Stenholm	Tierney	Watson (CA)
Strickland	Toomey	Watt (NC)
Tancredo	Towns	Weiner
Tanner	Turner	Wexler
Tauscher	Udall (CO)	Woolsey
Thompson (CA)	Udall (NM)	Wynn
Thompson (MS)	Velazquez	
Thurman	Waters	

NOT VOTING—11

Barton	Cubin	Souder
Blumenauer	Houghton	Spence
Boehner	Jackson-Lee (TX)	
Clayton	Lipinski	
Cooksey		

□ 1531

Ms. BROWN of Florida and Mr. LAMPSON changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

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.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 2620 and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

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

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Chair for allowing me this time to advise the Members that we will do the best we can to expedite the conclusion of this bill today, if possible. It is a lengthy bill, and there are a lot of amendments. If the Members will cooperate and help us in assembling a list of all the amendments we will have to consider, we ask the Members who have amendments to offer to the VA–HUD bill to please present them at least by the close of the general debate on the bill. Hopefully, we would be able to finish this bill tonight.

I would also say that our leadership has made the decision that if we cannot finish the bill tonight that we would come back tomorrow to finish this bill, but we need to finish it before the beginning of next week.

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

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman.

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

Let me simply say I share the gentleman's desire to try to find a way to reach some type of understanding on this bill, but we have a practical problem. The problem is that there is considerable feeling on this side of the aisle that it is a might strange to ask for cooperation from the minority in setting time immediately after a martial law approach to this House was just rammed down our throats.

So while I will certainly work with the gentleman and I would urge every Member who has a potential amendment to, by the time general debate is over, get the text of those amendments to both sides so that we have some idea of what the universe of amendments is and we can try to work out a proposed timetable, I am not very optimistic at this point that we can get clearance on our side of the aisle.

I am told, for instance, that our leadership at this point is not contemplating providing clearance, but I would like us to continue to try to work this out. I know the possibility has been raised by myself of trying to get a time limit that would make certain that we would finish this bill. If we cannot finish it today, we could make sure that the timetable assured that we could finish it early on whatever day it was continued to.

I would hope, in light of the requests we have had from both sides, that that would not be tomorrow; that if we could not finish it tonight, it would go over to Monday or Tuesday. But I frankly do not care. I will be here either time. But I think people on the majority side need to understand that it is very difficult to get clearance on this side of the aisle after martial law has just been rammed down our throats. That is not usually the way in which the majority in this House elicits the cooperation of the minority in changing the rules.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman that I do appreciate his comments and I do appreciate the way we have been able to cooperate on the previous appropriations bills to have the time limit agreements so that no Member would be denied an opportunity to say what they have to say, but that we would try to do it in an expeditious manner.

As our former colleague and dear friend, Moe Udall, used to say on many of these debates, anything that needs to be said has already been said. The problem is not everyone has said it yet.

So with the cooperation of the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) and both sides, we would be able to expedite the consideration of this and get done today.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, would the gentleman continue to yield?

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I would simply like to point out to the House that each of the previous regular appropriations bills has been supported on a bipartisan basis by the majority and minority. This is the first bill that we run into trouble on because, in our view, the allocation provided to the bill is insufficient, which means we will be starving housing, we will be starving veterans medical care and environmental enforcement.

Nonetheless, we had indicated our intention to work with the majority to try to work out time limits, but a little thing called martial law has blown that up. And I wish that people who have no responsibility for managing bills in this place, and I am speaking specifically of the leadership on the other side of the aisle, I know they like to wave magic wands and tell the committee to get its work done, but I wish that people who have an interest in seeing that work done in a timely fashion would work in a more cooperative manner with this side of the aisle if they are asking me to be able to get cooperation on this side of the aisle so we can do what the majority leadership wants to do.

It is sometimes hard to help people who do not want to help themselves.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Members for the bipartisan support on this rule. It was somewhat contentious, but we are prepared to take up the rule.

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 210 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. 2620.

□ 1538

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. 2620) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes, with Mr. SHIMKUS 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 New York (Mr. WALSH) and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH).

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

Mr. Chairman, it is a privilege today to present for House consideration H.R. 2620, the Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies appropriations bill for fiscal year 2002. In the interest of time, I will try to be brief.

I would, however, like to begin by telling my colleagues that I believe this is a good bill and that the Administration has indicated that they support its passage. Just as presented in

each of the past few years, this bill represents a joint effort of both myself and my distinguished colleague and ranking member, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN).

While we clearly have not agreed on every single aspect of the bill as reported, it nevertheless represents a true collaboration of effort for which I am very grateful.

With the House's indulgence, I would like to outline the highlights of the proposal.

First and foremost, this proposed bill is within the 302(b) allocation, budget authority and outlays, that approved by the committee. The bill's discretionary spending totals $85.4 billion in new budget authority, which is an increase of just over $2 billion above the budget submission and some $4.8 billion over last year's bill.

I note for the House that this level of discretionary spending includes emergency spending of $1.3 billion for FEMA disaster relief, which was amended during the full committee markup by the majority whip. The committee has tried, as best we can, to spread the proposed increases throughout the bill.

Discretionary veterans program will increae by $1.6 billion compared to last year, with $1 billion going to veterans' medical care and the remainder spread to research, processing veterans' compensation, pension and education claims, operating our national cemeteries and, most significantly, increasing the necessary construction at VA facilities by some $434 million. That is a direct response to Member requests, and we think it is a high priority. The proposal is well within the scope of the amount allocated in the budget resolution.

Housing programs will increase by $1.4 billion compared to 2001, with increases in the housing certificate fund, section 8, public housing, operating subsidies, the HOPWA program, the HOME investment partnerships, the housing for the elderly and disabled programs, and the lead hazard reduction program.

It is important to note that this proposal also includes some very difficult, but I believe extremely important and highly defensible choices and changes in policy direction. They are represented by reductions in the Public Housing Capital Fund and the drug elimination grant programs. Neither of these programs is serving the best interests of the people they were intended to benefit. It is our job, albeit a difficult one, to take whatever steps necessary to remedy the situation.

In the case of capital funds, it means getting tougher on public housing authorities to spend the dollars intended for the residents in the public housing authority properties. There are literally hundreds of millions of dollars worth of code violations and hazards in these buildings that are not getting fixed.

In the case of the drug elimination grant program, it means taking an honest look at whether HUD is the best entity to run a law enforcement program. Based on HUD's track record, I do not believe that it is.

Mr. Chairman, I know these two items in particular will be discussed at length throughout the development of this bill in the House and in conference with the Senate.

EPA funding increases some $229 million over the budget request, although a decrease below last year's funding level. This proposal continues to provide strong research programs as well as increased resources for the many State categorical grants and significant resources for clean water and drinking water state revolving fund and congressional priorities for water projects and infrastructure grants.

FEMA operating expenses will increase by nearly $135 million over last year. We have provided the budget request of $1.37 billion in on-budget nonemergency dollars for disaster relief.

In addition, by virtue of the amendment in full committee markup, which I mentioned before, we have also included an additional $1.3 billion in contingent emergency spending for disaster relief. Those funds would not be drawn on unless the White House specifically asked for them and declared an emergency. I would just add that such emergency provisions have been used for several years to provide FEMA the ability to meet the needs of natural disaster victims.

In addition, our total appropriation of $2.6 billion for disaster relief is actually below the current 5-year average of $3.2 billion.

NASA programs would receive an increase of $641 million over last year, and we have proposed several structural changes in the Agency's account structure to provide them greater programmatic flexibility and the Committee better oversight capability. We have also included funding to reverse some of the changes to the International Space Station proposed by the President. I believe this is the right decision if the research mission of the station is to be fulfilled.

Finally, I am proud to say we have raised the overall funding for the National Science Foundation by just over $414 million to a total program budget of $4.84 billion. This is a 9 percent increase compared to last year. The bulk of these funds, some $292 million, would go to improve available resources for NSF's core research programs, while the remainder would be spread to major research, construction and equipment, education and human resources programs, and salaries and expenses for NSF's capable staff.

□ 1545

I would like to add that I personally would have liked to do more for NSF. However, to do so could only have been at the expense of other very important programs in other agencies. Having said that, given the increase proposed by the Administration of just 1 percent, I think we have done a remarkable job, and this is perhaps the aspect of the bill for which we can be most proud.

All Members are, of course, aware of the difficulty in putting these bills together, especially with so many diverse and competing interests. Developing the perfect bill is probably impossible. Nevertheless, I believe we have done a good job developing a bill that is both supportable and passable. Once again, I would like to thank my colleagues on the Committee from both sides of the aisle for their dedication, time, hard work, and thoughtful consideration of the provisions we have put into this bill. I would also like to thank our staff who has done a terrific job in helping us to sort out the priorities, to fund those priorities, and to make the hard decisions that are required. This job would be impossible without this highly professional staff.

Mr. Chairman, I include for the RECORD the budget tables representing the mandatory and discretionary spending provided in H.R. 2620.

VA AND HUD AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2002 (H.R. 2620)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2001 Enacted	FY 2002 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
TITLE I					
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS					
Veterans Benefits Administration					
Compensation and pensions	22,766,276	24,944,288	24,944,288	+2,178,012	
Readjustment benefits	1,634,000	2,135,000	2,135,000	+501,000	
Veterans insurance and indemnities	19,850	26,200	26,200	+6,350	
Veterans housing benefit program fund program account (indefinite)	165,740	203,278	203,278	+37,538	
(Limitation on direct loans)	(300)	(300)	(300)		
Administrative expenses	162,000	164,497	164,497	+2,497	
Administrative savings from prohibiting new Vendee Home Loans		-1,000			+1,000
Education loan fund program account	1	1	1		
(Limitation on direct loans)	(3)	(3)	(3)		
Administrative expenses	220	64	64	-156	
Vocational rehabilitation loans program account	52	72	72	+20	
(Limitation on direct loans)	(2,726)	(3,301)	(3,301)	(+575)	
Administrative expenses	432	274	274	-158	
Native American Veteran Housing Loan Program Account	532	544	544	+12	
Total, Veterans Benefits Administration	24,749,103	27,473,218	27,474,218	+2,725,115	+1,000
Veterans Health Administration					
Medical care	19,381,587	20,304,742	20,381,587	+1,000,000	+76,845
Delayed equipment obligation	900,000	675,000	900,000		+225,000
Total	20,281,587	20,979,742	21,281,587	+1,000,000	+301,845
(Transfer to general operating expenses)	(-28,134)			(+28,134)	
(Transfer to Parking revolving fund)	(-2,000)			(+2,000)	
Medical care cost recovery collections:					
Offsetting receipts	-639,000	-691,000	-812,000	-173,000	-121,000
Appropriations (indefinite)	639,000	691,000	812,000	+173,000	+121,000
Total available (excludes offsetting receipts)	20,920,587	21,670,742	22,093,587	+1,173,000	+422,845
Medical and prosthetic research	351,000	360,237	371,000	+20,000	+10,763
Medical administration and miscellaneous operating expenses	62,000	67,628	66,731	+4,731	-897
Total, Veterans Health Administration	20,694,587	21,407,607	21,719,318	+1,024,731	+311,711
Departmental Administration					
General operating expenses	1,050,000	1,194,831	1,195,728	+145,728	+897
Offsetting receipts	(36,520)			(-36,520)	
Total, Program Level	(1,086,520)	(1,194,831)	(1,195,728)	(+109,208)	(+897)
(Transfer from medical care)	(28,134)			(-28,134)	
(Transfer from national cemetery)	(125)			(-125)	
(Transfer from inspector general)	(28)			(-28)	
National Cemetery Administration	109,889	121,169	121,169	+11,280	
(Transfer to general operating expenses)	(-125)			(+125)	
Office of Inspector General	46,464	48,308	52,308	+5,844	+4,000
(Transfer to general operating expenses)	(-28)			(+28)	
Construction, major projects	66,040	183,180	183,180	+117,140	
Facility rehabilitation fund			300,000	+300,000	+300,000
Construction, minor projects	162,000	178,900	178,900	+16,900	
Miscellaneous appropriations (P.L. 106-554)	8,840			-8,840	
(Transfer to Parking Revolving Fund)	(-4,500)			(+4,500)	
Total	170,840	178,900	178,900	+8,060	
Grants for construction of State extended care facilities	100,000	50,000	100,000		+50,000
Grants for the construction of State veterans cemeteries	25,000	25,000	25,000		
(Transfer to Parking Revolving Fund)	(6,500)			(-6,500)	
Parking Revolving Fund		4,000	4,000	+4,000	
Total, Departmental Administration	1,568,233	1,805,388	2,160,285	+592,052	+354,897
Total, title I, Department of Veterans Affairs	47,011,923	50,686,213	51,353,821	+4,341,898	+667,608
(Limitation on direct loans)	(3,029)	(3,604)	(3,604)	(+575)	
Consisting of:					
Mandatory	(24,585,866)	(27,308,766)	(27,308,766)	(+2,722,900)	
Discretionary	(22,426,057)	(23,377,447)	(24,045,055)	(+1,618,998)	(+667,608)
TITLE II					
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT					
Public and Indian Housing					
Housing Certificate Fund:					
Direct appropriation	9,740,907	15,717,392	11,494,242	+1,753,335	-4,223,150
Advance appropriations provided in previous acts	4,200,000		4,200,000		+4,200,000
Subtotal, discretionary	13,940,907	15,717,392	15,694,242	+1,753,335	-23,150
(Advance appropriation)	(4,200,000)		(4,200,000)		(+4,200,000)
(Mandatory reclassification of prior year advance)		(4,200,000)			(-4,200,000)

