Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the chairman of the

committee for allowing me to bring this forward.

Congress has a responsibility to see that funds are spent

appropriately by the Department of Defense to support missions and

provide for our national security.

The Department has been using foreign-owned aircraft to carry

equipment in and out of Afghanistan, totaling over $140 million year-

to-date. These missions could have been completed by American carriers.

American carriers are regulated by the FAA and have a much better

safety record than foreign airlines. And U.S. government dollars go to

develop U.S. jobs.

The U.S. government specifically designated the Civil Reserve Air

Fleet, or CRAF, to supplement national security air transport needs

through partnership with private U.S.-based airlines. The program

allows civilian airlift capability to integrate with military command

structures on short notice.

Using foreign-owned aircraft is not only disadvantageous for our

military carriers but also for U.S. commercial airlines that have

dedicated aircraft to CRAF. It removes the incentive for American

carriers to hire American workers and use American mechanics and

suppliers, and ultimately harms a vital national security program.

This amendment requires that the Department of Defense use American-

owned and operated aircraft whenever possible to move cargo and

passengers. It ensures that troops in the field get what they need by

allowing the Department to use foreign carriers when necessary. It

strengthens this vital national security program and assures that

American dollars are spent on American services.

Current law, the Fly CRAF Act, is not being complied with to the

extent, again, of $140 million. It has gone to foreign carriers this

year, and unapproved carriers are being assigned CRAF missions. This

``leakage'' from CRAF programs is a threat to the viability of our CRAF

carriers, the program, and ultimately, our warfighters.

I would encourage all Members to support this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.