□ 1100

ALL SENIORS SHOULD HAVE A PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, our seniors are facing skyrocketing prices for their prescription drugs. They are scared. For millions of seniors, a prescription drug benefit is the difference between getting the medicine they need for their health and what they need to do in order to pay mortgages, what they need to pay rent, what they need to do to pay for food. That is what the decisions are that our seniors are making today. They are forced to choose between purchasing that medication and buying groceries.

The problem with prescription drug coverage does not just affect one group of seniors. The Republican plan for prescription drugs is to focus on low income seniors, not all seniors. What we need to do is to cover all seniors with a prescription drug benefit. Prices are skyrocketing out of control. According to a recent study by Families USA, the price of the 50 prescription drugs most frequently used by seniors rose by twice the rate of inflation in 1999.

Between 1993 and 1998, the price of the average prescription rose 40 percent. The situation imperils our seniors. Let us make sure that all of our seniors are covered for prescription drug coverage.

INTERNATIONAL ABDUCTIONS MUST BE STOPPED

(Mr. LAMPSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to tell my colleagues the story of Sam Ali Tabaja, just one of the 10,000 American children who have been abducted to foreign countries. Sam was taken to Lebanon by his father Ali Ibrahim Tabaja in August of 1997. Sam was 3 years old at the time of his abduction.

Sam's mother was awarded custody of him and allowed his father to visit him frequently. A warrant for international parental kidnapping was issued for the father. However, Ali Ibrahim Tabaja has a large circle of friends and relatives in Lebanon who have helped to protect him. Sam's mother, Zohra Tabaja, has traveled to Lebanon and was allowed to visit with her son for half an hour. During the visit, she was surrounded by bodyguards. Zohra has been informed that she will never see Sam again, and she has heard nothing since her visit.

The problem of international child abduction is a disgrace. We should be displaying the same amount of outrage for American children that we did for Elian Gonzalez. I urge my colleagues to support the efforts to bring American children back to America, their home and their rightful place. Bring H. Con. Res. 293 to the floor and bring our children home.

IRANIAN JEWS

(Mr. DEUTSCH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to once again bring notice to this Congress of 13 Jews who are accused of spying in Iran, who have been imprisoned for over a year without formally being charged.

Jews have been living in Iran for 2,700 years, the oldest Jewish Diaspora community and the biggest in the Middle East after Israel.

At least 17 Jews have been executed in Iran since 1979, most of whom were accused of spying for Israel and the United States.

These Jews who have been held have had their due process violated, even under Iranian law. Thirteen Jews have been denied the right to choose their own lawyers. Ten of the defendants imprisoned for over a year without legal representation had lawyers chosen for them by the court, after the court rejected the lawyers picked by the defendants' families. Three of the 13 have been released on bail but none of the others were allowed to consult attorneys until hours before the trial opened.

Since that time, the lawyers have only had brief periods with their clients and only the most limited contact with their court-appointed attorneys. There has been a closed trial. No members of the Jewish community diplomats or human rights activists were permitted in the courtroom by order of the judge. The trial comes amid a power struggle between President Khatami and the hardliners opposed to his social and political reforms. This is about hardliners' opposition rather than the actual action of the defendants.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4205, FLOYD D. SPENCE, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2001

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules I call up House Resolution 503 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 503

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4205) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2001 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2001, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule.

SEC. 2. (a) It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Armed Services now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived.

(b) No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution or specified by a subsequent order of the House, amendments en bloc described in section 3 of this resolution, and pro forma amendments offered by the chairman or ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services for the purpose of debate.

(c) Except as specified in section 5 of this resolution, each amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules shall be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. Unless otherwise specified in the report, each amendment printed in the report shall be debatable for 10 minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent and shall not be subject to amendment (except that the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services each may offer one pro forma amendment for the purpose of further debate on any pending amendment).

(d) All points of order against amendments printed in the report of the Committee on Rules or amendments en bloc described in section 3 of this resolution are waived.

SEC. 3. It shall be in order at any time for the chairman of the Committee on Armed Services or his designee to offer amendments en bloc consisting of amendments printed in the report of the Committee on Rules not earlier disposed of or germane modifications of any such amendment. Amendments en bloc offered pursuant to this section shall be considered as read (except that modifications shall be reported), shall be debatable for 40 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services or their designees, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. For the purpose of inclusion in such amendments en bloc, an amendment printed in the form of a motion to strike may be modified to the form of a germane perfecting amendment to the text originally proposed to be stricken. The original proponent of an amendment included in such amendments en bloc may insert a statement in the Congressional Record immediately before the disposition of the amendments en bloc.

SEC. 4. The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may: (1) postpone until a time during further consideration in the Committee of the Whole a request for a recorded vote on any amendment; and (2) reduce to five minutes the minimum time for electronic voting on any postponed question that follows another electronic vote without intervening business, provided that the minimum time for electronic voting on the first

in any series of questions shall be 15 minutes.

SEC. 5. The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may recognize for consideration of any amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules out of the order printed, but not sooner than one hour after the chairman of the Committee on Armed Services or a designee announces from the floor a request to that effect.

SEC. 6. After disposition of the amendments printed in the report of the Committee on Rules, the Committee of the Whole shall rise without motion. No further consideration of the bill shall be in order except pursuant to a subsequent order of the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOEHNER). The gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. MYRICK) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Committee on Rules met and granted a structured rule for H.R. 4205, the Fiscal Year 2001 Department of Defense Authorization Act. The rule provides for 1 hour of general debate equally divided between the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. It makes in order as an original bill for the purpose of amendment the Committee on Armed Services amendment in the nature of a substitute now printed in the bill.

The rule also waives all points of order against the amendment in the nature of a substitute.

The rule provides that no amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the Committee on Rules report accompanying the resolution or specified by a subsequent order of the House, amendments en bloc described in section 3 of this resolution, and pro forma amendments offered by the chairman or ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services for the purpose of debate.

The rule provides that except as specified in section 5 of the resolution, each amendment printed in the report shall be considered only in the order printed in the report; may be offered only by a Member designated in the report; shall be considered as read and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or the Committee of the Whole.