VA AND HUD AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2002 (H.R. 2620)—Continued
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2001 Enacted	FY 2002 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Rescission of unobligated balances: Section 8 recaptures (rescission)	-1,833,000		-886,000	+947,000	-886,000
Public housing capital fund	3,000,000	2,293,400	2,555,000	-445,000	+261,600
Public housing operating fund	3,242,000	3,384,868	3,494,868	+252,868	+110,000
Subtotal	6,242,000	5,678,268	6,049,868	-192,132	+371,600
Drug elimination grants for low-income housing	310,000			-310,000	
Revitalization of severely distressed public housing (HOPE VI)	575,000	573,735	573,735	-1,265	
Native American housing block grants	650,000	648,570	648,570	-1,430	
Indian housing loan guarantee fund program account	6,000	5,987	5,987	-13	
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(71,956)	(234,283)	(234,283)	(+162,327)	
Total, Public and Indian Housing	19,890,907	22,623,952	22,086,402	+2,195,495	-537,550
Community Planning and Development					
Housing opportunities for persons with AIDS	258,000	277,432	277,432	+19,432	
Rural housing and economic development	25,000			-25,000	
Empowerment zones / enterprise communities	75,000	150,000		-75,000	-150,000
Rural empowerment zones	15,000			-15,000	
Miscellaneous appropriations (P.L. 106-554)	110,000			-110,000	
Total	200,000	150,000		-200,000	-150,000
Community development block grants	5,057,550	4,801,993	4,801,993	-255,557	
Miscellaneous appropriations (P.L. 106-554)	66,128			-66,128	
Section 108 loan guarantees:					
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(1,261,000)	(608,696)	(608,696)	(-652,304)	
Credit subsidy	29,000	14,000	14,000	-15,000	
Administrative expenses	1,000	1,000	1,000		
Brownfields redevelopment	25,000	25,000	25,000		
HOME investment partnerships program	1,800,000	1,796,040	1,996,040	+196,040	+200,000
Homeless assistance grants	1,025,000	1,022,745	1,027,745	+2,745	+5,000
Shelter Plus Care	100,000	99,780		-100,000	-99,780
Total, Community planning and development	8,586,678	8,187,990	8,143,210	-443,468	-44,780
Housing Programs					
Housing for special populations	996,000	1,001,009	1,024,151	+28,151	+23,142
Housing for the elderly	(779,000)	(783,286)	(783,286)	(+4,286)	
Housing for the disabled	(217,000)	(217,723)	(240,865)	(+23,865)	(+23,142)
Manufactured housing fees trust fund		17,254	13,566	+13,566	-3,688
Offsetting collections		-17,254	-13,566	-13,566	+3,688
Savings from canceling S.1029			-8,000	-8,000	-8,000
Federal Housing Administration					
FHA - Mutual mortgage insurance program account:					
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(160,000,000)	(160,000,000)	(160,000,000)		
(Limitation on direct loans)	(250,000)	(250,000)	(250,000)		
Administrative expenses	330,888	336,700	330,888		-5,812
Negative subsidy 1/	-2,246,000	-2,323,000	-2,323,000	-77,000	
Administrative contract expenses	160,000	160,000	145,000	-15,000	-15,000
Additional contract expenses	4,000	1,000		-4,000	-1,000
Streamlined down payment requirements	7,000			-7,000	
FHA - General and special risk program account:					
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(21,000,000)	(21,000,000)	(21,000,000)		
(Limitation on direct loans)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)		
Administrative expenses	211,455	216,100	211,455		-4,645
Negative subsidy	-100,000	-225,000	-225,000	-125,000	
Subsidy	101,000	15,000	15,000	-86,000	
Guaranteed loans credit subsidy (emergency funding) (P.L. 106-554)	40,000			-40,000	
Non-overhead administrative expenses	144,000	144,000	139,000	-5,000	-5,000
Additional contract expenses	7,000	4,000		-7,000	-4,000
Total, Federal Housing Administration	-1,340,657	-1,671,200	-1,706,657	-366,000	-35,457
Government National Mortgage Association					
Guarantees of mortgage-backed securities loan guarantee program account:					
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(200,000,000)	(200,000,000)	(200,000,000)		
Administrative expenses	9,383	9,383	9,383		
Offsetting receipts	-347,000	-382,000	-382,000	-35,000	
Policy Development and Research					
Research and technology	53,500	43,404	46,900	-6,600	+3,496
Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity					
Fair housing activities	46,000	45,899	45,899	-101	
Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes					
Lead hazard reduction	100,000	109,758	109,758	+9,758	
Millenial Housing Commission					
Gifts and donations		1,500			-1,500
Management and Administration					
Salaries and expenses	543,267	556,067	556,067	+12,800	
Transfer from:					
Limitation on FHA corporate funds	(518,000)	(530,457)	(520,000)	(+2,000)	(-10,457)
GNMA	(9,383)	(9,383)	(9,383)		
Community Planning & Development	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)		
Title VI	(150)	(150)	(150)		
Indian Housing	(200)	(200)	(200)		
Total, Salaries and expenses	(1,072,000)	(1,097,257)	(1,086,800)	(+14,800)	(-10,457)

1/ Not included in FY2001 CSBA tables.

VA AND HUD AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2002 (H.R. 2620)—Continued
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2001 Enacted	FY 2002 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Office of Inspector General	52,657	61,555	61,555	+8,898	
(By transfer, limitation on FHA corporate funds)	(22,343)	(22,343)	(22,343)		
(By transfer from Drug Elimination Grants)	(10,000)			(-10,000)	
(By transfer from Public Housing Oper Subsidy)		(10,000)	(10,000)	(+10,000)	
Total, Office of Inspector General	(85,000)	(93,898)	(93,898)	(+8,898)	
Consolidated fee fund (rescission)		-6,700	-6,700	-6,700	
Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight	22,000	27,000	23,000	+1,000	-4,000
Offsetting receipts	-22,000	-27,000	-23,000	-1,000	+4,000
Total, title II, Department of Housing and Urban Development (net)	28,590,735	30,580,617	29,979,968	+1,389,233	-600,649
Appropriations	(30,423,735)	(30,587,317)	(30,872,668)	(+448,933)	(+285,351)
Rescissions	(-1,833,000)	(-6,700)	(-892,700)	(+940,300)	(-886,000)
(Limitation on direct loans)	(300,000)	(300,000)	(300,000)		
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(382,332,956)	(381,842,979)	(381,842,979)	(-489,977)	
(Limitation on corporate funds)	(551,076)	(563,533)	(563,533)	(+12,457)	
TITLE III					
INDEPENDENT AGENCIES					
American Battle Monuments Commission					
Salaries and expenses	28,000	28,466	35,466	+7,466	+7,000
Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board					
Salaries and expenses	7,500	7,621	8,000	+500	+379
Department of the Treasury					
Community Development Financial Institutions					
Community development financial institutions fund program account	118,000	67,948	80,000	-38,000	+12,052
Consumer Product Safety Commission					
Salaries and expenses	52,500	54,200	54,200	+1,700	
Corporation for National and Community Service					
National and community service programs operating expenses	458,500	411,480		-458,500	-411,480
Rescission	-30,000			+30,000	
Office of Inspector General	5,000	5,000	5,000		
Total	433,500	416,480	5,000	-428,500	-411,480
Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims					
Salaries and expenses	12,445	13,221	13,221	+776	
Department of Defense - Civil					
Cemeterial Expenses, Army					
Salaries and expenses	17,949	18,437	22,537	+4,588	+4,100
Department of Health and Human Services					
National Institute of Health					
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences	63,000	70,228	70,228	+7,228	
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention					
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry	75,000	78,235	78,235	+3,235	
Total, Department of Health and Human Services	138,000	148,463	148,463	+10,463	
Environmental Protection Agency					
Science and Technology	696,000	640,538	680,410	-15,590	+39,872
Miscellaneous appropriations (P.L. 106-554)	1,000			-1,000	
Transfer from Hazardous Substance Superfund	36,500	36,891	36,891	+391	
Subtotal, Science and Technology	733,500	677,429	717,301	-16,199	+39,872
Environmental Programs and Management	2,087,990	1,972,960	2,014,799	-73,191	+41,839
Office of Inspector General	34,094	34,019	34,019	-75	
Transfer from Hazardous Substance Superfund	11,500	11,867	11,867	+367	
Subtotal, OIG	45,594	45,886	45,886	+292	
Buildings and facilities	23,931	25,318	25,318	+1,387	
Hazardous Substance Superfund	1,170,000	1,268,135	1,170,000		-98,135
Delay of obligation	100,000		100,000		+100,000
Transfer to Office of Inspector General	-11,500	-11,867	-11,867	-367	
Transfer to Science and Technology	-36,500	-36,891	-36,891	-391	
Subtotal, Hazardous Substance Superfund	1,222,000	1,219,377	1,221,242	-758	+1,865
Leaking Underground Storage Tank Program	72,096	71,937	72,000	-96	+63
Oil spill response	15,000	14,967	15,000		+33
State and Tribal Assistance Grants	2,620,740	2,232,943	2,355,000	-265,740	+122,057
Categorical grants	1,008,000	1,055,782	1,078,899	+70,899	+23,117
Subtotal, STAG	3,628,740	3,288,725	3,433,899	-194,841	+145,174
Total, EPA	7,828,851	7,316,599	7,545,445	-283,406	+228,846

VA AND HUD AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2002 (H.R. 2620)—Continued
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2001 Enacted	FY 2002 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Executive Office of the President					
Office of Science and Technology Policy	5,201	5,267	5,267	+66	.....
Council on Environmental Quality and Office of Environmental Quality	2,900	2,974	2,974	+74	.....
Total	8,101	8,241	8,241	+140	.....
Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation					
Office of Inspector General (transfer)	(33,660)	(33,660)	(33,660)	.....	.....
Federal Emergency Management Agency					
Disaster relief	300,000	1,369,399	1,369,399	+1,069,399	.....
(Transfer out)	(-2,900)	(-2,900)	(-2,900)	.....	.....
Contingent emergency funding	1,300,000	.....	1,300,000	.....	+1,300,000
Subtotal	1,600,000	1,369,399	2,669,399	+1,069,399	+1,300,000
Radiological emergency preparedness fund	.....	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000	.....
Disaster assistance direct loan program account:					
State share loan	1,678	405	405	-1,273	.....
(Limitation on direct loans)	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)	.....	.....
Administrative expenses	427	543	543	+116	.....
Salaries and expenses	187,000	203,801	197,900	+10,900	-5,901
Defense function	28,000	30,000	30,000	+2,000	.....
Subtotal	215,000	233,801	227,900	+12,900	-5,901
Office of Inspector General	10,000	10,303	10,303	+303	.....
Emergency management planning and assistance	249,652	334,623	384,623	+134,971	+50,000
Defense function	20,000	20,000	20,000	.....	.....
Miscellaneous appropriations (P.L. 106-554)	100,000	.....	.....	-100,000	.....
Subtotal	369,652	354,623	404,623	+34,971	+50,000
(By transfer)	(2,900)	(2,900)	(2,900)	.....	.....
Emergency food and shelter program	140,000	139,692	140,000	.....	+308
National Flood Insurance Fund:					
(Limitation on administrative expenses):					
Salaries and expenses 1/	25,736	28,798	28,798	+3,062	.....
Flood mitigation 1/	77,307	76,381	76,381	-926	.....
(Transfer out)	(-20,000)	(-20,000)	(-20,000)	.....	.....
National Flood Migration Fund (by transfer)	(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)	.....	.....
Total, Federal Emergency Management Agency	2,439,800	2,212,945	3,557,352	+1,117,552	+1,344,407
Appropriations	(1,139,800)	(2,212,945)	(2,257,352)	(+1,117,552)	(+44,407)
Emergency funding	(1,300,000)	.....	(1,300,000)	.....	(+1,300,000)
General Services Administration					
Federal Consumer Information Center Fund	7,122	7,276	7,276	+154	.....
National Aeronautics and Space Administration					
Human space flight	5,462,900	7,296,000	7,047,400	+1,584,500	-248,600
Crew return vehicle	.....	.....	275,000	+275,000	+275,000
Science, aeronautics and technology	6,190,700	7,191,700	7,605,300	+1,414,600	+413,600
Mission support	2,608,700	.....	.....	-2,608,700	.....
Office of Inspector General	23,000	23,700	23,700	+700	.....
Total, NASA	14,285,300	14,511,400	14,951,400	+666,100	+440,000
National Credit Union Administration					
Central liquidity facility:					
(Limitation on direct loans)	(1,500,000)	(1,500,000)	(1,500,000)	.....	.....
(Limitation on administrative expenses, corporate funds)	(296)	(309)	(309)	(+13)	.....
Revolving loan program	1,000	1,000	1,000	.....	.....
National Science Foundation					
Research and related activities	3,287,000	3,263,981	3,579,340	+292,340	+315,359
Defense function	63,000	63,000	63,000	.....	.....
Subtotal	3,350,000	3,326,981	3,642,340	+292,340	+315,359
Major research equipment	121,600	96,332	135,300	+13,700	+38,968
Education and human resources	787,352	872,407	885,720	+98,368	+13,313
Salaries and expenses	160,890	170,040	170,040	+9,150	.....
Office of Inspector General	6,280	6,760	6,760	+480	.....
Total, NSF	4,426,122	4,472,520	4,840,160	+414,038	+367,640
Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation					
Payment to the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation	90,000	95,000	105,000	+15,000	+10,000
Selective Service System					
Salaries and expenses	24,480	25,003	25,003	+523	.....
Total, title III, Independent agencies	29,918,670	29,404,820	31,407,764	+1,489,094	+2,002,944
Appropriations	(29,918,670)	(29,404,820)	(31,407,764)	(+1,489,094)	(+2,002,944)
Rescissions	(-30,000)	.....	.....	(+30,000)	.....
Emergency funding	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
(Limitation on administrative expenses)	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
(Limitation on direct loans)	(1,525,000)	(1,525,000)	(1,525,000)	.....	.....
(Limitation on corporate funds)	(296)	(309)	(309)	(+13)	.....

