

military compensation generally results in more countable income for SSI purposes than comparable wages earned by a civilian. Accordingly, a child or spouse of a service member could be ineligible for SSI while the child or spouse of a civilian worker could be eligible for SSI based on comparable gross wages.

The problem is particularly acute when a member of the National Guard or Reserves is called to active duty and begins to receive full military pay, including special pay and allowances. In some cases, the military pay alone is sufficient to cause a reduction of SSI benefits or a loss of eligibility for the disabled dependent. This means that at the critical point when the service member is called away from his or her family in the service of our country, SSI benefits may be reduced or stopped.

In consideration of the special hardships facing military families in a time of war and to provide more financial security for these families, I have offered an amendment that proposes a statutory exclusion for all types of special pay and allowances received by service members serving on active duty regardless of duty station. At a time when military service members and their families are making such a huge sacrifice for our country, it is vital that this step be taken to protect SSI eligibility for these families.

Under this proposed statutory change, only basic pay, earned income, would be used to determine SSI eligibility for a disabled child or spouse of the service member. All compensation provided by special pay and allowances, including the basic allowance for housing, BAH, would be excluded. Excluding all special pay and allowances would eliminate the disadvantageous income counting that results from treating a substantial portion of military compensation as unearned income.

Mr. STEVENS. I agree with the Senator from Nebraska. The provisions of the Social Security Act need to be addressed in order to ensure Supplemental Security Income eligibility and benefits are not inadvertently taken away from those in the armed services when they need them most.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, for the information of Senators, we will resume consideration of this bill tomorrow following the opening of the Senate at 9:30 a.m. as soon as possible. It will be my intention to ask that any votes that are to be taken on this bill be stacked until approximately noon or 12:30 in order that the committees may meet in the morning. There has been a specific request for that to happen. It is my understanding that there will be a request later that the time consumed for cloture be consumed during the period of temporary recess this evening on into tomorrow morning; is that the understanding?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That unanimous consent request has not yet been propounded or agreed to.

Mr. STEVENS. I am assured that will be the case.

NOTICE OF INTENT

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, in accordance with rule V of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby give notice in writing that it is my intention to move to suspend paragraph 4 of rule XVI for the purpose of proposing to the bill, H.R. 2863, a bill making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes: amendment No. 2040.

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of Tuesday, October 4, 2005 under "Text of Amendments.")

CROWS

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I wish to bring up an important subject involving our soldiers in harm's way. In my State of Colorado and across the country, our fighting men and women have suffered casualties while on patrol in armored vehicles. Typically, the gunner sitting on top of the vehicle is at more risk from being hit both because he or she is visible to the enemy and because he or she is not as protected as those troops inside the armored vehicle.

I recently received an e-mail from a Colorado soldier serving in Iraq. This brave young man wrote me concerning the combat death of his friend. His friend was riding in the gunner's seat when his Humvee was subjected to an improvised explosive device attack. He feels that his friend might still be alive if that Humvee had a Common Remotely Operated Weapons Station—CROWS—and he wanted me to know about it and see if anyone here in Washington could do something about it.

I think we can do something about it, and with the help of my colleagues from Hawaii and Alaska, we will do something about it.

The CROWS can be mounted on a variety of vehicles, including Humvees. It allows the operator to acquire and engage targets while protected inside the armored vehicle from enemy fire and IED attacks. It works with a variety of machine guns. The sensor suite allows both day and night time operation.

This appropriations bill, as it stands now, allocates \$75 million out of the emergency supplemental for the military to purchase CROWS. The House Defense appropriations bill provides no funding for CROWS, which is disheartening. The DOD's program manager has advised me that the Pentagon supports spending \$206 million for the CROWS system over the next year.

My goal is for the military to be able to purchase thousands of these systems, but at the moment our production capability is only on the order of 10 systems per month. We have to do better. I ask my colleagues, the chairman and ranking member of the Defense Subcommittee on Appropriations, for their leadership and assistance in sustaining the Senate's position when they get to conference on this matter with the House.

Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, like all proud Americans, I share my colleague's concern for the safety and well being of our troops. IED attacks are a very real threat to our troops and it is our responsibility as Members of Congress to help protect our brave men and women fighting overseas. I will work in conference to ensure that we can maintain the Senate's funding level to purchase CROWS for our troops.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues from Colorado and Hawaii for their work on this issue. They are right. We will continue to support these systems that provide our service members with the force protection they need.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I thank the chairman and the ranking member for their leadership on this issue—and for their careers of service to and sacrifice for this country.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak therein.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RETIREMENT OF SENATE FINANCIAL CLERK, TIM WINEMAN

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I have often spoken of the importance of the Senate staff and the Senate's various support services for the effective workings of this great institution. These are the people and the offices that are rarely mentioned in the newspapers or the history books but who are essential to the effective workings of this institution. They are the people and the offices who make the jobs of the 100 Members of this Chamber more pleasant and more productive.

I cannot even imagine how this institution could function without the Senate Disbursing Office. In addition to serving as the finance office of the Senate, this office maintains our retirement, health insurance, life insurance, and other human resource programs. For the past 7 years, this most important Senate office has been headed by the Senate's highly capable Financial Officer, Mr. Tim Wineman.

Unfortunately, Mr. Wineman will soon be leaving us. He is retiring on October 14. Therefore, I want to take a few minutes of the Senate's time to thank Mr. Wineman for his service, to express my appreciation for his outstanding work, and to say that we will miss him.

Mr. Wineman was born and raised in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area, graduating from Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School. On October 19, 1970, he started work as a payroll clerk in the Senate Disbursing Office; he remained in this office for the next 35 years. In September, 1976, Mr.