The rule provides that unless otherwise specified in the report, each amendment printed shall be debatable for 10 minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent and shall not be subject to amendment, except that the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services may each offer one pro forma amendment for the purpose of debate on any pending amendment.

The rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in the report or amendments en bloc described in section 3 of the resolution.

The rule provides that it shall be in order at any time for the chairman of the Committee on Armed Services or his designee to offer amendments en bloc consisting of amendments printed in the report not earlier disposed of or germane modifications of any such amendment, which shall be considered as read, except that modifications shall be reported, shall be debatable for 40 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services or their designees and shall not be subject to amendment; shall not be subject to a demand for a division of the question in the House or the Committee of the Whole.

The rule provides that for the purpose of inclusion in such amendments en bloc, an amendment printed in the form of a motion to strike may be modified to the form of a germane perfecting amendment to the text originally proposed to be stricken.

The rule provides that an original proponent of an amendment included in such amendments en bloc may insert a statement in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD immediately before the disposition of the amendments en bloc. The rule allows the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole to postpone votes during consideration of the bill and to reduce voting time to 5 minutes on a postponed question, if the vote follows a 15-minute vote.

The rule allows the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole to recognize for the consideration of any amendment printed in the report out of the order printed, but not sooner than 1 hour after the chairman of the Committee on Armed Services or a designee announces from the floor a request to that effect.

Finally, the rule provides that after disposition of the amendments printed in the report, the Committee of the Whole shall rise without motion and no further consideration of the bill shall be in order except pursuant to a subsequent order of the House.

H.R. 4205 is a good bill. For several years, this body cut our military's budget while the administration deployed troops all over the globe. It was not fair to our men and women in uniform and it was not fair to hard working Americans who count on the military for their protection.

Well, those days are over. Now we are taking care of our national defense. We are getting our military families off food stamps by providing a 3.7 percent pay raise and we are helping them retire by creating an armed forces thrift savings plan. We are providing resources to improve military housing. For years our military personnel have been living in substandard housing.

□ 1115

We are giving our leaders the tools they need to get the job done in the field of battle, including five new submarines, up to 15 destroyers, additional Black Hawk helicopters, and Bradley fighting vehicles.

We need this bill, Mr. Speaker. For far too long we have shortchanged our military at the expense of our Nation's security.

This rule provides for a fair debate on the bill. The Committee on Rules received 102 amendments to H.R. 4205. With this rule, we will debate more than one-third of them, 35 amendments in all. But this is only the first step. Later the Committee on Rules will meet to grant a second rule for H.R. 4205.

All of the amendments which are not made in order under this rule are still in play. We simply decided that it was wise to get started this morning, and with 35 amendments to debate today, it is a healthy start.

I urge my colleagues to support this rule and to support the underlying bill, because now more than ever we must provide for our national security.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4205, the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2001, was reported from the Committee on Armed Services on a strong bipartisan vote of 56 to 1. The vote reflects the understanding of Democrats and Republicans for the need to ensure that our national defense continues to be second to none.

This bill reflects the commitment of Democrats and Republicans to achieving a level of readiness throughout the military that will protect this Nation and our commitment to democracy and the rule of law throughout the world.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4205, the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2001.

Mr. Speaker, during the report recess, I had the opportunity to see firsthand the dedication of the men and women who serve our country in uniform, often under the most trying circumstances. Along with some of my colleagues from the Texas delegation, I traveled to Bosnia to visit with National Guard troops from Texas and to see how our regular forces are faring in the tense and hazardous duty stations in Kosovo.

Many of the Members of this body have made the same kind of trip, and I am sure that every Member has come away with similar impressions of our men and women in uniform and their dedication to duty.

Mr. Speaker, the Congress has as one of its primary duties to provide for the national defense and the men and women who protect it. This bipartisan bill does a great deal to improve military readiness and to improve the quality of life for our men and women in uniform, as well as for their families.

Mr. Speaker, I am particularly pleased that this bill contains several provisions to improve the quality of

life of our military personnel. The bill provides for a 3.7 percent military pay raise, reduces out-of-pocket housing costs, which will particularly benefit the enlisted ranks, and provides a targeted subsistence benefit for those personnel who are most in need.

H.R. 4205 also makes significant improvements in military health care, and authorizes the creation of a Thrift Savings Plan for military personnel which will help them plan for their retirement needs.

The bill also provides $857 million for construction and improvement of military family housing, and an additional $605 million for construction of new barracks and dormitories. There are funds for child development centers, DOD dependent schools and impact aid, and commissary modernization, all important to quality of life improvements for uniformed personnel and their families. I congratulate the committee for their work on these issues.

I am also pleased that the committee has continued its commitment to the wide range of weapons programs that ensure our military's superiority throughout the world.

The bill includes $1.4 million for research and development for the F–22 Raptor, the next-generation air dominance fighter for the Air Force, as well as $2.1 billion for 10 low-rate initial production aircraft, and $396 million for advanced procurement of 16 LRIP aircraft in fiscal year 2002.

H.R. 4205 also includes $51.7 million for the procurement of three F–16C aircraft, and $1.1 billion for the procurement of 16 MV–22 aircraft, and $142.7 million to accelerate development of the CV–22 Special Operations Variant.

These aircraft are all important components in our national arsenal, and moving forward on their production sends a clear signal that the United States has no intention of relinquishing our air superiority.

Mr. Speaker, while the Committee on Armed Services has reported a truly bipartisan effort, I should note that 101 amendments to the bill were filed with the Committee on Rules. This rule makes in order 36 of those amendments, and provides that an additional rule providing for the consideration of further amendments to the bill will be considered before the House votes on final passage later this week.

Mr. Speaker, while it is not unusual for the Committee on Rules to report more than one rule providing for the consideration of amendments to the Department of Defense authorization, in the past the Committee on Rules pursued this course in order to ensure that a full and fair debate on the issues of the day would follow.

The rule now under consideration will certainly allow the House to debate the issue of the continued presence of U.S. ground forces in Kosovo, an issue on which there is a genuine split of opinion in this body.

While I do not agree with the amendment to be offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH), I cannot object to the House having the opportunity to debate the issue.

While I disagree with the amendment to be offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK), which seeks to cut 1 percent of funding in the bill, I certainly believe that this is an issue worthy of debate in this body. The other 34 amendments made in order in this rule are also certainly deserving of consideration of the House.