1/ FY2001 funding scored as non-add.

VA AND HUD AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2002 (H.R. 2620)—Continued
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2001 Enacted	FY 2002 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
OTHER PROVISIONS					
Filipino veterans provision	3,000	.....	.....	-3,000	.....
Grand total (net)	105,524,328	110,671,650	112,741,553	+7,217,225	+2,069,903
Appropriations	(106,087,328)	(110,678,350)	(112,334,253)	(+6,246,925)	(+1,655,903)
Rescissions	(-1,863,000)	(-6,700)	(-892,700)	(+970,300)	(-886,000)
Emergency funding	(1,300,000)	.....	(1,300,000)	.....	(+1,300,000)
(By transfer)	(66,560)	(66,560)	(66,560)	.....	.....
(Transfer out)	(-22,900)	(-22,900)	(-22,900)	.....	.....
(Limitation on direct loans)	(1,828,029)	(1,828,604)	(1,828,604)	(+575)	.....
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(382,332,956)	(381,842,979)	(381,842,979)	(-489,977)	.....
(Limitation on corporate funds)	(551,372)	(563,842)	(563,842)	(+12,470)	.....
Total mandatory and discretionary	105,133,328	114,867,650	112,616,553	+7,483,225	-2,251,097
Mandatory	24,581,866	31,504,766	27,183,766	+2,601,900	-4,321,000
Discretionary	80,551,462	83,362,884	85,432,787	+4,881,325	+2,069,903

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

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Chairman, I want to begin by thanking our excellent chairman, the gentleman from New York, for the work that he has done in crafting this legislation, the many hours that he has spent involved in it. Throughout the development of the bill, he and his staff have been accessible; and they have made every effort to accommodate the concerns that the minority have presented to them.

As I know he will tell you, we have not seen eye to eye on nearly all the issues in this bill. But the communication necessary for a cooperative effort has occurred and that is certainly very much appreciated.

The departments and agencies that are funded in this bill all deserve adequate funding, but the allocation that we have been given simply does not make that possible. Congress has been operating under unrealistic budget constraints fashioned for the purpose of justifying a huge tax cut. Many concerns were raised during the consideration of that tax cut, most importantly the concern of ensuring the solvency of Social Security and Medicare. While Members from both parties professed that these funds were sacred, as we await the Congressional Budget Office's mid-term reestimates of the government finances, including projections for fiscal year 2002, which are due out in mid-August, it is becoming clear that the tax cut might well invade the Medicare surplus. This is exactly what Democrats were concerned about. This is not fair to our seniors, and it is not good fiscal policy.

It is that same tax cut that is forcing the Committee on Appropriations to make do with fewer resources than are needed. This has resulted in an inadequate allocation to this subcommittee. This has forced the gentleman from New York to engage in a balancing act. While he has been able to do many good things, he has by necessity had to underfund some important accounts.

First, let me mention two specific accounts where the gentleman from New York has markedly improved upon the administration's request. The National Science Foundation is provided $4.84 billion, an increase of $414 million over last year. This represents a 9 percent increase rather than the 1.2 percent increase that the President proposed.

NASA, an account that has been flat funded for the past several years, is in need of funding increases. NASA would receive an increase of $641 million over last year's funding for a total budget of $14.9 billion. Importantly, the bill and report also begin the process of addressing the cost issues associated with the International Space Station. It provides $275 million toward the Crew Return Vehicle, a vital station component that President Bush would eliminate. This funding is conditioned on NASA reporting back to this committee its plan to address the Space Station cost overrun issue. In addition, NASA is charged with ensuring that research is not compromised in the solution.

To underscore the point that research continues to be a principal justification for the Space Station, the chairman's mark includes an additional $35 million for Space Station research. Further, the chairman's amendment includes an amendment that I proposed to the chairman that will add an additional $25 million. Once again, this bill reflects the strong support that science enjoys among the members of this subcommittee. But ensuring adequate resources for science is only one of the many important responsibilities that needs to be fulfilled by this legislation.

The funding levels for several of the accounts are clearly inadequate. For example, to his credit, the chairman has increased discretionary funding to the Veterans' Administration by $1.6 billion over last year's level. While this is a large increase, it falls significantly short of the medical care need as outlined most recently by the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, the authorizing committee.

Programs within the Department of Housing and Urban Development are cut and several receive no funding at all. These include public housing capital funds, drug elimination grants, rural housing and economic development, empowerment zones, and shelter-plus-care homeless renewals.

The Corporation for National and Community Service is zero-funded and the Community Development Financial Institutions fund is sharply reduced from last year. I know that the gentleman from New York shares my concern about most of these accounts and that he would provide more resources to them if he could.

Today, amendments will be offered addressing some of the problems in the bill. However, even if adopted they will not remedy all the funding shortfalls in this legislation. Resources are simply not available to address the larger issues. We need more money.

From veterans, to housing, to water and sewer needs and even science, more needs to be done, Mr. Chairman. I hope that as this process moves forward, additional resources will be made available allowing us to properly fund the many needy, deserving programs in this legislation.

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

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG), a hardworking member of the subcommittee.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the gentleman first of all for yielding me time and I in particular want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) for the very, very difficult and hard work that they have done on this bill. We have to obviously recognize Frank Cushing, who heads the staff, and all of the staff, who have done, I think, yeoman's work in bringing about the expertise that produces a product that is one that, I think, we should all be happy to support. The quality of the committee members should be highlighted along with the quality of their work product as well.

This appropriations bill is unique in that it covers an array of diverse agencies ranging from the Veterans Administration to the EPA. That is quite a broad stretch. It is not easy. It is not an easy task to bring this wide range of interests together into a single bill. But the gentleman from New York and the gentleman from West Virginia have a working relationship that I think makes all this possible.

The fiscal year 2002 VA–HUD bill is a fair piece of legislation produced under difficult circumstances, and it is within the budget resolution. It responsibly provides a $1 billion increase for veterans' medical health care, and increases funding for the Veterans Benefits Administration to reduce the backlog of claims. The bill increases funding for the Department of Housing and Urban Development by $1.4 billion and fully funds section 8 housing. H.R. 2620 also provides sound investments in research with a 9 percent increase for NSF.

The gentleman from New York, I believe, should be saluted for crafting this piece of legislation under these difficult circumstances. He has worked in good faith with the ranking member and the other side in a bipartisan way to forge the bill that is now before the House. As this process moves forward, we will have plenty of opportunities from Members to offer their suggestions and amendments before the President finally puts his signature on it.

This is a good, responsible bill. I encourage strongly my colleagues to support it.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MEEK) who is a very effective, hardworking member of our subcommittee.

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. I want to thank the gentleman from West Virginia for yielding me this time, and I want to thank the gentleman from New York.

Mr. Chairman, I have had the privilege and the pleasure of serving on this subcommittee. It is a very good subcommittee. It is very hardworking. I also want to give my thanks to the staff. They have just worked assiduously with all of us to make this bill come out as it is. We do owe them a great debt of gratitude.

I want to say that the main problem I see with this bill is that it is underfunded. It is not because we do not

have good leadership on this subcommittee or we do not have good supportive staff, but the fact that it is underfunded, the allocation was not adequate, probably due to the fact that we had to fund a great tax bill, now the results of that tax cut is coming back to haunt us in terms of being able to fund programs that come under our jurisdiction.

We were not able to fund veterans as much as we would have liked to have done. Therefore, we are seeing that as being a gap in this bill. The HOME account, however, there were some very good things going on in terms of accountability in the bill. The HOME account was increased by $200 million. It is one of the most valuable housing programs because it is very versatile and it is very effective.

That was very good of our subcommittee to be able to do this. Also, the subcommittee increased by 34,000 incremental vouchers which allow access to affordable housing on the private market. That is needed for additional low-income families. Section 202, one of my favorite programs for senior citizens, is increased by $4.2 million over fiscal year 2001. Also, this bill increases funding for HUD's Office of Lead Hazard Control. All these are strong points in the bill. Even though we were not able to fund adequately all of the programs, there are many bright spots in this bill, particularly what we were able to do for the National Science Foundation.

However, despite these responsible funding levels, Mr. Chairman, and these lack of funding levels that I would like to see, this bill underfunds some areas which I must call the committee's attention to. It underfunds public housing. It is a part of our bill, a part of our assessment that it should be funded strongly. It underfunds community development. It also cuts money from the Public Housing Capital Fund which helps to rebuild the worn-down and torn-up housing projects throughout this Nation. That is very badly needed. Children are in these housing projects. That makes it even more so. There are about 3 million low-income people that depend on public housing. One million of those are children.

The drug elimination grants which we have heard so many people talk about is also eliminated. It is needed. We need to keep drug trafficking out of our housing projects. Just the day before yesterday we voted $676 million in foreign aid to eliminate drugs. We need to eliminate drugs, Mr. Chairman, right here in our own country.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN), another very hardworking and dedicated member of the subcommittee.

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

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the VA appropriations bill and to thank, as others have done, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) for his leadership and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) for his leadership and cooperation.

Our bill, Mr. Chairman, helps the Veterans Administration provide health care to over 3.8 million men and women, who required last year over 717,000 inpatient visits and over 39 million outpatient visits to our Nation's 172 VA hospitals, 135 nursing homes, and over 600 outpatient clinics countrywide.

This bill provides for those purposes this year an additional $1.1 billion over last year's level for their medical care, for a total in the medical care account of $21.2 billion. With this latest increase, Congress will have provided an additional $4 billion for veterans' medical care over the past 3 years.

On a specific issue, our bill continues to direct Secretary Principi to address the serious issue of hepatitis C among the veterans population, particularly those of the Vietnam era.

On the housing front, the bill provides $30 billion for that agency, an increase of $2 billion over last year's level, and it continues our commitment to increasing housing opportunities for all people in need but especially for individuals with disabilities.

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This bill that we consider today will provide funding for nearly 8,000 vouchers specifically to provide decent, accessible housing for individuals with disabilities who often must compete with programs that provide housing for the elderly.

On the environmental protection front, the committee has provided $1.2 billion for the Superfund hazardous waste cleanup program. This vital program cleans up our Nation's most polluted sites and, in many cases, can restore formerly toxic sites to new productive uses. My own State has more of these sites than any other State in the Nation. Despite local successes in the Superfund cleanups, there are many more sites to be cleaned up and more sites and brownfields sites than ever.

Like the chairman, I think we need to highlight the fact that this bill substantially increases funding for the National Science Foundation by $415 million, or 9 percent, over last year's level, for a total of $4.8 billion over last year's amount. Basic scientific research funding is critical, and I particularly commend the gentleman from New York (Chairman WALSH) for his leadership and responsiveness which led to this much-deserved increase.

The committee has also provided $14.9 billion for NASA, an increase of $641 million over fiscal year 2001. While the committee rightly has concerns about cost overruns of the International Space Station, overall NASA is responsible for a number of research initiatives.

For this and other reasons, I support the bill.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN).

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Chairman, I thank my friend from West Virginia for yielding me time.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the NASA funding included in this legislation, particularly as it relates to NASA Glenn Research Center in Cleveland. Glenn Research Center provides over $1 billion a year to Ohio's economy. Over 12,000 jobs exist in Ohio thanks to Glenn Research Center. Glenn Research Center grants over $10 million a year to Ohio's universities, and NASA has an important impact on our everyday lives.

Glenn Research Center has given us advances in biotechnology, to improve our health care, led in the development of quiet aircraft technology to minimize the noise in communities surrounding airports, and spearheaded research that benefits space travel.

Glenn Research Center also developed a lightweight battery that enables energy storage in space, in our own laptops and cell phones. This Congress's investment in Glenn Research Center benefits every American. I am pleased the subcommittee has recognized the importance of Glenn Research Center.

Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from New York (Chairman WALSH) and I thank the ranking member, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN).

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguish gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), the distinguished Chairman of the Committee on Rules, for the purpose of a colloquy.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Chairman, I want to begin by complimenting both the gentleman from New York (Chairman WALSH) and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) for the superb job they have done on this bill, especially in the area of investment in scientific research and our Nation's space program.

I am joined by my very distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Glendale, California (Mr. SCHIFF), who has also joined with me in representing the area of Pasadena, which includes the Jet Propulsion Lab, and I would like to make a couple of comments about this.

Unfortunately, the vision that I just mentioned that the chairman and ranking member and the work of the subcommittee and the full committee reported out is not shared by the piece that came out from our friends in the other body. It not only does not provide sufficient funding for the National Science Foundation and NASA, but it goes so far as to propose the systematic dismantling of one of our Nation's national treasures, the Solar System Exploration Program.

