Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 24, the "Marine Corps Identity" bill. This bipartisan legislation would change the name of the Department of the Navy to the Department of the Navy and Marine Corps.

For over 200 years, the Marine Corps has fought side by side with the Navy. Yet, despite having served in every armed conflict in America's history, the Marines are not recognized at the department level. When the parents of fallen Marines receive a letter of condolence from their country, the Marine Corps name does not even appear on the official letterhead. For too long, recognition of the United States Marine Corps has failed to match the remarkable sacrifice of its men and women.

By adding just three symbolic words, H.R. 24 will finally honor the Marine Corps as a coequal branch of America's Armed Forces. For veterans in Minnesota and across the United States, and for our Marines currently serving overseas, I am proud to co-sponsor and vote to pass this important and overdue legislation.