So far so good, Mr. Speaker. What concerns me is the fact that there are several major amendments that have not been included in this rule and may not be included in the second rule to be acted on later. Mr. Speaker, one can only hope that when the Committee on Rules meets later today to report the second rule for H.R. 4205, the Republican majority on the Committee on Rules will allow these issues to be fairly aired and considered by the House.

Let us take, for example, Mr. Speaker, the issue of health care for military retirees. Members will be hearing from the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) on this issue shortly. The ranking member of the Committee on Armed Services has called this the year of health care, and the bill does indeed make substantive improvements in the way health care is delivered for active duty military personnel and their dependents. These improvements are long overdue, and the committee is to be congratulated for taking these positive steps.

But Mr. Speaker, the bill is seriously deficient on the issue of health care for Medicare-eligible retirees. Mr. Speaker, I have serious concern that the two thoughtful amendments addressing this issue, that is, the issue of health care for Medicare-eligible retirees, might not be made in order when the committee meets this afternoon. One proposal by the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) would expand and make permanent the TRICARE Senior Prime demonstration, more commonly known as Medicare subvention.

The other offered by the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. SHOWS) would give all military retirees the option of participating in FEHB, or remaining in TRICARE after they become Medicare-eligible.

I have a serious concern that the only reason the House will be denied the opportunity to debate either of these amendments presented to the Committee on Rules will be for purely partisan political reasons.

Let us also take the issue of the island of Vieques in Puerto Rico. The committee bill has chosen to ignore an agreement negotiated between the President of the United States and the Governor of Puerto Rico about the future of this island as a training facility for the Navy and Marine Corps, and has instead adopted language that directly contravenes this agreement.

I remain hopeful that when the Committee on Rules meets later this day, the Republican majority will see fit to allow the ranking member of the committee the opportunity to offer an amendment which will strike the committee language and insert language which will allow the President's negotiated position to go forward.

In the interests of fairness to the people of Puerto Rico, I would hope that the Skelton amendment will be part of the second rule. The only reason to not allow his amendment to be considered would again be for purely partisan reasons. I would hope that this truly bipartisan bill will not be marred by such action.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support the committee bill, but I do believe the House should be given the opportunity to address the issues I have just mentioned, as well as a number of other issues that have been raised in the 101 amendments submitted to the Committee on Rules.

The bill is one of fundamental importance to our great country, and the policies and programs that are contained within it certainly are worthy of extensive debate. Mr. Speaker, I support this rule, but I hope that the bipartisan approach to the committee bill will be extended to the second rule providing for its consideration. To do less is a disservice to this House and to our military.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON).

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this rule and for H.R. 4205, the Defense Authorization Act.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking the gentleman from South Carolina (Chairman SPENCE) for his hard work and dedication in putting together a measure that helps our fighting men and women. The efforts of the gentleman from South Carolina (Chairman SPENCE) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) should not be underestimated. It is truly apt that this legislation we debate today is named after the gentleman from South Carolina (Chairman SPENCE).

Mr. Speaker, this is the first year that the President has brought us a reasonable defense budget for consideration. Over the last 7 years, the President's budget has failed the military service chiefs and our fighting men and women in uniform.

While the President's budget was reasonable this year, it still failed our armed services to the tune of $16 billion. However, under the leadership of the gentleman from South Carolina (Chairman SPENCE), the Committee on Armed Services has once again added funding to support our defense requirements.

While still living within a balanced budget, we have added $4.5 billion to the President's defense budget request. For example, the B–2 bomber was an

essential part of the success story from the air war in Kosovo. The B–2's success in this conflict underscored our needs for an adequate and modern bomber fleet.

We also learned some very valuable lessons about the effectiveness of our smart bombs during the war. Unfortunately, the President failed to fund the research and development of the 500-pound JDAM and 500-pound JDAM bomb rack, even though the Service Chiefs wanted it.

It was the Committee on Armed Services, under its able bipartisan leadership, that added funding for these upgrades and advancements. In total, the committee added funding of $96 million for upgrades on the B–2. These include the Link 16 upgrades that will modernize the cockpit and allow for in-flight re-planning, research, and development of the 500-pound JDAM and the integration on the B–2.

With the success of the B–2, these upgrades will allow our military to exert further strength to keep freedom and peace abroad, thus making the B–2 truly the spirit of America.

I also want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) for implementing legislation I introduced last year on the Joint Strike Fighter program. As we all know, one of the pillars of the Joint Strike Fighter program is affordability. My legislation called for a cost study to be conducted on possible production sites for the Joint Strike Fighter. While I contend that Air Force Plant 42 offers the best opportunity for savings, I believe that the Defense Department owes Congress and the American people a study showing the savings opportunities that the different production sites offer.

Mr. Speaker, these two programs are just a few of the many success stories found in this legislation. Again, I want to thank both the chairman and the ranking member for their hard work on this important legislation. Yet again, the Committee on Armed Services has worked in a bipartisan manner in order to put the national security of the United States ahead of politics.

It is for this reason that the legislation passed in committee with an overwhelming majority and deserves the votes of the Member of this House. I urge a vote on this rule and for this important legislation.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), the ranking member on the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I wish I could say I am wholeheartedly in support of this rule. I suppose the politic thing to do would be to say I will vote for this rule and await the second rule.

But I feel constrained to express my reservation, because there is no assurance that one of the most important issues will come before this body, that which deals with military retirees. Even though this rule does not touch upon that, and there is the possibility of the second rule being adopted with the amendment offered by the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) therein, I have no such assurance. I feel constrained to voice my reservation.

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This is a very important bill, Mr. Speaker. It is an excellent bill, by and large, with some exceptions. And I also wish to tell the Members of the House that in honor of our chairman, it is named the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001, and it is a very, very proper recognition of this fine gentleman from South Carolina, who does such a fair and decent job for us in the committee, for us in the House.

I wish I could say on this very first part of the split rule that I could support the rule, but I do not have the assurance. Now, if I have that assurance in the next few minutes, that would be fine, but I do not have that. I do not see it forthcoming, because I cannot very well bifurcate the two rules, and as a result, I would have to vote against this first rule because of the lack of assurance that the second rule will contain the amendment that is so important to military retirees.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Rules.

