reflects all of these ideas.

greatfully we could not pass a clean bill that judge to decide a case fairly and justly. It's re-
civil liberties, and mandatory sentencing
signed to keep child abductors off the street,
added to such an important piece of legis-
tences for certain crimes. It is unfortunate that
suspects, and establishing mandatory life sen-
easier to authorize wiretaps against criminal
an expansion of the death penalty, making it
appropriate measures to ensure the protection of
child abductors that their actions will not go
work Plan. I believe it is important that the fed-
missing child through the AMBER Alert Net-
April 3, 2003

funding by $2.5 billion to Homeland Security
Committee offered an amendment to increase
first responders must not be overlooked as we

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker,
I rise in opposition to this rule. The rule waives
all points of order against the Majority's bill,
while denying Democrats the opportunity to offer
amendments.

Yesterday, during the meeting of the Rules
Committee, my Democratic colleagues offered
toughtful amendments ranging from increas-
ging funds for the U.S. Army Corps of Engi-
ners to adding $1.7 billion for health care,
education, and infrastructure in the United
States; yet none of my Democratic colleagues
were granted waivers. I offered five amend-
ments addressing our homeland security
needs and mental health services. None of
these amendments were granted waivers.

I believe that our domestic priorities and our
first responders must not be overlooked as we
consider this supplemental appropriations bill.
The Ranking Member of the Appropriations
Committee offered an amendment to increase
funding by $2.5 billion to Homeland Security
programs. This was not accepted for a waiver.

These increases would have provided an
additional $197 million to protect military facili-
ties: $241 million for nuclear security (nuclear
cargo detection, nuclear detection equipment,
security nuclear materials abroad and in the
U.S.); $722 million for port and infrastructure
security (Coast Guard personnel, port security
grants, dam and bridge security, water and
chemical plant security, rail tunnel security);
and $1.2 billion for state and local first re-
ponders (state and local civil defense teams,
firefighter grants, state and local biotechnical response, military
guard and reserves).

The Obey amendment, which I support, pro-
vides critical funding to Homeland Security
programs. Under Article I, section 7, of the
U.S. Constitution, Congress has the power of
the purse. We have an obligation to have an
open and democratic debate on this supple-
mental.

With the United States now at war to disarm
Saddam Hussein, some Republicans continue
to question the patriotism of anyone who has
the audacity to challenge the Bush administra-
tion's foreign policy. All of us pray for a quick,
successful conclusion to this war and for our
troops' safe return.

However, it is our duty as members of this
august body of Congress to consider fully any
funding that involves our military forces and
funding that could help our domestic priorities.

With the Republicans denying essential de-
bate on this bill, we will not have full consider-
ation of the supplemental, and this is an
abomination on what should be a fair and open
process.

This is a process far from what our Found-
ing Fathers envisioned when granting Con-
gress spending authority. I regret that we can-
not have a serious Open Rule process and
waivers for amendments that address this na-
ton's needs.

It is past time to change this misleading and
unfair law. We must provide equity to the sur-
viving spouses of our military retirees. My bill
would fix this problem by eliminating the cal-
lous and absurd reduction in benefits and give
what is expected and what is deserved: 55
percent of the military retired pay. To put it
simply, no offset. A simple solution to a dif-
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And a second—

While my husband was alive, we worked
out a budget for me in case he died. I felt se-
cure in the knowledge that he had provided
for me by joining the Survivors Benefits
Plan. I could not believe it when I learned
that I was not going to get the amount we
were promised. I cannot believe that our gov-
ernment would do this to the widow of a vet-
eran.

It is past time to change this misleading and
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viving spouses of our military retirees. My bill
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lous and absurd reduction in benefits and give
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simply, no offset. A simple solution to a dif-
ficult problem, as equitable solution to a
mean-spirited practice.

Colleagues, please join me in co-sponsoring
H.R. 1592, the Military Survivors' Equity Act.
Let us do this for our veterans and for their
surviving spouses. Let us stop the pain and
anguish that we are causing them.