While the proposed transfer of the Telecommunications and Mission Operations Directorate to the Consolidated

Space Operations Contract is portrayed as an effort to save money and consolidate space operations, the cost savings are illusory and the transfer would be devastating to the space program.

The proposal assumes that an industry contractor can absorb the telecommunications and missions operations activities, but, in fact, because the deep space environment is substantially more hostile than the near-Earth environment, the personnel who presently operate the Earth orbiting satellites do not now possess the experience or training required to operate a spacecraft in deep space. Therefore, the contractor would have to hire new people to do the work.

Furthermore, in order to achieve the level of savings promised by the Senate, the contractor would be forced to conduct the missions with fewer than half the personnel presently on the missions. Unfortunately, we have already learned the short-staffing lesson the hard way. The Young Commission's findings on the loss of the two Mars missions concluded that the principal failure for both missions was the result of NASA headquarters' limitations on participation by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory's expert staff. Unfortunately, the bill from the other body ignores this finding and further weakens JPL's role.

In addition, the Senate proposal would transfer the mission operations and communications for all of the solar system exploration missions, including Galileo, Mars Global Surveyor, Ulysses, Cassini, Voyager and Mars Odyssey to an outside contractor.

Mr. Chairman, I am certain that this body did not authorize and appropriate the millions of dollars needed to fund these programs with the idea that they would then be outsourced to a new and inexperienced operations and communications team. We expect, and indeed should demand, that the operations of these high-risk, high-reward missions be conducted by the most capable, most qualified and the most experienced personnel available.

Mr. Chairman, I know personally NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory is the authority on deep space exploration, and the House cannot allow the Senate to place these vital missions in jeopardy simply to fulfill the parochial interests that exist in the other body.

I am joined, as I said, by my colleagues, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF), the gentleman from California (Mr. COX), the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) and others to ask that you refuse to accept any of these shortsighted proposals during conference; and, in a bipartisan fashion, we offer whatever assistance we may have in this effort.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for his comments and look forward to working with him.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) for the purpose of a colloquy.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to join my colleague and neighbor from California in his praise for your leadership as well as the leadership of the gentleman from West Virginia and to urge that we turn back the Senate's proposals which I believe will seriously undermine the Solar System Exploration Program.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory is managed for NASA by the California Institute of Technology, Caltech. The Senate makes three proposals that are damaging to Caltech, damaging to NASA and damaging to the space program. The first is the transfer of telecommunications and mission operations to an outside contractor, as discussed by my colleague; the second is the reduction of $50 million from the Mars Surveyor program; and the third is the transfer of the Europa mission and the entire Solar System Exploration Program from JPL to an ad hoc grants program.

The combined impacts on JPL of these three proposals would be the elimination of 1,200 jobs at JPL and the resulting elimination of highly trained personnel and unnecessarily imperil our Nation's space exploration program.

Essentially, the Senate proposes that the critical mass of talent, experience and know-how which resides at JPL should be dispersed and that the core of NASA's exploration program should be conducted piecemeal and ad hoc.

At a time when the Nation is facing a critical shortage of experienced personnel in public service, the Senate proposals would terminate hundreds of engineers, technicians and scientists who possess the greatest level of knowledge regarding space exploration. The consequences would be tragic, and the Nation's space program would suffer a tremendous setback.

Mr. Chairman, I am proud to represent the best and brightest in a field where the advancement of science inspires young children and captures the imagination of millions, but I believe the space exploration program at JPL also serves the Nation as a whole.

NASA's solar exploration program carefully laid out and scrutinized resides at JPL because for the past 50 years this Congress has invested in the creation of the talent and infrastructure that exists at JPL. They are the experts, and this is rocket science.

For this body to allow that investment in space exploration to be jeopardized in this manner would be a disservice to the Nation and contrary to the fiscal duty we owe taxpayers.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume to complete the colloquy.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to say I thank both gentlemen for their comments, and please be assured we will not allow investments made in the space exploration program to be wasted. Be assured that both the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) and I look forward to working with the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF), the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), the gentleman from California (Mr. COX) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) to ensure that JPL remains one of the premier space research facilities in the country.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman will yield very briefly, I would just say this is not rocket science. What they do out at JPL is rocket science.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), the distinguished ranking minority member on the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, the Congressional Budget Office just finished the study which showed that over the last 20 years the wealthiest 1 percent of people in this country had an after-tax income gain on an annual basis of $414,000 per year. The tax bill which this Congress passed just a couple of months ago gave those people on average a $53,000 tax cut, about an 8 percent increase in their after-tax income.

That study also showed if you are exactly in the middle of the income stream, you have had an income increase over the past 20 years of about $3,400, and the tax bill that passed gave those folks not an 8 percent or 7 percent or 6 percent increase in their after-tax income, it gave those folks a 2 percent increase in their after-tax income.

That study also showed if you were in the poorest 20 percent of people in this society, that you actually have lost $100 in your annual income over the last 20 years, and those folks got a 1 percent on average increase in their after-tax income by the tax bill that passed, except for the almost one-third of people in that bracket who got nothing whatsoever because they made too little money to qualify for the tax cut.

That tax bill took so much money that it made it impossible for the Committee on Appropriations to give the gentleman from New York an adequate allocation for this bill; and because of that fact, not because of the desires of the gentleman, but because of the realities imposed by that misguided tax bill, this bill today is at least half a billion dollars short in providing needed veterans medical care. It is desperately short of the levels we need to be at to provide assistance for low-income people to obtain decent housing. It weakens our ability to provide environmental protection, and it does a number of other things that are not in the long-term interests of this country.

I have voted for the last five appropriation bills this House produced because I thought they were decent, bipartisan products, even though they were not perfect. But this bill I will not be supporting because of the shortcomings that I have cited.

I do want to say, however, that I think the gentleman from New York has done a very decent job with the

limited amount of resources that he had available to him, and I especially commend him for the way he dealt with the science budget. We needed an increase over the White House budget for science.

There is another strange twist to this bill, however. We tried on this side of the aisle on three occasions to get the majority to recognize that we were going to need more money for disaster assistance in FEMA's budget for the existing fiscal year. We were blocked on each of those three occasions.

Now, however, this bill contains a $1.3 billion item which has been labeled an emergency by no one less than the distinguished majority whip. That is the same distinguished majority whip who last year took the floor to defend the idea that somehow funding the census was an emergency, as though we did not know that every 10 years we are required by the Constitution to conduct a census. So I find that flip-flop strange indeed.

It is because of that flip-flop that this bill has been delayed for the better part of a day, and yet the majority leadership now somehow expects us to be able to make up the time lost by the internal divisions within the majority party caucus on this issue, and yet they expect us to work a miracle and finish this bill by 10, 11, 12 o'clock tonight. There are some 44 amendments pending. I do not believe it is possible to come anywhere near closure, even though we will try to work with the majority.

So I would simply say that if this bill cannot be finished tonight, it ought to be clearly understood why. It is not because of any delay on the part of anyone. It is simply because of the inconsistency which was noticed by the majority party caucus, the inconsistency represented by the DeLay amendment. While I support the DeLay amendment, I regret the ridiculous turmoil that it has caused.

□ 1615

Mr. FRANK. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. OBEY. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK. Mr. Chairman, I am the ranking minority member of the Subcommittee on Housing. There are enormous questions at issue here, and trying to rush them through would be inappropriate.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA), the distinguished subcommittee chair of the authorizing committee.

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for his distinguished leadership on this issue.

Certainly, as the chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Housing, I have just completed a series of hearings on the availability of affordable housing. These hearings focused on many of the programs within the jurisdiction of this appropriation bill, such as HOME, CDBG, section 8 vouchers, section 202 elderly housing, homeless and the disabled.

We have an intelligent understanding, even in this good economy, that there are a growing number of hardworking Americans who suddenly cannot afford rental housing that they are occupying because of the higher rents in their particular area. So at our housing affordability hearings, witness after witness reinforced the need for improved administration, utilization, and delivery of HUD programs. Furthermore, programs like HOME, CDBG, HOPE, section 8 vouchers, disability and 202 for the elderly, all of these programs need community development groups that can help them and can more efficiently and effectively meet the needs of these vulnerable populations.

Now that we have concluded the hearings, it is our intention to begin crafting legislation that will help to meet the needs of the growing housing affordability and availability problem.

We must remember, and I say this as a strong fiscal conservative, we must remember that the American taxpayer deserves consideration in this budget debate as well. If directing resources from one program to another means, as is done in this bill, means resources are being more efficiently and effectively used, then we should be supportive. The gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) has done that in this bill.

I would like to point out that the bill is not absolutely perfect, but I must say that I wish it had included credit subsidies.

I rise in support of this bill today. Chairman WALSH was given limited resources, and he has worked hard to craft a bill that is fair to all the competing interests and programs within his jurisdiction.

As Chair of the Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing, I have just completed a series of hearings on the availability of affordable housing. These hearings focused on many of the programs within the jurisdiction of this appropriations bill, such as HOME, CDBG, section 8 vouchers, section 202 elderly housing, homeless and the disabled.

This country is facing a growing housing crisis. The growth in the economy has created a major dilemma for an increasing number of working class and low-income Americans—a better economy means higher rents in many areas. A growing number of hard working Americans suddenly can't afford the rental housing they are occupying, or can't even find any housing available that is geared to their income levels. In addition, our government is faced with the increasing budget needs of our existing public housing system as well as how to pay for future housing demands.

At our housing affordability hearings, witness after witness reinforced the need for improved administration, utilization and delivery of HUD's programs. Furthermore, programs like HOME, CDBG, HOPE VI, section 8 vouchers, section 202, disability and homeless programs need more flexibility so that housing finance agencies, PHAs and community development groups can more effectively and efficiently meet the needs of these vulnerable populations.

Now that we have concluded the hearings, it is our intention to begin crafting legislation that will help to better meet the needs of this growing housing affordability and availability problem. We will be looking at ways to improve the delivery and administration of HUD administered programs.

I know that many members plan to offer amendments today concerning programs that fall within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Housing. I invite members who may have problems or concerns with this bill to work with the authorizing committee to address those concerns. Clearly, changes are warranted to many of these programs so that they better meet the needs of the people that so desperately need our help.

I consider myself a strong fiscal conservative, so for my part I do not automatically presume that each and every government program that currently exists deserves an increase in funding, merely by virtue of being there. Let us remember that the American taxpayer deserves consideration in this budget debate as well. If redirecting resources from one program to another means resources are being used more efficiently and effectively, then we should be supportive.

Faced with sharp budget constraints, Chairman WALSH has worked hard to use the taxpayers money in the most effective and efficient way possible. Where funds have not been spent in a timely manner, he has recaptured those funds and redirected them to programs that can use them now. Funding for programs with proven track records—like HOME, public housing operating subsidies, and housing for disabled and elderly has been increased in this appropriations bill.

This bill isn't perfect—for example, I wish it included credit subsidies to ensure the continued operation of the FHA multifamily loan program; and I will continue to work with both OMB and the Appropriation's Committee to determine how best to address continued funding for that program. In fact, just last week, I asked GAO to conduct a review of the issues surrounding the credit subsidy, such as how it is assessed and whether it is consistent with current default rates. There are good arguments on both sides of the issue relating to whether we have an accurate risk assessment of the credit subsidy. I am hopeful that the GAO will provide some insight on how best to proceed in resolving this crisis and whether an actual insurance premium is necessary.

Finally, I am glad that the Chairman has included provisions for the President's Downpayment Assistance Program. Home funds are distributed by formula to states and local participating jurisdictions which have the flexibility to use these funds for a variety of purposes, including downpayment assistance. The President's initiative would allow this to continue, but would require state and localities to use a designated amount of their funds for downpayment assistance.

This downpayment assistance set aside will go a long way to addressing the needs of many of those who currently are unable to own their own home. For this reason, I will oppose any amendment that seeks to reduce or eliminate the money for this important initiative.

On balance, this bill deserves your support, and we recognize that it outlines the foundation of review and legislative reform on our committee agenda for next year.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. ORTIZ) for the purpose of a colloquy with the chairman.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Chairman, I thank the ranking member, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) for yielding me this time.

I would like to enter into a colloquy at this point with the Chairman of the subcommittee, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH). After testifying last spring, Mr. Chairman, the subcommittee has been very helpful in finding creative solutions to the challenges faced by a multitude of veterans living in the Rio Grande Valley. I know the limitations on our spending this year, and I applaud the gentleman's work.

I appreciate language in the VA–HUD report to this bill that directs the VA to work with the Defense Department to share resources to serve our veterans, our active duty military, military retirees, and their dependents. The language directs the VA and DOD to submit a plan to the Committee for three demonstration sites through which to integrate health care resources and reduce the burden on veterans.

I would like to propose that a hospital in South Texas, which is at the Naval Air Station in Corpus Christi, be considered as a prospective site for just such a demonstration to help our veterans. I know that the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HOBSON), my good friend, has actually traveled to South Texas and looked at the facility with this in mind. There is room in the hospital and open beds that could be used to tend to the specialty care and the needs of our veterans.

I am grateful for a recent meeting with Veterans Secretary Anthony Principi in which we had a very good discussion about the needs of South Texas veterans. The Secretary was very engaged and helpful with suggestions. Secretary Principi agreed to have his experts at the VA study the prospect of having one of these demonstration sites at the Naval Air Station Hospital at Corpus Christi. I am very appreciative.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH).