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, let me begin by thanking the gentlewoman from Charlotte, North Carolina, (Mrs. MYRICK), my very good friend, the former mayor, who has done a wonderful job managing this rule. She has just come back, and we are all happy to see her doing so extraordinarily well, and it is very fitting that we would be here on an issue which is near and dear to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. MYRICK), and that is the national security of the United States of America, that she is leading the charge in this rule.

Mr. Speaker, as my friend, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) said, I want to recognize the fact that this is a great accomplishment and a great tribute to a wonderful individual to have the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Reauthorization Act established in his name, and I believe this is a very, very important piece of legislation, because as has been pointed out, we are really beginning this effort to rebuild our capability.

This morning in the Republican Conference, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPENCE) referred to the fact that over the past decade and a half, we have seen this continued diminution in the level of expenditures for national security, and we have been trying in recent years to rebuild it, and the steps that we are going to begin taking today will go a long way towards doing just that.

This has been one of the four top priorities that this Republican Congress has established for us, along with rebuilding our defense capabilities, saving Social Security and Medicare and, obviously, providing tax relief to working families, that has been a priority, and then improving public education. Those have been the four guides that we have had, but nothing is more important than our national security, because as we look at the issue, these other issues can be dealt with by a different level of government, but only Washington can deal with our national security.

My friend, the gentleman from San Diego, California (Mr. HUNTER) in 1980 came in and got on to this Committee on Armed Services so that he could make sure that we proceeded as vigorously as we could at rebuilding our Nation's defense capability. We did that during the Reagan years, as we all know so well, but we have had this pattern of reduction; the threats have changed.

The thing that I find very, very troubling has been over the past few years we have had continued requests made by the administration.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DREIER. I yield to the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I do not want to interrupt the gentleman's dialogue.

Mr. DREIER. The gentleman from Missouri has done that already, so I am happy to yield to the gentleman, in light of the fact that he already interrupted me.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the chairman of the Committee on Rules understands my concern for the military retirees, that it is a major problem. They were told when they joined if you stay with us 20 years, we will take care of your health care for life. And I think that there should be some assurance that we would be able to at least debate the issue on a proper amendment, and that is why I said what I did a few moments ago. I really do not have a great deal of problem with this part of the rule; however, I cannot in my own mind bifurcate the two parts of the two rules, and that is why I said what I did.

I would certainly hope that the Taylor amendment would be made in order in the second go-around.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the contribution of the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), my friend. I appreciate his requests. Let me say that we all know that the reason that we have dealt with this two-rule process is due to the tragic situation that hit the Stupak family, and the fact that many of our colleagues are this afternoon going to go to Michigan, and that led to this situation.

We are still working on the issue that my friend has raised, and we hope to have a resolution to that. I can assure the gentleman that when we meet later today in the Committee on Rules, we hope to have what I hope will be a satisfactory response.

Let me just conclude by saying as we look at where we are going in our Nation's national security, we have had a pattern over the past few years of seeing an administration which, unfortunately, has called for deploying troops all over the world, in fact, 139 countries with 265,000 Americans. We have seen that number, and at the same time there have been reduced requests for the level of commitment from Washington to our national defense.

Look at what it really has brought about. Unfortunately, it has brought about reduced readiness. We know that there is lower morale that exists in the military today; recruitment difficulties, we have heard many stories about those. And we have in this high-tech economy today a need to focus more investment on high-tech for our national security.

We have some real problems that need to be addressed, and I believe that this bill will go a long way towards doing just that. And again, as the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), my friend, has just said making sure that we have everything that is necessary for our men and women in uniform.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that we have begun this debate. It is an important one that we will be having, and I hope very much that my colleagues will join in support of the rule and in support of the bill when we finally get to passage.

I should say just before I do that that the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), my friend, and I are going to be jointly offering an amendment to deal with the issue of high-speed computers, which is an important one, that allows us again to maintain our commitment to national security, but at the same time our competitiveness around the world, which is a priority.

I urge support of the rule and support of the Dreier amendment that will be coming up later and support of this bill itself.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR).

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to encourage my colleagues to vote against this rule. I appreciate the horror that has happened to the Stupak family. I understand the reason that we will be meeting on a short schedule today. It makes perfect sense for as many Members to be with the Stupaks during this horrible moment as possible.

It also makes a golden opportunity for the Committee on Rules to meet and to make amendments in order. In fact, they should have been doing that right now. It is a good national defense bill. It actually improves spending for the first time maybe in a decade. It does a lot of good things, but what it does not do is solve the problem of health care for our military retirees.

If we think about it, they are the only Americans who were promised health care, the only Americans who were promised health care if they serve their country honorably for 20 years. They have done that. Every recruiter in every custom house for every branch of the service since the 1950s has been telling young 18, 19, 20 years old if you serve your country honorably for 20 years, then when it comes time for you to retire, for you and your spouse, we are going to take care of you at a military facility for the rest of your life. But what they are being told, because of the defense drawdown and because money is tight, is that when they hit 65, I am sorry, Chief; I am sorry, Sergeant; I am sorry, Colonel, yes, we asked you to go to Vietnam. We told you to go to Korea. We sent you to Kosovo. We sent you to Bosnia.

We sent you to all these places you did not want to be, where you got shot at, where you were away from your family, but we are not going to keep our end of the bargain. Congress for the past decade has failed to address this issue. I am saying it is time for Congress to address this.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe the Committee on Rules. This was the third amendment brought before the Committee on Rules, the third of over 100. They chose not to even vote on it. That is how good, that is how much they care about our Nation's retirees. We have absolutely no guarantee that this amendment will be brought to the floor. We have none.

We have asked repeatedly. This amendment has four Republican cosponsors, including three Members of the Committee on Armed Services, one of which is a subcommittee chairman.

This is not partisan. This is Republicans and Democrats trying to solve a sincere problem for the folks who deserve it the most. And we cannot even get a vote in the Committee on Rules.

I am asking every single Member of this body, if they care about those folks who have served your country honorably, if they think it is time that they keep getting told, well, next year, maybe we will get around to it in a couple of decades. Doggone it, we found time for tax breaks for millionaires. We found time to honor or condemn just about every group under the sun. You do not think we can find time for our military retirees?

