

**STATEMENT OF  
CONGRESSWOMAN BARBARA LEE, OF CALIFORNIA**

**IN SUPPORT OF LEE AMENDMENTS  
TO H.R. 1540  
DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FY12**

**BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON RULES**

May 24, 2011

Thank you Chairman Dreier and Ranking Member Slaughter, as well as the rest of my distinguished colleagues on this committee, for the opportunity to discuss my amendments to the defense reauthorization bill, H.R. 1540.

My amendments are straightforward and will send a welcome message to the American people, who, in the face of daunting economic challenges, are weary after more than ten years of war.

I strongly urge that you make each of these amendments in order for consideration by the full House.

Mr. Chairman, there is no military solution in Afghanistan, and it is not in our economic and national security interest to remain there. The American people overwhelmingly support action to speed up the withdrawal of U.S. troops in Afghanistan.

To rectify this, my amendment number 168 will end combat operations in Afghanistan and limit funding to the safe and orderly withdrawal of U.S. troops and military contractors.

I have offered this amendment on the House Floor in the past and believe it important for the House to go on record on this critical issue.

As you may recall, in 2009, President Obama pledged to begin to transfer responsibility to Afghan security forces and to begin to bring our troops home in July of 2011.

With that in mind, I have offered amendment number 170, which simply reaffirms these expectations through a sense of Congress. The amendment states that the President should commit to announcing a significant and sizeable reduction of U.S. troops levels in Afghanistan by the end of July, 2011

Of particular important, I worked with my colleague Rep. Amash and am the democratic lead sponsor on the Amash-Lee amendment number 155 to strike section 1034 from this bill.

Congress has yet to have a full and meaningful debate regarding the original 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF), on which I placed the **lone vote** in opposition because I knew it was blank check to wage war.

Section 1034 represents a far reaching new declaration of war against an undefined enemy and gives unchecked authority to the executive branch now and in the future, and should be unacceptable to each of us.

It is with these same responsibilities in mind that I have also offered amendment number 169 that requires that any agreement which obligates U.S. troops to security commitments in Iraq beyond 2011 to receive Congressional approval.

My amendment number 118 would freeze Department of Defense programs at fiscal year 2011 levels unless the financial statements of the Department of Defense are validated as auditable and meet generally accepted accounting principles.

Furthermore, I urge the committee to make in order number 171, cosponsored by Representative Stark, to return defense spending to 2008 levels. It is time to ramp down the unchecked bloated Pentagon spending abroad that imperils our domestic economic recovery.

In addition, I ask you to make in order Rep. Conyers' amendment number 35, to keep American ground troops from deploying in Libya with the exception of rescue missions, of which I am a co-sponsor.

It is my understanding that my amendment on no permanent bases in Iraq and Afghanistan is being offered en bloc. I wish to thank the committee for this opportunity because, as you know, this has been signed into law on numerous occasions by both former President Bush and President Obama, as well as in the Congressional Resolution passed by the Republican-led House.

Again, thank you Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Slaughter. I ask you to make these amendments in order. I look forward to answering any questions you might have for me.