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for his diligence on this very important issue in bringing the problem of accessible health care for the veterans of the beautiful area of South Texas that he calls home.

The VA and DOD have a great opportunity to do better in this area. I agree that the Naval Hospital in Corpus Christi would be an excellent candidate for this demonstration project, and I would encourage the VA to give this site every consideration when formulating a plan.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the gentleman's help, and I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HOBSON).

Mr. HOBSON. Mr. Chairman, I would also like to join in thanking the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ORTIZ) for bringing his testimony before the committee.

I visited this hospital in Corpus Christi, along with a number of other members of my subcommittee, and I really believe that the available capacity at that hospital and certainly the need of the veterans in that area would lend itself to progress in this program that he wants to do in this area. I want to commend the Chairman for encouraging the VA to work with DOD at the possibility of establishing not only this project, but other similar programs, because I think it comes into the extension of quality, cost-effective care for our veterans around the country, and the gentleman's facility in Corpus Christi is a good place to demonstrate that program.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the Committee again and the staff for their very diligent work.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY), the chairman of the Committee on Financial Services.

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

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 2620. I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), the chairman of the subcommittee, and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN), the ranking member, for putting together an appropriations bill that balances all of the competing interests and programs, given the fiscal restraints that we are under.

As the chairman of the Committee on Financial Services, the housing programs administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development fall under our jurisdiction. To date, the committee has held at least nine housing program and oversight hearings to explore how to make these programs models of efficiency and expand housing opportunities for everyone.

What the hearings reveal is that we are facing a housing crisis. In some areas, that crisis is one of availability of housing, while in others, it is affordability, with low-income families paying more than 50 percent of their monthly income for housing. In other cases, it has been poor management of public and private resources and, indeed, our committee plans to look into that.

I applaud the committee on their work. For example, the HOME program is increased by some $200 million to accommodate the President's request. This new initiative will expand the homeownership dream, particularly for low-income, first-time home buyers. While the overall homeownership rate is 68 percent, we have lots of work to do in our minority and disabled communities to foster this American dream. I will oppose any amendments that diminish the Downpayment Initiative incorporated in the HOME program.

I do want to point out to my colleagues that there will be some amendments today related to the elimination of the Public Housing Drug Elimination Grant Program. As I understand, this program is duplicative and that the Public Housing Authorities already have existing authority to provide crime-fighting initiatives through the operating fund. H.R. 2620 increases the PHA operating subsidy to 8.1 percent to allow flexibility to do crime-fighting initiatives and other activities. Moreover, the Drug Elimination Program experienced many abuses, including HUD's approval to allow PHAs to use funds for ''creative wellness'' programs that teach residents to surround themselves with colored gemstones and incense; and I am not making this up, Mr. Chairman, to the tune of $800,000; for occasions and trips, and for controversial gun buy-back programs.

I am also concerned that there is $397 million of unspent funds, some dating back to as far as fiscal year 1997. I support the Administration's proposal to eliminate duplicate programs.

While I understand that there will always be more need than resources, it is important that Congress act in a fiscally prudent manner that balances the housing program investments made by the taxpayer with the legitimate needs of those citizens who are not finding adequate resources in the private sector. The Committee on Financial Services, including the Housing Subcommittee chaired by Representative MARGE ROUKEMA, looks forward to working through the policy details that will ensure an improved housing delivery service.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FATTAH), a distinguished and hard-working member of the subcommittee.

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Chairman, let me also thank the ranking member and the chairman of the subcommittee for their hard work.

I have a number of concerns about the bill, even though I am generally supportive. One of course is the elimination of the AmeriCorps program, and the elimination of the drug elimination fund. There is nothing controversial about gun buy-back programs in neighborhoods where people have been victimized by the illegal use of these guns. But I think that even though there are some unfortunate directions, there is a lot to be very pleased with in this bill, and I commend both the gentlemen who have had the leadership roles.

I wanted to yield a moment to the chairman, the gentleman from New York, to have a brief colloquy on the question of the reserve funds for public housing authorities.

I, along with the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE), have

talked before about our concerns about the move from 2 months to 1 month. We realize that the vast majority of housing authorities have not needed a 2-month reserve, but there have been instances where, for a small percentage of housing authorities where they have had to go beyond the 1 month. I just want assurances from the chairman that he will be mindful of this and monitor and seek to ensure that HUD would have the flexibility to be responsive so that no family presently being served would in any way be jeopardized by the decision, and I think the correct decision that has been made, which is to roll the reserve back to a 1-month status.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FATTAH. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, certainly, it is not the committee's intent, nor do I believe this action will have any negative impact, on the ability of Public Housing Authorities to fully utilize their vouchers. It is my understanding that less than $46 million of the $1.3 billion in reserve funding was drawn down last year.

I assure the gentleman that it is the committee's intention that any PHA which exhausts its funds will be given additional funds to ensure that its legitimate needs are met. In fact, I have a letter from the Deputy Secretary which indicates that HUD will continue its long-standing policy to provide any Public Housing Authority that has exhausted its funds for legitimate needs with whatever funding is necessary to ensure that all families currently served retain their assistance.

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SCARBOROUGH).

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Chairman, I would also like to thank the committee staff for this worthy bill which promotes environmental cleanup and scientific study for areas impacted by toxic pollutants.

One such area of impact is Escambia County, Florida, which is my home county. In 1998, it ranked 22nd out of 3,300 counties in America in the amount of toxic releases reported to the EPA. Now there is mounting evidence that these toxic pollutants contributed to increased illnesses in Northwest Florida. Friends, neighbors, family members, and other constituents continue to ask me questions at town hall meetings and elsewhere about whether there is a connection between buried toxins and increased levels of cancer and other diseases.

Fortunately, the University of West Florida and Escambia County Health Department have formed a partnership to find scientific answers to these troubling questions. These questions as to whether toxins buried underground decades ago are now causing sharp increases in cancer and other deadly diseases need to be answered.

Also, too often, the affected areas are occupied by some of our poorest constituents, not only in Northwest Florida, but across America.

□ 1630

That is why I am grateful that this committee has urged the EPA to study Escambia County's increased levels of illness, and it will impact not only Northwest Florida, but also affected areas across America.

That is why I encourage passage of this worthy bill, and thank the chairman and the staff for recognizing the importance of the measure.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK), distinguished member on the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity.

Mr. FRANK. Mr. Chairman, this bill is a stunning example of the social harm that is resulting from the excessive tax reduction of earlier this year.

We have widely acknowledged that there are housing crises in many parts of this country. The gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA), who chairs the subcommittee, has presided over hearing after hearing in which witnesses brought forth by both sides of the aisle have testified to that.

The very prosperity which benefits so many and is so welcome exacerbates the problem in many areas of those people in middle-income and lower-income categories who are not participating, and this bill systematically makes it worse. It is not a matter of what the subcommittee chose to do, it is a matter of the substantial reduction in resources mandated by that tax bill, which left them with no real options.

As a result of the inaction of this committee pursuant to that tax cut, the Federal Housing Administration, the FHA multifamily program, is shut down, has been shut down, and will remain shut down. When we get in the full House I will put in a letter from the homebuilders and realtors and many others lamenting this. We are not building multifamily units for middle-income people.

Public housing residents are savaged by the President's budget, and unfortunately, this bill repeats that. The public housing drug elimination program, I do not think it is duplicative to have more cops in public housing. This cuts virtually every aspect of public housing.

The President says he will leave no child behind. Who does he think lives in public housing, stuffed animals? Children live in public housing, the poorest children in this country. They are victimized by the poor resource allocation that this bill manifests.

This bill is, unfortunately, far below the minimum we should expect, and that is mandated by that irresponsible tax cut.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT).

Mr. WATT of North Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Chairman, this is kind of a strange institution we are operating in here, because both the chairman of the Committee and the ranking member I think have done a good job of operating within the context of what they are operating in. Unfortunately, they are playing with a budget the size of a baseball when the size of the need is, at best, the size of a softball or a soccer ball, or perhaps even a basketball or bigger.

The dramatic example of that is in the area of housing. The chairman, the Republican chairman, the Democratic ranking member, and those of us who sit on that committee have gone through hearing after hearing after hearing, and every single witness has come and said, ''We need more affordable housing in this country.'' Yet, there is nothing that will address that need in this bill.

It is not because of the ranking member or the chairman of the Committee, it is because of the big tax cut that has taken all of the money that we should have been spending on low-income housing and affordable housing and sent it back to rich people, leaving poor people in destitute housing. That is a shame for our country.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

As co-chair of the Congressional Aerospace Caucus, I strongly support maintaining America's leadership in space exploration, research, and technology. That is why I rise in support of increased funding for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Let me speak of two challenges being met by NASA in aircraft noise and engine emissions. The ultraefficient engine technology program at the NASA Glenn research center is improving local air quality around airports and reducing aviation's impact on global warming.

The program is developing revolutionary propulsion technologies for increased performance and efficiency of aircraft engines. The goal of NASA's quiet aircraft technology program is to develop technologies which will contain aircraft noise within airport boundaries.

The Federal Government is investing millions of dollars every year to insulate homes. Such sound insulation is the only feasible approach today. However, breakthrough technologies developed by NASA through the UEET program and the quiet aircraft technology program will properly address the problem by achieving significant reductions in aircraft noise and emissions.

I urge increased support for NASA. Not only will this funding enable the U.S. to remain at the forefront of space technology, but it will serve to give much-needed relief to our constituents who live near airports.

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

Mr. Chairman, there have been a number of the speakers who have commented on HUD funding. I would just like to respond briefly on a couple of points.

First of all, we, unlike the Senate, increased Section 8 housing vouchers. We put, I believe, 34,000 new housing vouchers in. Eight thousand of those are specifically for people with disabilities. I think that it is the subcommittee stepping up to the plate and dealing with an issue that we have not fully dealt with in the past. The Senate provided no new Section 8 housing vouchers, so I think the House did an excellent job there.

We also increased operating expenses for the public housing authorities across the land by 8 percent. That is a very, very substantial increase.

Although we have a reduced amount of funding in the capital budget, I would remind my colleagues, there is $8 billion in the capital expenses pipeline for public housing authorities across the nation. That is $8 billion that is appropriated but unallocated to a specific project, and unspent.

We would urge those public housing authorities to move forward and allocate those funds toward a project. Otherwise, they will lose those funds, and we will assign them to public housing authorities that are spending their funds in a timely way.

The problem is, we are appropriating these monies and they are not taking care of their housing code violations, they are not taking care of the hazards that people living in public housing have to deal with every day. So it is our responsibility as a Congress to make sure those public housing authorities spend that money.

Lastly, the level of funding that we have provided is exactly what the Clinton administration asked for for the past 3 years. So to say that we did not do our job for HUD, Members can say that, but it is tougher to make the case because the facts I think would argue otherwise.

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

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER).

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the ranking member for yielding time to me.

Mr. Chairman, I add my voice to those of my colleagues on this side of the aisle who have said there are stunning examples in this bill of how the tax cut has forced us into insufficient funding for important programs. I join everybody who has spoken in thanking the Chair and the ranking member for doing what they can with the insufficient budget they had.

Let me just add another stunning example, as my colleague, the gentleman from Massachusetts said, of the social harm that has been done by insufficient funding.

We all have said we have added $1 billion to the health care for our veterans in this budget. That is true. But $1 billion, given the inflationary cost of health care in this Nation, barely keeps up with that inflation; $1 billion barely keeps up with the inflation. How do we make up for all the years that we have not granted sufficient funding to our Nation's veterans?

Of all people, these are the folks who we should take care of before we declare a surplus, before we give a tax cut to the wealthiest 1 percent of our Nation. It is our veterans who have made this Nation the prosperous one it is. Yet, they have come last, again.

The so-called Independent budget that is put out by the veterans service organizations of this Nation, virtually every single veterans' organization has contributed to this independent budget, they think another $1.7 billion is necessary for the health care for our Nation's veterans to keep up with inflation and to deal with problems such as Hepatitis C, with problems of our aging veteran population, with bringing down the incredible 5 months and 8 months and year-long waiting times for specialty doctors.

So I will be proposing an amendment, when we get to that stage in the bill, to give $1.7 billion extra. We have emergency funding in this bill now. I would hope that this House would agree with me that the funding for our veterans is an emergency, that we ought to declare our support for our Nation's veterans and provide this level of funding.

There will be amendments to do that. There will be amendments to increase the medical research budget, to increase the budget to fight and treat Hepatitis C victims, and there will be amendments to give health care to the 75,000 Filipino veterans of World War II, one-third of them citizens of this Nation, and the others living in the Philippines who have contributed to our Nation's victory in World War II. It is time that we supported them.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON).

(Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague for yielding time to me.

I want to praise both the chairman and the ranking member of this subcommittee for their outstanding work in a very difficult budget environment. I know the tough decisions they had to make were not easy, and I support the effort they have put forth.

I want to speak about one very small part of this bill we are going to be voting on today that impacts one very large group of people in America.

We talked about the FEMA budget and how we need to help resolve those problems created by disasters and reimburse towns and cities for the expenses they have lost, the debts they have in incurred. But we have not heard anything about FEMA's commitment to the 1.2 million men and women in this country who are the fire and EMS personnel.

Under the chairman's leadership, with the strong support of the full committee chairman, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG), this past year the Congress for the first time established a grant program to support the Nation's domestic defenders. The $100 million that was allocated was requested by 30,000 fire and EMS departments across this country to the tune of $2.9 billion. We will only be able to fund a very small portion of that request.