Vote against this rule, that sends the Committee on Rules back to work. Let us make the Taylor-Hefley-Pickering-Tanner-Abercrombie amendment in order, Democrats and Republicans trying to solve the problem of health care for military retirees, to fulfill our Nation's promise. And doggone it, if we do not make it in order, then I am asking as many of you as possible to shut this place down.

We are not going to vote on this bill until we have an up or down vote on whether or not we are going to fulfill our promise to our Nation's military retirees.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER).

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I think, to a large degree, this is a historic bill. This is the first defense bill of this century, and in a bipartisan way, I believe it reflects some of the lessons of the century. After World War II, we had an enormous military, over 8 million people in arms, we rushed to throw our weapons away when General Marshall was asked how the demobilization was going. He said, this is not a demobilization, it is a rout, we are literally disarming before the world.

If we look at the correspondence between the Communist Chinese and Stalin's Russia, we can see their understanding of the fact that America over just a couple of years became extremely weak, and we found ourselves in June of 1950 being driven off the Korean Peninsula by a third-rate military. And before we had regrouped and managed to push our forces back and establish the stalemate that had endured, we lost 50,000 Americans killed in action.

We have seen in this last century what these bloody wars do, this enduring lesson that we achieve peace through strength. As the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), one of the great Members of this House, who came in with me in 1980, and I and a number of other people sought to do with Ronald Reagan, and I know the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPENCE), our chairman, and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), our ranking member, were members of this movement, we sought to rebuild America's defenses in 1980. And by doing that, we backed down the Soviet Union and ultimately dismantled the Soviet Union.

The interesting thing about that dismantlement is that dismantlement actually led to enormous savings of money by American taxpayers. What I am talking about is the fact that this bill that we are offering today is about $125 billion less in military spending than Ronald Reagan's bill of 1985. We have saved probably $1 trillion by the Reagan dismantlement of the Soviet empire, the fact that we no longer have the requirement to meet those massive Warsaw Pact divisions in military Europe.

We achieved something by being strong. I think it is important that we carry that message into the next century. This bill is a start of that. But I want to remind my colleagues, it is only a start. We still have massive problems.

Our mission capable rates have dropped about 10 percent, and they are

hanging there. They fell off the cliff, and they are hanging there around 70 percent throughout the services; meaning that about 30 percent of our aircraft cannot get off the carrier deck or the tarmack to go do their job and in return cannot do their mission. We still have shortages of ammunition. We have shortages of spare parts.

We do have people problems; instead of 800 pilots short in the Air Force, as we had last year, we are going to have about 1,200 short this year. But we are making some improvements, and this House voted for a $4 billion increase in national defense, I think reflecting the mood of the people in this country and their understanding that we do achieve peace through strength.

Mr. Speaker, we passed that in the emergency supplemental, and working with the other body, it came back as an add-on to this defense bill that we are debating today. We have started the upgrading and modernization of our forces, but I want to remind everybody what Bill Perry, President Clinton's former Secretary of Defense, said about the blueprint that he, himself, helped to put in place for defense spending: It looks like we need about $10 billion to $15 billion more per year. Jim Schlesinger, another former Secretary of Defense, said it is actually closer to $100 billion more per year that we need.

□ 1145

So we need to increase defense spending. That is clear. Members of Congress recognize that. This bill is a start. It is only a start, but I would hope that all Members would support this bill and support this rule.

And with respect to my friend from Mississippi, I think, and I have confidence in the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPENCE), that they will be able to work out the subvention issue before this bill is finished. So please support this bill. It is good for America.

Peace through strength is what we want to achieve, and we are on our way at least to achieving it. And I am going to talk about him a little later, but I want to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SISISKY), too, our ranking member on the Subcommittee on Military Procurement of the Committee on Armed Services, for the wonderful job that he has done.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN).

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, for reasons stated by the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), I rise in opposition to this rule, although I believe the underlying bill is a good bill.

I want to commend the chairman of the Committee on Armed Services, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPENCE), and the ranking member, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), for their hard work in putting together such complex and important legislation. I urge particular support for the health care provisions. The gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE), the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR), the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER) have done a great job of putting together a bipartisan package that improves the Tri-Care system and increases health care access for retirees.

I want to focus on the provision to extend the pharmaceutical benefit to military retirees over the age of 65. Prescription drug coverage is a vital issue for all seniors, and I am pleased this committee has made a small but important contribution to provide affordable and meaningful coverage to a segment of the Medicare eligible population. I hope that other committees will follow suit.

The Tri-Care Senior Pharmacy Program in this bill allows all military retirees to participate in the DOD pharmacy program. Under this government-run prescription drug benefit, the Defense Supply Center in Philadelphia negotiates prices for its beneficiaries that are as low or lower than those obtained by other Federal agencies.

The Defense Supply Center receives some drugs off the Federal supply schedule and negotiates pricing agreements with more than 200 manufacturers, using as a starting point the mandated 24 percent VA discount. DOD estimates that these negotiated prices are 24 percent to 70 percent lower than the average private sector price.

My bill, H.R. 664, the Prescription Drug Fairness for Seniors Act, would give the rest of the Medicare eligible population the same discounts that this provision provides. We have 153 cosponsors, but none so far are Republicans. I hope that they will now embrace my bill as warmly as they have embraced the Tri-Care Senior Pharmacy Program.

Now, I do not accept the accusation that H.R. 664 involves price controls. But those who do must also conclude that this prescription drug benefit for military retirees is, indeed, a price control. Like the Democratic Medicare prescription drug plan, the Tri-Care Senior Pharmacy Program is administered by a Federal agency making good on the government's promise to provide health care for life for military retirees and the promise to provide health care in the golden years for the over 65 population at large. It uses the government's volume purchasing power to negotiate and achieve the same price discounts that favored large purchasers obtain.

Unlike the Republican prescription drug plan, this program does not throw military retirees to the whims of the private insurance market leaving them guessing about whether they can get prescription drug insurance from an industry that says it cannot offer such insurance anyway.

