

to the Armed Forces Medical Intelligence Center (AFMIC).

Detrick is also home to U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Disease (USAMRIID). These state of the art laboratories are continuing to develop vaccines and treatments to defend against offensive bio-weapons. USAMRIID also has a large staff dedicated to finding cures for cancer.

I am proud that the United States has dedicated a military base to these problems and I am proud it is in the my home state of Maryland. It is imperative in this day of terrorism to be prepared for the new chemical and biological weapons. Today I am happy to honor the 60 years of research that Detrick has provided for the National Security of this Nation.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SESSIONS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BARTLETT) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 271, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The title of the concurrent resolution was amended so as to read: "Concurrent resolution congratulating Fort Detrick, Maryland, on 60 years of service to the Nation."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 2691, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004

Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 2691), making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, and for other purposes, with a Senate amendment thereto, disagree to the Senate amendment, and agree to the conference asked by the Senate.

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

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT OFFERED BY MR. DICKS

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct conferees.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. DICKS moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 2691 be instructed to provide an additional \$400,000,000 of emergency funding for fiscal year 2003 forest fire suppression costs.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XXII, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. TAYLOR) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS).

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

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

This motion would instruct the conferees to agree to the additional \$400 million of emergency firefighting funds in the Senate version of the fiscal year 2004 interior appropriations. These funds are desperately needed to repay the Department of the Interior and the Forest Service accounts that have been emptied to fight forest fires during the current fiscal year. We need this additional money. In fact, the agencies estimate that we need \$171 million more than was provided by the Senate.

The decision of Chairman BURNS in the Senate to add an additional \$400 million was in response to new agency estimates that show a shortfall of \$860 million for fire. While the other body's amount does not fully address the problem, it would go a long way towards repaying the construction and land acquisition accounts of these agencies that have been pillaged, all because the administration did not request enough to fight fires.

My colleagues from the West understand this problem all too well, but I hope everyone is aware that other areas beyond the West face similar fire risks from record low rainfall. The National Fire Center reports that as of today, more than 3.1 million acres have burned. Nineteen large fires are still burning, affecting more than 350,000 acres.

The Forest Service and the BLM have already spent the money; they had no choice. But unlike other agencies, FEMA, for example, that get reimbursed, the Forest Service and BLM are forced to cancel construction projects, land acquisition, reforestation programs in our national forests, endangered species work, processing of grazing fees, and many other activities. These agencies simply cannot function and cannot do the work Congress directs them to do if year after year their accounts are drained for fires that we already know will occur, and if Congress does not reimburse these accounts.

In 2002, the Forest Service and BLM spent nearly \$1.2 billion fighting fires. The administration requested repayment of \$825 million, leaving \$334 million still owed to the Forest Service and the BLM. This borrowing is over the amounts that Congress had previously appropriated. This cannot happen again and again. These cuts have real impacts and, in some cases, only compound the problems we have in our forests if the agencies do not have the money to do the thinnings and fuel-load reduction work that is necessary to avoid fire risk in the first place.

We all know this money is needed and that it is needed now. The conference should agree to the additional \$400 million added by the Senate. I urge a "yes" vote on this motion.

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

Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I sympathize with the comments of my good friend, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS). We have had a hard fire season this year. We just passed \$289 million, the President just signed it yesterday, so we have added that amount in. We are working with the administration on the new amount, and I have no objection to the recommendation the gentleman has to the committee.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS).

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

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

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. DICKS. So when this comes back up, I have to be here to ask for a recorded vote?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. At that point the Chair will put the question de novo.

Mr. DICKS. I thank the Chair.

□ 1230

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SESSIONS). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for 10 minutes.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 32 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess for 10 minutes.

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore at 12 o'clock and 41 minutes p.m.