I am pleased that this bill has an additional $100 million, and I am going to ask at a later point in time, when I offer an amendment, that my colleagues and the leadership of this subcommittee support the Senate position, which is $150 million.

We talk about the needs that we have in this bill, but Mr. Chairman, each year 100, on average, fire and EMS personnel die in the line of duty protecting our communities, and 85 percent of them are volunteers. The right thing for us to do is to support a program that will help prevent and protect these individuals from the loss of life and injuries that they assume on a regular and annual basis.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES).

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me. I know the chairman works very hard to try and craft some legislation that would address the issues of our community.

But I am concerned about the cut in housing that has occurred in this bill, particularly the drug elimination program that was provided for public housing. In Cuyahoga County, Ohio, that will mean the cut is equal to the entire budget for the law enforcement department at the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority. For me and for my community and district, that is significant.

So I ask Members to rethink that. I ask them to realize that even though people think it is a stupid program, in fact the people who live in public housing that have had an opportunity to have drugs eliminated think it is a great program.

However, I do want to compliment the chairman and the ranking member on the work they have done for the NASA program. The NASA program in Cuyahoga County is very, very important. I want to thank the chairman, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. HOBSON), and my ranking member for seeing that NASA had an opportunity to get additional dollars.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. BENTSEN).

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

□ 1645

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the bill for its functions that it annually funds, including funding for NASA and other issues. But in particular I want to talk about the funding for FEMA.

I strongly support the committee's decision to accept the amendment offered by my colleague, the gentleman from Houston, Texas (Mr. DELAY), to provide an additional $1.3 billion for FEMA as emergency funding. As Members know, Tropical Storm Allison dropped 40 inches of rain throughout the Houston area over a week-long period, causing damages up to about $5 billion affecting 90,000 people in Texas.

It is estimated that the damages in the Texas Medical Center in my district alone will exceed $2 billion, and it is expected with other disasters that we will far exceed what was originally budgeted and what the President originally called for. So I think this is a step in the right direction.

In fact, the other body, in their bill, has a figure up to $2 billion; and I hope that ultimately we can get there, because we know we will have other disasters in the remaining part of this year and in next year. And we will certainly need this funding so people in my district and other parts of Texas can get back on their feet.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, can the Chair advise us as to how much time is remaining in general debate?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) has 3½ minutes remaining and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL).

(Mr. HALL of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this fine bill that the chairman, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), and the ranking member, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN), have brought to the floor.

I do not get excited about many Federal programs, but this bill contains money for two of the very best science agencies in the world, NASA and the National Science Foundation. These are programs that ultimately will result in an increased understanding of the world around us and will deliver practical benefits to the American taxpayers. It is a good bill.

Again, let me congratulate the Chair and the ranking member for their fine work, and I urge my colleagues to support the NASA funding in this bill.

It seems obvious to me that if we invest in these advanced science and engineering efforts now, when our economy is still relatively robust, we can help lay the groundwork for another generation of economic growth, which is good for all Americans.

NSF is our premier agency for support of basic research at academic institutions in the physical and biological sciences, in mathematics, and in engineering. Basic research discoveries launch new industries that bring returns to the economy far exceeding the original public investment.

The Internet, which emerged from research projects funded by the DOD and NSF, strikingly illustrates the pay-off potential of such research expenditures. In fact, over the past 50 years, half of U.S. economic productivity can be attributed to technological innovation and the science that has supported it.

Unfortunately, the simple truth is that during the 1990s we have been underinvesting in the fields of science that NSF supports.

A recent report from the National Academy of Sciences provides specific examples that make this case. The report shows that between 1993 and 1999 federal research support at academic institutions fell by 14 percent in mathematics, by 7 percent in physics, by 2 percent in chemistry, and by 12 percent in electrical engineering.

Inadequate funding for basic research in such important fields imposes a price on society, because new ideas are lost that would otherwise underpin future technological advances. Of even more importance, anemic funding of academic science and engineering research reduces the numbers of new young scientists and engineers, who constitute the essential element necessary to ensure the nation's future economic strength and security.

The bill before us provides funding growth for NSF in excess of nine percent. The increase will enable the Foundation to expand its investments in exciting, cutting-edge research initiatives, such as information technology and nanoscale science and engineering. Of course, I would like to see the budget-doubling rate of increase that was appropriated for NSF last year. But I understand the constraints the Committee faced and I believe they did a wonderful job under the circumstances.

NASA

I'd now like to turn to the bill's treatment of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. I am a strong and unabashed supporter of our Nation's space program. It has delivered countless practical benefits to our citizens over the four decades since NASA was established. You only need to think about some of the things that have come from past investments in space research—including such things as worldwide satellite communications, space-based weather imagery, advanced medical diagnostic and telemetry devices, advanced materials—the list just goes on and on—to know that this has been money well spent.

I would be the first to say that we haven't been able to fund NASA as well as I would have liked over the past decade. We were trying to get the deficit under control, and NASA had to take cuts, just as other agencies had to take cuts. And I supported holding the line on NASA's spending, even though I supported its programs. However, we are in a different era and I believe it is time to increase our Federal investment in research and development. It's an investment in our future, and no agency symbolizes the future more than NASA.

This bill, I am pleased to say, takes a step in that direction. It provides an increase of more than four percent for NASA. Given the constraints facing the Committee, I appreciate the efforts of Chairman WALSH and Ranking Member MOLLOHAN to provide the additional funding.

Of particular interest to me is the fact that the bill provides $275 million for the Space Station Crew Return Vehicle, as well as additional funding for Space Station research.

I know that Members are concerned about the reported cost growth in the Space Station program. And those who know me know that I do not want to spend a single dollar more than is necessary to carry out the Federal government's programs—whether they are NASA programs or some other agency's programs. At the same time, we have to provide the resources needed to finish what we start, or we will just wind up wasting the taxpayer's money.

The International Space Station is going to be a world-class orbiting research facility if we are wiling to keep the faith and ensure that it has the capabilities successive Congresses have supported. Thus, we are going to need to invest in Space Station research facilities—and make sure that the Station can support the seven-person crew needed to carry out that research. This bill supports that vision.

I also support the additional funding provided to the Space Shuttle program. The Shuttle program is critical to our nation's exploration and use of space, and we need to ensure that it has adequate funding so that it keeps flying safely and reliably. In addition, the bill provides funding for a range of important programs in science, aeronautics, and technology.

These are programs that ultimately will result in increased understanding of the world around us and will deliver practical benefits to the American taxpayer. Again, let me congratulate the Chair and Ranking Member for their fine work, and I urge my colleagues to support the NASA funding in this bill.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I have no additional requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time to close.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I have one remaining speaker.

Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time, 2 minutes, to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS).

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Chairman, what this debate is about, really, is the priorities of this country. Several months ago it was the wisdom of the President of the United States and a majority of the Members of the Congress that we were a rich enough Nation that we could afford to provide hundreds of billions of dollars to the wealthiest 1 percent of the population, people who have a minimum income of $375,000 a year. That is how rich we were. But today, when we are talking about the needs of our veterans, the men and women who put their lives on the line to defend this country, the men and women who were

wounded in action, well, guess what, today we do not have enough money to address their needs.

All over this country, including the State of Vermont, there are waiting lines for veterans to get the quality treatment that they need. There is speculation that the prescription drug program for veterans will cost veterans more money because we do not have, as a Nation, the funding available to take care of those people who made such sacrifices for this country. Hundreds of billions of dollars for tax breaks for those who do not need it but inadequate funding for our veterans.

Mr. Chairman, in my State, and again all over this country, millions of Americans are paying 50 or 60 percent or more of their limited incomes for housing. In one region after another in this country affordable housing is unattainable. Yet, once again, we apparently do not have enough money to adequately fund affordable housing in this country, so that families and children sleep out on the street and working people pay 50, 60 percent of their incomes for housing. Tax breaks for millionaires, yes; adequate funding for affordable housing, no.

And, once again, all over this country communities are struggling to make sure that the air that they breathe, the water they drink, is not polluted. Money for tax breaks, yes; money for the environment, no.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN), for joining me in this debate and a general discussion of the bill. As I said before, I think we have a good bill. I suspect that if we had $150 billion to spend, someone would stand up and say we just need more money. Last year, we provided a record increase in veterans medical care, the most ever in the history of this country in one year and we still had amendments asking for more money.

I think we have done a pretty good job of providing the resources that we need. I would remind my colleagues that back in the years of the Reagan tax cut, there was a very substantial tax cut but there was an agreement that they would cut taxes and that they would also commensurately cut spending. The tax cuts occurred, the spending cuts did not. Therefore, we wound up with very substantial budget deficits. I think that what we have done thus far this year is the right thing to do. We have had growing surpluses, we were collecting more money than the government needed to operate, and if the money was left there, it would have been spent. So the President proposed a tax cut that was supported by both the House, and the Senate, in very large numbers, and signed by the President. It is now law and the money is being mailed out to the taxpayers who were overpaying.

So we have to now take care of the spending part, which is really what this bill is about. It is spending priorities. We have close to $110 billion in this bill. Some of it is at our discretion, about $85 billion. I think we have done the best we could. I think we have met the priorities of the country.

We have increased veterans medical care by $4 billion in the last 3 years, if this bill passes. We have provided for the protection of the environment. We have provided for emergency relief, disaster relief for emergency victims, and we have provided for the housing of our Nation. I think we have made some difficult choices, but we have made wise choices. And I think that the people who pay the taxes would accept the fact that we have done our level best.

So I submit to my colleagues in closing the debate with my feeling that we have done the very best that we could.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I would like to comment on H.R. 2620, VA-HUD-Independent Agencies appropriations for FY 2002. I intend to offer several amendments to this legislation to address my concerns regarding affordable housing and support of our only national community service program.

This bill appropriates $112.7 billion for programs and activities of the Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) departments, and for independent agencies. The independent agencies included under this appropriations measure include the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA).

The total appropriation in the bill is $7.2 billion (7%) more than FY 2001 funding and $2.1 billion (2%) more than the administration's request. On an adjusted basis (i.e., after certain official CBO budget scorekeeping adjustments have been made), the bill provides $112.6 billion—$7.5 billion more than the FY 2001 level but $2.3 billion less than requested.

As the founder and Co-Chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, and congressional representative from the 18th Congressional District of Texas I have a strong interest in the well being of our nation's children and their families. I would like to offer the following amendments for the committee's consideration as it prepares the rule for consideration of this important legislation.

This year has been very difficult for the residents of Harris County and the City of Houston with the devastation caused by flooding as a result of Tropical Storm Allison. Although words cannot even begin to describe adequately the destruction that Houston and its surrounding areas, I will attempt to describe for you some of havoc that the storm has wreaked. The more than three feet of rain that fell on the Houston area beginning June 6 has caused at least 23 deaths in the Houston area and as many as fifty deaths in six states. Over 10,000 people have been left at least temporarily homeless during the flooding, many with no immediate hope of returning to their homes. More than 56,000 residents in 30 counties have registered for federal disaster assistance. Over 3000 homes have been destroyed, over 43,000 damaged. The damage estimates in Harris County, Texas alone are $4.88 billion and may yet increase. As to housing needs because of the flood, I will offer amendments to increase the housing funds to assist in rebuilding disaster-stricken homes.

Some of the most hard hit areas include the University of Houston, Texas Southern University, and the Kashmere Gardens neighborhood, a Houston enclave that is predominantly low income and possesses the fewest resources needed to bounce back from this once in a lifetime event.

However, I want to take particular note to some of the greatest damage to our city, which occurred at Texas Medical Center, because what has occurred affects us not just locally, or even just in Texas, but nationally. The Texas Medical Center, home to some forty medical institutions, is the largest medical center in the world. Globally renowned medical care and research takes place there. The flood has decimated these preeminent health institutions.

The flood has also damaged educational institutions. The University of Houston estimates that the damage to that institution is $250 million, in addition several schools in the North Forest Independent School District were also damaged.

Houston will recover, but to what extent and over what period of time remains to be answered, by the federal government's commitment to residents of that area. Therefore I support the effort to add $1.3 billion to FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund. I ask my colleagues to support this needed funding to assist in all the existing disaster declarations.

Assistance for residents in and around Houston has come from many quarters. I am particularly grateful for the assistance provided by AmeriCorps Volunteers, who were directed to the Houston area by the Corporation of National and Community Service. The Corporation's three major service initiatives are AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and the National Senior Service Corps.

Over 200 AmeriCorps members from four regional campuses responded to a call-up from the American Red Cross to assist victims of Tropical Storm Allison in Texas and Louisiana. The members are serving as first-line family assistance representatives, helping families to receive immediate aid and to identify each family's long term needs. The corps members are also operating emergency assistance shelters, working in soup kitchens, and delivering meals to people affected by the flooding. Additionally, Spanish speaking members are helping translate emergency assistance forms for people who don't speak English. The members are working in ten emergency assistance shelters in the Houston, TX, vicinity and three shelters around Baton Rouge, LA.

Overall, the storm caused upwards of $4.88 billion in damage to Houston and surrounding Harris County. Over 20,000 homes were damaged by the flooding as the storm dumped over 36 inches of rain in some areas with some houses reporting over seven feet of water in them.

It is unfortunate that the Appropriations Committee zeroed out the account for the Community Development Fund, when the administration requested $411 million in funding for FY 2002. My amendment would restore the program and allow them to continue their work on the behalf of communities throughout the United States.