As we cast our affirmative vote for this legislation, and I hope we all will, please consider these questions. If Congress can provide a government-administered prescription drug benefit with negotiated price discounts to one segment of the Medicare eligible population, military retirees over 65, why can we not offer the same benefit to the rest of our Nation's seniors? If Congress can give 1.4 million Medicare eligible military retirees access to the best prices the government can negotiate, why is Congress not giving the other 38 million seniors the same access to the best prices that the government can negotiate?

I urge support for the bill and for affordable and meaningful prescription drug benefits.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I would ask the time remaining on each side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOEHNER). Each side has 11 minutes remaining.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time. I appreciate the work done by all the members of the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. Speaker, I am here to say that I support the cause of peace, I support the defense of the United States and the men and women who serve.

I also support the taxpayers of the United States of America. That is why I rise in opposition to this rule, because it authorizes a $2.2 billion boondoggle called the national missile defense, NMD. The NMD will consume defense budgets, undermine legitimate military expenditures, and contribute to the erosion of the readiness of our forces. Taxpayers will regret the day we authorize $2.2 billion in wasteful spending for the NMD.

Everything is wrong about spending $2.2 billion for the missile defense building in the bill. First, the technology is not feasible, it is not testable, and it would not and could not be reliable.

Second, there is no real threat that such a missile defense system could protect anyone against anything.

Third, it clearly violates the ABM Treaty of 1972. The concept of the ABM Treaty recognizes that countries have nuclear missiles, swords, but could not deploy shields. If the U.S. tells Russia, we want a shield, what can Russia conclude, other than they may need a shield and more swords, more nuclear missiles?

The deployment of the NMD will decouple all arms agreements. It will undermine the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. It will negate the anti-ballistic missile treaty and, furthermore, will frustrate SALT II and SALT III. It will

lead directly to the proliferation by nuclear nations. It will lead to transitions towards nuclear arms by nonnuclear nations. It will make the world less safe, and lead to the impoverishment of people of many nations, as budgets are refashioned for nuclear arms expenditures.

The United States would be willing to risk a showdown with Russia or China and the rest of the world over the unlikely possibility that North Korea may one day have a missile that could touch the continental United States. What that argues for is talks with North Korea, not the beginning of a new worldwide arms race.

The fourth reason why this bill is wrong is that it lacks adequate funding for the cooperative threat reduction program, Nunn-Lugar, which helps in denuclearization and demilitarization of the states of the former Soviet Union. Nunn-Lugar has proven real and successful and effective in reducing nuclear threats, yet this program receives only $143 million in comparison to a total of $5.2 billion for an imaginary ballistic missile technology, the NMD, which has proven to be unworkable and easily defeated by countermeasures.

Fifth, the NMD is a waste of taxpayers' money: $2.2 billion for a system which everyone knows does not and cannot work will only serve to undermine taxpayers' confidence in the spending for the military.

Today's Washington Post reports that three high-level Pentagon officials, who have served in this administration are saying that a national defense missile system is expensive and unnecessarily alienating to the Russians. The Russians just passed START II and a comprehensive test ban treaty. We are saying the Cold War is over. If the Cold War is over, what are we doing putting together a national missile defense shield?

The officials conclude in The Washington Post that the development and testing of the system is not mature enough for the United States to make a confident deployment decision this year.

Let us recommit to nuclear arms reduction. Let us recommit to nuclear disarmament. Let us do this for ourselves and future generations. There is no security in a future saturated with nuclear weapons. The Cold War is over. The benefits of the end of the Cold War ought to start coming back to the taxpayers, not to arms contractors for a missile shield that does not work.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM).

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, the bill that my friend, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR), was talking about with regard to subvention was written in San Diego by my veterans. It was actually written before I became a Member of Congress in 1990, and we support that particular bill.

The gentleman from Mississippi has got good intentions on this. There are many of us that would like this bill to come forward, and we have talked to both the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) and to the Speaker, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT). But let me tell my colleagues something. Before we shut this House down, I would say to my friend, it is important that we move forward. Subvention, Tri-Care, FEHBP, we have promised our military veterans too long that we are going to take care of them. We are losing thousands of World War II veterans every month. If we wait and keep on delaying, those veterans are not going to get the care that was promised to them.

We looked at the subvention bill itself. When I originally introduced the subvention bill, we had it as 100 percent. Because of the cost analysis and different reasons, the White House said no, we want to make it a pilot program. They were going to limit it just to two, one in the Senate and one here. It was my bill and my hospital was not even going to get in the subvention mix. I fought tooth, hook, and nail, and we were able to get that expanded.

But even then we were stopped. And if my colleagues will look at why subvention and some of these others have not passed, the White House itself did not push. DOD did not push these bills. Matter of fact, they told people if they got involved with subvention or FEHBP, they may not get back onto the regular program. So the numbers were very, very deficient. And they put out outlandish numbers; that the cost would reach out too much.

I would say to my friend, the gentleman from Mississippi, that I will work with him. But he is also aware that whether it is Tri-Care, whether it is FEHBP, and I personally think FEHBP, which a civilian has, is better than my original subvention. The same thing that a civilian Federal worker has that will guarantee subsistence beyond Medicare will actually be better. But the commission, Republicans and Democrats, were put together and tasked with what do we need to put together to really keep the promise of our health care promises to our veterans.

I remember in 1993, when the other side of the aisle increased taxes, increased spending and they cut military COLAs. They cut veterans' COLAs and they increased taxes on Social Security. So what we are saying, there is fault on both sides. Do not try to demagogue the veterans issue. Work with us in providing this health care plan.

We are well aware that the White House came over to the Democrat leadership and now every single bill the minority leadership is going to try to stop, to show a do-nothing Congress. Every one of these bills, whether it is riders, whether it is this issue, the Democrats are going to try to shut down the House or delay and end up with a monumental appropriations package at the end because the White House wants $20 billion more. Will they get some of that? Probably, yes, because we cannot control the Senate. But what the minority wants is to where they can get the whole $20 billion and work in taking the majority. I think that is disingenuous.

I support the gentleman from Mississippi, and I think he is very, very caring in what he wants to do for veterans. But look at the big picture and help us work through this process. Support this rule. Let us push on forward and let us work for the betterment of the American people.

□ 1200

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, all that the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) is asking for is a vote. All he is asking for is the House to have the opportunity to vote on his proposal. That is not an unreasonable proposition. All the platitudes on the other side will not do any good if they do not give us a vote on the Taylor amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR).

