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Currently the program is scheduled to expire as of September 30, 2009.

In 1992, the Congress granted eligibility for VA home loans to persons who served in the Selected Reserve, including the National Guard. This benefit is a useful recruiting and retention tool. Mr. Speaker, this legislation would also equalize the fees charged to members of the Selected Reserve and active-duty veterans for VA home loans. Currently, qualifying members of the Selected Reserve are charged a higher funding fee than other veterans. According to VA, members of the Selected Reserve have a lower foreclosure rate than other loan guarantee beneficiaries. This higher rate is not justified.

Mr. Speaker, in recent years our Guard and Reserves have been increasingly called upon to participate on active duty for lengthy periods of time. As the recent military actions in Afghanistan and Iraq clearly demonstrate, the Selected Reserve is an integral part of America's total force. Clearly, reservists have earned the right to receive equal lower fees with other veterans.

I am proud to be an original cosponsor of H.R. 1257. This legislation will assist the many members of the Guard and Reserves living in my home State of Maine. I fully support H.R. 1257 and urge my colleagues to pass this measure.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Veterans Affairs.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend for yielding time. I will not take the 5 minutes because this bill has been very adequately explained by my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), and, of course, the author of the bill, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), our ranking member and a very close partner on all veterans issues. I want to commend him for this legislation. At a time when there is some partisanship when it comes to veterans issues, as I just made very clear at a press briefing that we had, the gentleman from Illinois and several members of the committee have always gone out of their way to keep the committee as non-partisan as humanly possible. We do work in a very cooperative way. The bill under consideration really builds on the whole total-force concept that whether you be Selected Reserve or active Army or active military, we should not permit any distinction when it comes to home loan fees. This is a very important piece of legislation. I am very proud to be supporting it. I congratulate the gentleman from Illinois on his authorship of this fine bill.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1257, the "Selected Reserve Home Loan Equity Act."

H.R. 1257 amends Title 38 of the United States Code, "to make permanent the author-

ity for qualifying members of the Selected Reserve to have access to home loans guaranteed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and to provide for uniformity in fees charged qualifying members of the Selected Reserve and active duty veterans for such home loans."

I support H.R. 1257 because it is a way for this body to thank our Select Reservists the same way we thank the brave veteran men and women who have served their country so valiantly. The Department of Veterans Affairs provides our active and inactive military personnel with various services and benefits. One of the benefits provided is guaranteed home loans at reasonable fees.

Presently, members of the Selected Reserves are eligible for Department of Veterans Affairs loans. However, the current program is scheduled to expire at the end of fiscal year 2009. Moreover, Selected Reservists pay a higher fee on guaranteed home loans than do active duty veterans. H.R. 1257 grants Selected Reservists permanent access to guaranteed home loans just as like veterans. Selected Reservist will also be eligible for the same fee structure as veterans.

Our Selected Reservists are an important part of our exemplary military, and are integral to protecting our homeland and bringing peace throughout the world. Providing our military personnel, including members of the Selected Reserve with access to economically beneficial programs like guaranteed loans is one small way to thank them for their service.

Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 1257, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the Selected Reserve Home Loan Equity Act.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TERRY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1257.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1257.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1904, HEALTHY FORESTS RESTORATION ACT OF 2003

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 239 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 239

*Resolved*, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 1904) to improve the capacity of the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior to plan and conduct hazardous fuels reduction projects on National Forest System lands and Bureau of Land Management lands aimed at protecting communities, watersheds, and certain other at-risks lands from catastrophic wildfire, to enhance efforts to protect watersheds and address threats to forest and rangeland health, including catastrophic wildfire, across the landscape, and for other purposes. The bill shall be considered as read for amendment. The amendment printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate on the bill, as amended, with 30 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Agriculture, 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Resources, and 10 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary; (2) the further amendment printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules, if offered by Representative George Miller of California or his designee, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, and shall be separately debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent; and (3) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to my namesake, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

(Mr. HASTINGS of Washington asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 239 provides for the consideration of H.R. 1904 under a modified closed rule. The rule provides 1 hour of general debate in the House with 30 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Agriculture, 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Resources,