AmeriCorps, the domestic Peace Corps, engages more than 40,000 Americans in intensive, results-driven service each year. We're

teaching children to read, making neighborhoods safer, building affordable homes, and responding to natural disasters through more than 1000 projects. Most AmeriCorps members are selected by and serve with projects like Habitat for Humanity, the American Red Cross, and Boys and Girls Clubs, and many more local and national organizations. Others serve in AmeriCorps*VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) and AmeriCorps*NCCC (the National Civilian Community Corps). After their term of service, AmeriCorps members receive education awards to help finance college or pay back student loans.

AmeriCorps is a win-win program that I hope the rule for this legislation will allow it to continue in its work to help make America a better place to live. Homelessness in America continues to be a problem that seems to lack a broad commitment to see and end to this blight on the American Dream. Attempting to attribute homelessness to any one cause is difficult and misleading. More often than not, it is a combination of factors that culminates in homelessness. Sometimes these factors are not observable or identifiable even to those who experience them first hand (Wright, Rubin and Devine, 1998). For example, lack of affordable housing is a factor repeatedly cited as contributing to homelessness (Hertzberg, 1992; Johnson, 1994; Metraux and Culhane, 1999; National Coalition for the Homeless, 1999–F). However, lack of affordable housing is often representative of a collectivity of other problems. Other key factors include the inability to earn a living wage, poverty, welfare reform, unemployment and/or domestic violence that can combine to form a situation in which even the most basic housing is not affordable.

The support that AmeriCorps volunteers provided to Houston area residences must be supported by funds from the federal government in allowing families have homes to live in after the damaged caused by Tropical Storm Allison. I have an amendment that increases funds for HUD's Community Development Block Grant Program to be used as matching funds for home repair and buyout for Harris County and the City of Houston citizens who have been displaced by Tropical Storm Allison.

Rather than speak in terms of cause, we must focus on the factors that contribute to the alarming numbers of persons who are homeless. Among the leading risk factors associated with homelessness, the following factors are paramount: Lack of affordable/low-income housing; poverty; welfare reform; Lack of a living wage; mental illness; substance abuse; domestic violence; and lack of affordable health care. I for one do not want to add to this list; natural disasters as a cause of homelessness should this Congress fail to act.

Another key area of this legislation's appropriations provides funding to our nation's aerospace effort. The residents of the Houston Congressional District, which I serve, are located near the Johnson Space Center, which manages human space flight missions as part of National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration was created by the National Space Act of 1958, after the success launch of the world's first man made satellite by the Soviet Union. NASA is charged with the responsibility of conducting space and aeronautics research, development, flight activity designed to ensure and maintain U.S. preeminence in space and aeronautical endeavors.

The only real threat to date present to our nation's leadership in space is right here on Earth in the determination of some Members to see an end to this leadership.

The principal mission of the space station is to establish a permanent human presence in space to perform research in a near-zero gravity environment. The space station is the largest, most technologically complex space program ever undertaken. Requiring more than 40 space shuttle flights to complete, the space station will be approximately the size of a football field, weight nearly 1 million pounds, and have an interior volume comparable to two 747 aircraft. The space station will serve as a platform for a range of research activities in biology, physics, and materials science, as well as for Earth and astronomical observations. The experience gained using the space station will provide information to support decisions about future human exploration missions. In addition, it is hoped that the space station will attract a substantial number of commercial ventures, and that an increasing fraction of the space station operational costs will be covered by the private sector.

Our ability to reach for the stars is another priority, which will ensure that America remains the preeminent country for space exploration. Last year it was difficult to see NASA's budget cut and I support every effort to increase funding during the FY 2001 appropriations process. After garnering support for increased funding for General Science, Space and Technology, this year's budget is $1 billion above last year's appropriation. I am thankful for the hard work done in restoring and increasing NASA's funding.

I will vigorously oppose any attempt to cut funds from NASA's International Space Station budget or related accounts. NASA has become an easy target over the last few years only because our dominance of space exploration has not been challenged. However, I would like to remind my colleagues that this circumstance could change. For this reason, and the important medical and scientific breakthroughs that could be achieve by the science conducted aboard the space station I urge my colleagues to reject all attempts to decrease funding to NASA.

I would like for my colleagues as we amend this appropriations measure, that we keep our eyes on the long view and not the short term.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2620, the FY 2002 VA–HUD and Independent Agencies Appropriations bill because the funding level in the bill is woefully disappointing in the areas of veterans medical care and public housing programs that serve our country's most vulnerable citizens and families.

Mr. Chairman, the funding shortfalls in this bill, in my opinion, is totally unnecessary. We have the resources in this country to take care of our veterans as well as to provide adequate housing for the poor, the elderly and the disabled. But because my colleagues on the other side of the isle thought it more important to pass a $1.3 trillion tax cut.

I made a request to the subcommittee, which was unfortunately not funded, to assist the Virgin Islands in replacing and upgrading our wastewater and sewage treatment facilities. The government of the Virgin Islands is under EPA mandate to replace or upgrade significant components of our wastewater infrastructure to eliminate constant bypass discharges of wastes in violation of the Clean Water Act. In addition to the Clean Water Act concerns, the constant discharge of raw sewage on our streets and in our beaches are threatening the quality of life of Virgin Islanders as well as, our fragile Tourism economy.

Because my community continues to be plagued by this crisis, I will continue to seek the assistance of the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee to explore the possibility that some assistance could be provided to my district to deal with this problem.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Chairman, this Member rises today to express his support for H.R. 2620, the VA, HUD and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act for FY2002. First, this Member would like to thank the distinguished gentleman from New York, the chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on VA, HUD and Independent Agencies from New York (Mr. WALSH), the distinguished gentleman from West Virginia, the ranking member of the subcommittee (Mr. MOLLOHAN), and all members of the subcommittee for the work they did under the tight 302(b) allocation.

This Member would like to focus his remarks on the following four areas: Section 8 housing, Section 184 Indian Housing Loan Guarantee Fund Program, and the Community Development Fund-Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

SECTION 8 HOUSING

First, this Member is supportive of the treatment of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Section 8 housing contracts. The legislation provides $15.7 billion to fully fund the renewal of all Section 8 housing assistance contracts and it provides $197.2 million to fund 34,000 new Section 8 vouchers.

SECTION 184 INDIAN HOUSING LOAN GUARANTEE FUND PROGRAM

Second, this Member supports the $6 million appropriation for the (HUD) Section 184, American Indian Housing Loan Guarantee Program, which is the same as the Administration's request. This Member created the Section 184 program in consultation with a range of Indian housing specialists. The Section 184 program appears to be an excellent new program which is providing privately financed homes through a Government guarantee program for Indian families who are otherwise unable to secure conventional financing due to the trust status of Indian reservation land. The above appropriations should support loan guarantees totaling approximately $72 million which should assist an estimated 20,000 families.

OFFICE OF RURAL HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Third, this Member would like to specifically commend the Subcommittee for eliminating duplicative efforts of the Federal Government in rural housing and economic development. Unlike FY2002 and FY2001, this bill does not fund the Office of Rural Housing and Economic Development within the Department of Housing and Urban Development for FY2002. In fact, this Member testified before the VA, HUD and Independent Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee in opposition to HUD's duplicative efforts in rural housing.

As a long-term advocate of rural housing during his tenure in the House, this Member believes that we need to be careful of duplication in the efforts of the Federal Government in rural housing and economic development. In the past, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) through their Rural Development offices has successfully implemented numerous rural housing and economic development programs. As a result, this Member disagrees with HUD's efforts to duplicate USDA Rural Development staff.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUND (CDBG)

Lastly, this Member would like to emphasize a concern about the VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies appropriations bill which in large part results from budgetary restraints. The Community Development Fund, which includes the CDBG program, is provided $4.8 billion, which is $255.6 million less than the fiscal year 2001 level. This reduction is of substantial concern to this Member. Indeed the CDBG program has been a model of local-Federal partnership.

The CDBG program not only is valuable to the larger entitlement cities, but it also gives assistance to those communities under 50,000 through state administering agencies. It is a Federal Government program with minimal overhead and bureaucracy. Moreover, CDBG has provided invaluable dollars to cities and rural communities for such things as affordable housing, public infrastructure, and economic development.

In conclusion, because of the necessity to fund important housing and community development programs, this Member would encourage his colleagues to support H.R. 2620, the VA, HUD and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I strongly support the VA-HUD appropriations bill.

This bill funds NASA and keeps our nation's leadership in human space exploration on track.

I am particularly pleased that the bill increases funding for the space station so that a crew return vehicle can be built. This critical component will enhance on-orbit research activities by allowing for a crew of six astronauts.

Also, I support the funds provided for the space shuttle program. Despite a flat budget, the shuttle program is more efficient and safer than ever.

The Shuttle program is critical to our nation's exploration and discovery of space. Since the shuttle will have to fly until at least 2012 to meet our nation's human space flight goals, we must ensure that the program is properly funded to include necessary vehicle upgrades and ensure that we have the necessary infrastructure to support human space flight.

Earlier this year, the shuttle program celebrated its 20th anniversary and its 100th flight. We must ensure that the shuttle remains a safe and reliable vehicle in space for the next decade and beyond.

This bill takes us in that direction.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I want to commend the chairman and ranking minority member of the VA/HUD, and Independent Agencies Subcommittee, Mr. WALSH, the gentleman from New York, and Mr. MOLLOHAN, the gentleman from West Virginia, for producing a bill that will ensure that the National Science Foundation (NSF) stays at the forefront of innovation.

For fiscal year 2002, H.R. 2620 provides $4.8 billion in funding for NSF, an increase of 9.3 percent over the fiscal year 2001 appropriation. Specifically, the bill provides about $3.6 billion for research, $135 million for research equipment and construction, and $885 million for education and human resources.

NSF is the government's premier science agency. It supports cutting-edge research to answer fundamental questions within and across scientific disciplines. Often the potential for failure is as great as that for success. But by encouraging such risks, NSF has helped fuel new industries and jobs that have propelled economic prosperity and changed the way we live.

Maintaining the Nation's leadership in science will require keeping open the pipeline of new ideas and innovations that flow from fundamental research. Although the private sector provides most of the research funding, which is expected to top $180 billion this year, its spending focuses largely on applied research with a near-term payoff. The Federal Government, therefore, has a significant role to play in supporting the long-term research the private sector needs but has little incentive to pursue.

We also need to increase the pool of talented scientists in our universities and workforce. Today, over half the graduate students in science and math at American universities are foreign born, and we are becoming increasingly reliant on foreign workers to fill critical jobs. Further, it is estimated that by 2020, 60 percent of the jobs will require the skills only 22 percent of the workforce has today. We can and must do better.

NSF is the Federal Government's only agency dedicated to the support of education and fundamental research in all scientific disciplines from physics and math to anthropology and zoology. Today's NSF-led research in nanotechnology, advanced materials, biotechnology, and information technology are laying the groundwork for the technologies of the future, and in the process training the scientists, engineers, and technology entrepreneurs of tomorrow.

It is important that we continue to support NSF as part of a balanced federal research portfolio. Large science budgets at mission agencies like the National Institutes of Health, while welcome, are not enough.

As former NIH director Harold Varmus noted last year, breakthroughs in the biomedical field are increasingly dependent on breakthrough in other fields—computer science, chemistry, physics, and engineering—traditionally funded by NSF. Nowhere is this more evident than in the unraveling of the human genome, a remarkable achievement that could not have occurred without advances in computing and networking technologies funded by NSF and other agencies. This bill helps restore some balance.

I do have some concerns, however, about NSF's management of large scientific construction projects, and I will be offering an amendment to the bill that I hope will help NSF get the expertise it needs to oversee these large projects. I believe that the addition of some experienced federal project management professional would improve the institutional memory and accountability within NSF, and I look forward to working with Chairman Walsh to see that NSF gets the expertise it needs.

Mr. Chairman, during its first 50 years, NSF-supported research has improved our lives in countless ways. By further investing in basic research today, we can ensure that over the next 50 years our kids and grandkids will profit from the innovations of tomorrow.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I want to express my strong support for the House version of the VA–HUD appropriations bill, and would especially like to associate myself with the comments of Mr. DREIER and Mr. SCHIFF relating to NASA. The importance of this legislation should not be underestimated. NASA and NSF are critical investments in the science and research that drive technology and our economy.

I am concerned about the Senate's action on the Solar System Exploration program. As my colleagues have already stated, the cuts and managerial changes proposed by the Senate would be devastating to the exploration of our solar system, as well as to the men and women who have dedicated their professional lives to extending our reach into deep space.

The Senate proposes to cut $50 million from the Mars Surveyor program. The exploration of Mars is an essential element of NASA's exploration program. Because of the nature of Mars' orbit around the Sun, we can only launch missions to Mars every two years. The reduction proposed by the Senate would force NASA to choose between taking unnecessary risks to meet the current launch schedule or delaying the mission another two years. Both of these results would increase the ultimate costs of going to Mars while limiting the ability of NASA to accomplish its mission.

Similarly, the proposed transfer of the telecommunications and mission operations directorate to an industry vendor would impede rather than enhance our ability to explore the solar system. My colleague, Mr. DREIER, discussed the impact on mission operations, I would like to discuss the impact on the communications program.