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM) for his comments. I certainly do not claim to be the inventor of subvention. Someone else is. It might possibly be the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM). It is a good idea, though.

What I would like to tell the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM) is that he is right. I am disappointed also that the administration has not been more helpful. But a reading of the Constitution will tell both of us that no money may be drawn from the Treasury except by an appropriation by Congress.

Just because the administration did not help enough no way absolves us from doing our job. I am asking for the opportunity for the 435 Members of this body to do their job, to take care of our military retirees. I hope the gentleman will help me in that effort.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. UDALL).

(Mr. UDALL of Colorado asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the rule.

As the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Rules know, the rule makes in order my amendment to provide the Department of Energy additional tools to manage the reduction of the overall number of Federal employees in the workforce at Rocky Flats and the other nuclear weapons facilities while also keeping those sites on track for expedited closure. In addition, the DOE would be able to provide assistance for employees to make successful transitions to retirement and new careers.

I am here to say that I greatly appreciate the Committee on Rules for allowing this important matter to be

considered. I also appreciate the cooperation and assistance of the leadership and staff of the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight. Based on my discussions with them, I have agreed to some revisions in the amendment; and it is my understanding that the amendment, with those revisions, probably will be included as part the en bloc managers amendment.

Here is a brief description of the revised amendment:

The amendment deals with the DOE weapons sites that are scheduled for expedited cleanup and closure—(1) Rocky Flats in Colorado and (2) several sites in Ohio: Fernald, Columbus, Miamisburg, and Ashtabula.

The amendment is based on an Administration request. It would give DOE additional tools to meet the challenge of downsizing the federal workforce in ways that will both facilitate accelerated closure of the site and also assist DOE's employees to make successful transitions to retirement or new careers.

DOE wants this authority as a way to avoid reliance on the standard reduction-in-force (RIF) procedures by offering incentives for some employees to voluntarily separate and for others to remain.

The goal is to manage the reduction in the overall number of federal employees at the site while still retaining the proper mix of people with needed skills despite the high attrition rates that can be expected as closure approaches—so, the amendment would allow DOE to offer incentives for some people to leave early and for others to remain.

Similar—not identical—language has been incorporated as section 3155 of the Senate version of the bill. As modified, the amendment would allow DOE to authorize—additional accumulation of annual leave; payment of lump-sum retention allowances; and continuation of health-care benefits for employees who are separated (voluntarily or involuntarily) from Rocky Flats or one of the other sides covered by the amendment.

The amendment would require inclusion of information about the use of these incentives in the required periodic reports on the closure.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE).

(Mr. ABERCROMBIE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the bill. I am disappointed with the rule as it stands before the body. But the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001 is very urgent for the United States. I strongly urge my colleagues on the Committee on Rules to reconsider their decision on many amendments that do not appear before the House today.

The bill before us builds upon last year's achievements and continues our efforts to improve the quality of life for our military personnel retirees and their families. I am particularly pleased that the bill includes several provisions, which I support, to improve the military health care system, particularly for our Medicare-eligible retirees and their families.

This year, the Year of Health Care, we have made significant improvements in the military health care system in response to concerns raised by service members, retirees, and their families. The health care provisions of this bill will greatly improve their quality of life, particularly for Medicare-eligible retirees and their dependents.

The TRICARE Senior Pharmacy Program will restore access to the National Mail Order Pharmacy, the network retail pharmacies, and the out-of-network pharmacies. It is a major step towards improving health care for our Medicare-eligible retirees. We have improved access to TRICARE. We have reduced and streamlined the administrative costs, and we are using the savings to improve health care benefits for our military personnel, retirees and their families.

I am particularly pleased that this bill includes provisions which we have supported on our side of the aisle, and I am particularly pleased to have been able to work with the gentleman from Indiana (Chairman BUYER) to see that everything has been included.

It includes improvements to pay, it reduces out-of-pocket housing costs for service members, and provides funding for the Military Thrift Savings Plan. These provisions help us build upon our achievements of last year, which was the Year of the Troops.

Mr. Speaker, I want to express my appreciation to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPENCE), the chairman, and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), the ranking member of the Committee on Armed Services, for their leadership in producing a bipartisan bill that will improve the lives of our service members.

I particularly want to commend again the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER) for working with me and other members on the committee to ensure that our men and women in uniform have the quality of life that they deserve.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I would just like to say that H.R. 4205 is a very good bill. I would like to commend the gentleman from South Carolina (Chairman SPENCE) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), the ranking member, for bringing it forward with excellent bipartisan cooperation. It is a difficult challenge with defense because of so many needs and not enough dollars to go around, but they have done an excellent job this year.

I would also like to reassure the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), the ranking member, that the gentleman from California (Chairman DREIER) and the Committee on Rules are very sensitive to the issue of the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) and will work to achieve a satisfactory result.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOEHNER). The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 220, nays 201, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 190]

