. And

if they're less efficient, more convoys would in all likelihood be

needed.

The Navy also claims that buying biofuels and sailing their Green

Fleet will end up saving American taxpayer dollars and ultimately lead

our military to energy independence. Throughout hearings in the House

and the Senate Armed Services Committee, witnesses failed to offer any

verifiable analysis that shows the costs of achieving this goal or when

these goals can be achieved.

Mr. Chairman, time and time again, with this current administration

we've seen instances of shortsighted, unrealistic expectations like

this and its sister project, Solyndra, at the Department of Energy

where venture capitalists are making a fortune off frivolous spending

of taxpayer dollars on projects that belong in the private sector.

The Department of Defense should be in the business of prosecuting

wars and keeping this country safe, not wasting dollars on the pursuit

of green fuel. I would argue that Department leaders should focus on

buying the cheapest most readily available fueling which keeps our

ships steaming and our planes flying.

Mr. Chairman, everyone in this House would sleep much

easier at night if our airplanes flew on sunbeams and our ships steamed

on rainbows, but they don't. They use diesel, and diesel they must have

if they are to continue to protect this Nation.

I rise today in strong support of this amendment to lift the

restrictions on the military's procurement of alternative fuels

enshrined in section 526 of the Energy Independence and Security Act. I

would also like to thank my colleagues, Mr. Flores and Mr. Hensarling,

for their work with me on this issue.

Section 526 prohibits the military from purchasing alternative fuel

products that have ``life-cycle greenhouse gas emissions''--that's a

mouthful--that are ``less than or equal to such emissions from

conventional fuel.'' Mr. Chair, this prohibition makes no sense to me.

Several months ago, Secretary of the Navy Mabus said:

If protecting fuel supply lines and avoiding price volatility are

truly the goals of the military--and I do believe that these are worthy

objectives--then lifting the restrictions imposed by section 526 should

be a no-brainer.

Section 526 puts technology like coal-to-liquids, gas-to-liquids, oil

shale, and oil sands out of reach for the United States military. These

technologies are capable of meeting the Department's objectives for

safeguarding production and reducing price volatility, and in most

cases are far more advanced than the exotic biofuels project that the

Navy is currently pursuing.

This amendment will offer us a stark choice: The military can meet

its strategic fuel supply concerns or operational planning can take a

backseat to environmental posturing.

Many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will spend their

time talking about how dirty fuel derived from coal-to-liquids or oil

sand technology is. They will offer up and knock down straw men dealing

with global warming and carbon footprints. But what they will not talk

about is the critical need for our Department of Defense to procure the

cheapest, most readily available fuel that fulfils its strategic

requirements.

I offer my full-throated endorsement for the Department's work to

increase its energy efficiency, to reduce the need for fuel convoys,

and to limit vulnerabilities in the fuel supply chain. However, those

aren't the issues that we're dealing with with this amendment. The

question this amendment asks is: Is it appropriate for Congress to

continue to prohibit the military from purchasing certain domestically

available synthetic fuels?

The Department of Defense's singular objective is to protect this

Nation. Department of Defense leaders have made it clear that foreign

sources of oil and price volatility present an obstacle to fulfilling

that obligation. Lifting the restrictions contained in section 526 will

free the military to utilize any technology it believes can help to

confront that danger.

I urge my colleagues to join me to lift this irresponsible

prohibition and provide the military with the options it needs to

manage the long-term, strategic risks facing our Nation.

I thank my good friend for offering this amendment, and I look

forward to its passage.

I yield back the balance of my time.