

Madam Speaker, I regret that this bill, like so many of its predecessors over the past several years, does nothing to address some the urgent need for real reform in our intelligence community.

I am particularly troubled by the failure of this bill to address the deepening militarization of the Central Intelligence Agency, a process that began long ago but that has accelerated dramatically in the post-9/11 era.

Throughout most of its history, the CIA has--at the direction of successive presidents--veered between two organizational paths. The first, and the proper one, is for the CIA to do what President Truman intended when he created it: to collect information about the world around us, synthesize and analyze that data, and provide it to the executive and the legislature for their information and action, as appropriate. The other path--the one that has caused the CIA and our Nation so much grief--is the path of militarized covert, and not-so-covert, action.

Today, it is manifested in a quasi-publicly acknowledged CIA assassination-by-drone campaign on which the Administration has refused to provide information, despite my own request and the request of many other House and Senate members for the information. In the previous decade, we saw what happened when lines of responsibility and accountability for secret programs were fuzzy or not observed. The result was a detainee and interrogation program that was a national embarrassment morally, and an albatross politically with our allies around the world. The not-so-covert ``drone wars" are on a similar glide path, and this bill does nothing to provide a much-needed course correction for the policy.

This state of affairs is all the more regrettable because there are many dedicated professionals working in the CIA and elsewhere in our intelligence community who are forced to implement these questionable programs and policies. Some would agree with me that the entire enterprise is out of control and would benefit from much more focused and effective Congressional oversight. If this bill contained whistleblower protections for intelligence community employees, some of those individuals might well step forward to report what they know, and what they believe needs to be changed. But this bill contains no such protections, ensuring that the chilling threat of job retaliation remains in place. We will not restore true accountability and oversight over the intelligence community until such reforms are enacted, and which are absent from this bill. Accordingly, I cannot support it.