YEAS—220

Aderholt	Frelinghuysen	Metcalf
Archer	Gallegly	Mica
Armey	Ganske	Miller (FL)
Bachus	Gekas	Miller, Gary
Baird	Gibbons	Moran (KS)
Baker	Gilchrest	Morella
Ballenger	Gillmor	Myrick
Barr	Gilman	Nethercutt
Barrett (NE)	Goode	Ney
Bartlett	Goodlatte	Northup
Barton	Goodling	Norwood
Bass	Goss	Nussle
Bateman	Graham	Ose
Bereuter	Granger	Oxley
Biggert	Green (WI)	Packard
Bilbray	Greenwood	Paul
Bilirakis	Gutknecht	Pease
Bliley	Hansen	Peterson (PA)
Blunt	Hastert	Petri
Boehlert	Hastings (WA)	Pickering
Boehner	Hayes	Pitts
Bonilla	Hayworth	Pombo
Bono	Hefley	Porter
Brady (TX)	Herger	Portman
Bryant	Hill (MT)	Pryce (OH)
Burr	Hilleary	Quinn
Burton	Hobson	Radanovich
Buyer	Hoekstra	Ramstad
Callahan	Horn	Regula
Calvert	Hostettler	Reynolds
Camp	Houghton	Riley
Canady	Hulshof	Rogan
Cannon	Hunter	Rogers
Castle	Hutchinson	Rohrabacher
Chabot	Hyde	Ros-Lehtinen
Chambliss	Isakson	Roukema
Chenoweth-Hage	Istook	Royce
Coble	Jenkins	Ryan (WI)
Combest	Johnson (CT)	Ryun (KS)
Cook	Johnson, Sam	Salmon
Cooksey	Jones (NC)	Sanford
Cox	Kasich	Saxton
Crane	Kelly	Scarborough
Cubin	King (NY)	Schaffer
Cunningham	Kingston	Sensenbrenner
Deal	Knollenberg	Sessions
DeLay	Kolbe	Shadegg
DeMint	Kuykendall	Shaw
Diaz-Balart	LaHood	Shays
Dickey	Latham	Sherwood
Doolittle	LaTourette	Shimkus
Dreier	Lazio	Shuster
Duncan	Leach	Simpson
Dunn	Lewis (CA)	Skeen
Ehlers	Lewis (KY)	Smith (MI)
Ehrlich	Linder	Smith (NJ)
Emerson	LoBiondo	Smith (TX)
English	Lucas (OK)	Souder
Everett	Manzullo	Spence
Ewing	Martinez	Stearns
Fletcher	McCollum	Stump
Foley	McCrery	Sununu
Fossella	McHugh	Sweeney
Fowler	McInnis	Talent
Franks (NJ)	McKeon	Tancredo

Tauzin
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thornberry
Thune
Tiahrt
Toomey
Traficant
Udall (CO)
Upton
Vitter
Walden
Walsh
Watkins
Watts (OK)
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—201

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baca
Baldwin
Barcia
Barrett (WI)
Becerra
Bentsen
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop
Blagojevich
Blumenauer
Bonior
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Carson
Clay
Clayton
Clement
Clyburn
Condit
Conyers
Costello
Coyne
Cramer
Cummings
Danner
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Deutsch
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Edwards
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Forbes
Ford
Frank (MA)
Frost
Gejdenson
Gephardt
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green (TX)
Gutierrez
Hall (OH)
Hall (TX)
Hastings (FL)
Hill (IN)
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hoeffel
Holden
Holt
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
John
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
Kleczka
Klink
Kucinich
LaFalce
Lampson
Lantos
Larson
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas (KY)
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Menendez
Millender-McDonald
Miller, George
Minge
Mink
Moakley
Mollohan
Moore
Moran (VA)
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Phelps
Pickett
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Rivers
Rodriguez
Roemer
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sabo
Sanchez
Sanders
Sandlin
Sawyer
Schakowsky
Scott
Serrano
Sherman
Shows
Sisisky
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Spratt
Stabenow
Stark
Stenholm
Strickland
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thurman
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Velazquez
Vento
Visclosky
Waters
Watt (NC)
Waxman
Weiner
Wexler
Weygand
Wise
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn

NOT VOTING—14

Baldacci
Campbell
Coburn
Collins
Crowley
Davis (VA)
Delahunt
Doyle
Largent
Lipinski
McIntosh
Stupak
Udall (NM)
Wamp

□ 1226

Messrs. MALONEY of Connecticut, STRICKLAND, HALL of Texas, RAHALL, MRS. MINK of Hawaii, Mr. LAMPSON, and Mr. PASTOR changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. UDALL of Colorado and Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPORT ON H.R. 4475, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001

Mr. WOLF, from the Committee on Appropriations, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106–622) on the bill (H.R. 4475) making appropriations for the Department of Transportation and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes, which was referred to the Union Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Pursuant to clause 1, rule XXI, all points of order are reserved on the bill.

FLOYD D. SPENCE NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2001

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 503 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 4205.

□ 1229

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 4205) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2001 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2001, and for other purposes, with Mr. BOEHNER in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

Under the rule, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPENCE) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPENCE).

□ 1230

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. SPENCE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Chairman, on May 10, the Committee on Armed Services reported this bill, H.R. 4205, on a strong bipartisan vote of 56 to 1. This bill, the first defense authorization bill prepared for the new millennium, makes a good start toward ensuring that America's military can meet the challenges that lie ahead and ensure the safety and security of all Americans well into the 21st century. However, it is only a beginning, not an end.

In recent years, the committee has called attention to the problems faced by the men and women who so proudly serve their country in uniform. Serious readiness deficiencies and equipment modernization shortfalls, made worse by longer and more frequent deployments away from home, have placed increasing strains on a military that is still being asked to do more with less. Moreover, the increasing use of America's Armed Forces on missions where vital United States national security interests are not at stake has reduced military readiness and affected recruiting, retention and morale.

The defense bill before us today seeks to correct many of these problems. It is the fifth year out of the last six in which Congress has added to the administration's budget request. I am pleased to report that, in real terms, after more than a decade of decline in defense spending, this downward spiral has finally been halted. Nevertheless, although this bill contains $309.9 billion for defense, an increase of $4.5 billion over the administration's defense budget request, a serious mismatch between requirements, forces and resources continues to exist.

This bill seeks to address the most critical deficiencies faced by our military today. While some would argue that the end of the Cold War allows us to cut defense further, the bill we are debating today must be seen in proper perspective. In reality, the level of resources we devote to defense remains at an historically low level, roughly 3 percent of this Nation's gross domestic product. This is hardly an exorbitant price to pay to defend our freedom, our values and our national interests around the world.

Moreover, the threats we face today are in many ways more difficult and challenging than those we faced during the Cold War. The increasing number of states seeking to develop or acquire weapons of mass destruction, chemical, biological, bacteriological and ballistic missiles, against which we have no defense, poses a qualitatively new set of challenges to our national security. Other threats are emerging; new forms of terrorism, the outbreak of long suppressed ethnic conflicts, and the spread of sophisticated military technologies to potential adversaries.

While the United States remains the world's sole military superpower, we need to adapt to the changing realities and threats that we face in the new millennium. This requires a growing level of investment in the tools and the people necessary to keep our country at least one step ahead of any potential adversary.

As former Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger testified recently before our committee, ''We are resting on our laurels as the sole superpower.'' He noted that under the administration's current and planned levels of defense funding, the United States would be unable to sustain even our current level of military capability. ''This is