It takes great skill and sophisticated equipment to communicate with a tiny spacecraft billions of miles from Earth. Despite what Hollywood might lead you to believe, it is not as simple as just phoning home. To appreciate the complexity faced by NASA, the two Voyager spacecraft, launched in the 1970s are still flying and still sending back data, but they are literally billions of miles away and transmitting a signal that is so weak, that the signal is almost undetectable. In fact, your wristwatch operates on 20 billion times more energy. However, eliminating the highly-skilled staff which operates the Deep Space Network is tantamount to turning off the array.

Finally, despite the rhetoric about efficiency, there is nothing efficient about failure. Cutting

funding and eliminating expert personnel may look good on the books today, but it will end up costing the taxpayers their space program.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the provision on the VA HUD appropriations which grants access to veterans medical facilities for Filipino World War II veterans.

General Douglas MacArthur, referring to the defenders of Bataan and Corregidor, claimed that ''no army has ever done so much with so little.'' Many of us take this as words of commendation meant for American forces defending the Philippines. However, we must not overlook the fact that a substantial portion of this defense force was composed of Filipino volunteers.

Although they fought and died alongside American comrades, these veterans were never afforded equal status. Prior to mass discharges and disbanding of their unit in 1949, these veterans were paid only a third of what regular service members received at the time. Underpaid, having been denied benefits they were promised, and lacking proper recognition, General MacArthur's words, ''no army has ever done so much with so little,'' truly depict the plight of the remaining Filipino veterans today as they did half a century ago.

Access to veterans facilities would be of great benefit to these men and it could not come at a more opportune time. The past few years have seen the numbers of these men drastically decline. Now, mostly in their 80's and of declining health, the handful of these veterans now remaining more than ever need the benefits and recognition afforded the rest of their compatriots.

This provision is not the long awaited act that would restore benefits denied by Congress to Filipino veterans who fought under the American flag during World War II. However, it would go a long way towards recognizing the service and sacrifices of these men for the benefit of the United States. In the past, this country has considered Filipinos as ''little brown brothers.'' Let us take an extra step and go a long way towards recognizing them as equals by acknowledging their service. Our ''little brown brothers'' were full partners in the struggle against Japan. Let us work towards having them become full partners in the distribution of benefits. I urge my colleagues to support this provision.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Chairman, I want to highlight the bill's science funding.

Because this is the bill that funds six different agencies, funding requests for veterans and the homeless are pitted against science programs and space exploration. Unfortunately, this is an institutional reality the members of the Appropriations Committee face every year.

Given that reality Chairman WALSH and Ranking Member MOLLOHAN have succeeded in providing additional funding for science and technology.

The National Science Foundation and NASA have received a 9 percent increase in funding and 4.5 percent increase over current year funding respectively. While some Members and members of the scientific community wanted more—this bill is a good start to proper science funding. It is noteworthy that the committee has funded more than $200 million to educate K–12 students and their teachers in math, science and technology education.

The Congress is doing the heavy lifting that the President failed to do in his budget blueprint. I am very concerned about the President's priorities when it comes to science.

It is interesting that the Bush administration has proposed to double funding (a 13.5 percent increase over current year funding) for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and it proposed a 1.3 percent increase for the National Science Foundation, 1.3 percent increase for NASA and reduced funding for the Department of Energy's Office of Science by less than 1 percent.

I do not often quote Former Speaker Newt Gingrich, but when it comes to science funding—he has it right. ''To double NIH without doubling the broad base of science means in the long run we will cripple the evolution of science, because NIH cannot, in the long run, progress beyond physics, chemistry, mathematics, etcetera.''

Recently E. Floyd Kvamme, the President's co-chairman of the Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, wrote that NSF and NASA will receive ''increases.'' ''In the case of NSF, its budget will grow 15 percent between 2000 and 2002,'' he said. That may be true. What he did not write was that that 13 percent of the increase occurred during the Clinton administration, according to the Congressional Research Service, with Bush requesting less than 2 percent under the rate of inflation.

The administration seems to be practicing fuzzy math to prop up its lack of leadership when it comes to Science and Technology.

We know that government support for science has a direct impact on innovation at universities and technology transfer in the private sector. As someone who represents Silicon Valley, my constituents and I know there is a direct link between competitiveness and innovation in science and technology.

Without adequate research and development funding by the federal government, we put our high technology companies and students at a competitive disadvantage.

The future is now. The U.S. has the opportunity to invest wisely in science and technology. Doing so keeps open the door to technological advancement. The door will slam shut without adequate research and development funding.

Earlier this year, the Senate adopted the Bond/Mikulski amendment to the budget resolution. This amendment increased current year funding to NSF by $674 million, to NASA by $518 million and to DOE's Office of Science by $469 million.

Though not included in the budget resolution conference report, I joined many of my colleagues in the House to support the science-funding goal of the Bond/Mikulski amendment as the appropriation process moves forward this year.

This bill already makes a start. Let's work with those who supported this effort in the other body earlier this year as this appropriations bill moves forward. With the support of my colleagues in the House, it is my hope that the final appropriations bill contains the science research and development increases that the Senate agreed to earlier this year.

Mr. HOBSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this bill and want to compliment my good friend and Chairman JIM WALSH for his hard work in crafting this very important appropriations bill. With this bill, the chairman and our committee worked hard to make sure that the medical needs of our veterans are met, and that their claims are processed in a timely fashion. It ensures that safe and affordable housing is provided for the low income, the elderly, and the disabled. It provides funding to make the water we drink cleaner and the air we breathe healthier. I am proud to serve on this committee which addresses these priority issues. In addition to the $1 billion increase for veterans medical care, I want to point out a few other highlights:

This bill provides the highest budget ever for the National Science Foundation at $4.8 billion. This is a 9 percent increase over last years level. Funding from NSF produces the in-depth research performed at almost every university across the country. Every single district benefits from this increase.

This bill also fully funds the renewal of all expiring section 8 housing assistance contracts, and provides 34,000 new Section 8 vouchers. These vouchers will be distributed to those most in need, and for the first time every, a portion will be designated for the disabled.

After almost a decade of being flat-lined, NASA is provided nearly $15 billion, including almost $7.6 billion for research and development. As the space station is now in successful orbit, I am pleased that this bill dedicates approximately $343 million to generate the unprecedented microgravity research the scientific community has been waiting for.

To address our environmental needs, this bill provides $1.2 billion for Clean Water State Revolving Funds, which provide grants to our communities to assist their efforts in building modern and adequate wastewater facilities.

This bill provides $2.25 billion for the Federal Emergency Management Agency to coordinate responses to our national disasters. I am especially pleased that $404.6 million is designed for FEMA's core activities to make sure that we are prepared to properly mitigate the disasters which might strike. I would like to recognize not only the FEMA officials who are all to often called to respond, but also the state and local emergency management teams who will benefit from this funding.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I want to congratulate you and the staff again this year for crafting a well-balanced bill.

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak on H.R. 220, providing appropriations to the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development and various independent agencies. While I have some concern about several provisions in the bill, the bill is technically consistent with the Budget Resolution and complies with the Budget Act.

H.R. 2620 provides $85.4 billion in budget authority and $88.1 billion in outlays for fiscal year 2002. The bill does not exceed the VA–HUD subcommittee's adjusted 302(b) allocation. Accordingly, the bill complies with section 302(f) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, which prohibits measures that exceed the reporting subcommittee's 302(b) allocation.

This bill designates $1.3 billion in emergencies, which triggers an automatic increase in the corresponding levels in both the Budget Resolution and the statutory caps. The appropriation is for FEMA Disaster Relief Operations in response to the recent tropical storm in Houston, Texas.

It is not entirely clear that the designation is necessary because the Budget Resolution provides ample resources for emergencies. With this said, the emergency designation is clearly permitted under existing law.

H.R. 2620 also provides $4.2 billion in advanced appropriations for the Section 8 Housing Certificate Program, which will be counted against the levels established in next year's Budget Resolution. This advanced appropriation is on the list of permissible appropriations under section 201 of H. Con. Res. 84.

I am somewhat concerned about several purported ''offsets'' in this bill. The bill claims $7 million from the repeal of a provision that was already signed into law. It claims another $121 million in savings from a veterans-related provision that already passed the House. Obviously, these savings can only be used once.

As Chairman of the Budget Committee, I am obligated to report to the Congress on how the appropriations bills compare to the Budget Resolution. Under existing law, this bill is consistent with the Budget Resolution and does not violate the Budget Act.

Nevertheless, the existing process with respect to emergencies is broken and needs to be fixed. At the very least, both Congress and the President should set aside resources for emergencies and restrict the use of these resources for legitimate emergencies.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Chairman, as chairman of the House Science Committee I rise in strong support of the FY 2002 VA, HUD and Independent Agencies appropriations bill. My good friends Chairman WALSH, and Ranking Minority Member MOLLOHAN have put together a bill that is very good for science, good for the space program, good for education, and good for the environment. That's a winning combination, one that's good for America. I thank them for their leadership.

Chairman WALSH shares my belief that basic research provides the foundation for economic growth and for the tremendous advances we have made in areas like biomedical research. The appropriation for the National Science Foundation contained within this bill reflects these beliefs. And the committee is to be commended for the 9 percent increase that he provided for the Foundation.

The bill also contains funding for the National Mathematics and Science Partnerships Program that was proposed by President Bush and that is authorized by my bill—H.R. 1858—that was unanimously reported out of the Science Committee. This program will bring colleges and universities and school districts together to form partnerships to improve the quality of elementary and secondary math and science education. Funding is also included to enable elementary and secondary teachers to participate in research projects conducted at State, Federal, and university labs.

I want to particularly thank the committee for including funding for the Noyce Scholarship Program. Named for the co-founder of Intel, this program provides scholarships to talented mathematics, science, and engineering students in exchange for a commitment to teach two years for each year of scholarship. I look forward to working closely with Chairman WALSH to retain this funding as the bill goes to conference.

The chairman is also to be commended for a bill that protects and expands NASA's scientific programs in Science, Aeronautics, and Technology while striking the right balance for the space station.

This bill sends a clear signal that Congress is not going to bail NASA out for its management failures. It also makes clear that we're willing to work with the Administration to identify additional resources to improve station capabilities, if we see the right management reforms and performance improvements at NASA. With that in mind, requiring the White House Office of Management and Budget to certify that NASA is containing its costs before obligating additional funds makes a lot of sense. Moreover, we should require the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy to certify that those additional funds will benefit the research effort.

Through careful fiscal management, we can ensure that the space station benefits science in the long run. The bill sets us on that path.

I particularly appreciate the committee's commitment to new space technology and its effort to bridge the gap between NASA and the Air Force. By directing additional funding into the Air Force Research Lab, the bill encourages NASA and the Air Force to pool their efforts on technologies that will benefit both agencies and the American people. Space based radar technology, for example, is vital to our national security, but also has immense applications in Earth science. A development program that reduces the cost of synthetic aperture radar technology will benefit both.

Similarly, the bistatic radar technology developed at Rome Research site has immense potential for upgrading our national launch range tracking capabilities at a low cost. By demonstrating this technology, we may finally break the logjam that has undermined our space launch competitiveness.

Let me turn for a moment to the budget for the Environmental Protection Agency. I appreciate the efforts of Chairman WALSH and his colleagues to provide a responsible budget to help meet the nation's environmental needs. On the whole, the bill is good news for EPA.

Clearly, many of us would prefer to see higher funding levels for some of the agency's programs, but the gentleman from New York has done an admirable job of balancing competing needs and working within difficult fiscal constraints.

As chairman of the Science Committee, I am particularly pleased the bill increases funding for the Science and Technology account from $640 million in the budget request to $680 million.

As a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the Congressional Water Infrastructure Caucus, I am pleased the bill rejects the proposed cut to the Clean Water State Revolving Fund but am disappointed it doesn't provide at least $1.35 billion for the program. I appreciate the constraints facing the chairman but would encourage the committee to find a way to fund some of the important, water infrastructure and ecosystem restoration programs, such as the new sewer overflow control grants program and the reauthorized Clean Lakes program. I hope there are opportunities down the road to target assistance for such efforts.

I would also continue to note my concern with the Superfund program. The bill provides $1.27 billion. The appropriators are doing their best under the circumstances. Congress needs to change the circumstances; comprehensive reform and, at a minimum, a reauthorization of the corporate environmental income tax—twelve one hundreds of a per cent (which expired on December 31, 1995) should be the next course of action.

Mr. Chairman, this is a good bill for science, a good bill for the space program, and a good will for the environment. It aptly illustrates the tremendous leadership provided by my friend from New York, Chairman WALSH, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. The Committee will rise informally.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY) assumed the Chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

The Committee resumed its sitting.

The CHAIRMAN. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule. The amendment printed in House Report 107–164 may be offered only by a Member designated in the report and only at the appropriate point in the reading of the bill, shall be considered read, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chair may accord priority in recognition to a Member offering an amendment that he has printed in the designated place in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Those amendments will be considered read.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2620

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the Departments of Veteran Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I—DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION

COMPENSATION AND PENSIONS

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For the payment of compensation benefits to or on behalf of veterans and a pilot program for disability examinations as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. 107, chapters 11, 13, 18, 51, 53, 55, and 61); pension benefits to or on behalf of veterans as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. chapters 15, 51, 53, 55, and 61; 92 Stat. 2508); and burial benefits, emergency and other officers' retirement pay, adjusted-service credits and certificates, payment of premiums due on commercial life insurance policies guaranteed under the provisions of article IV of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1940 (50 U.S.C. App. 540 et seq.)