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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

In the prophetic vineyard of Isaiah, You God Almighty, are recognized as the vine grower. Your people are the treasured vineyard which is cared for by the vine dressers. As believers and servants of Your people, the Members of Congress, viewed as the vine dressers, turn to You, Lord, in prayer. You must bless their work for You alone can produce lasting results in the roots and all the branches.

Only a healthy and prosperous vineyard will provide good wine for the tables of life in America. Yet, so much depends on climatic incidents, the soil, the water, the sunlight, as well as the human labor of distinguished pruning and attentive care.

Lord of the vineyard, help Congress to seize the right moments and make the right decisions. Especially during difficult times do the vine dressers need to cultivate together and be discerning. Only by mutual trust and conversation can there be a structured response focused not only on the long hanging produce or just on some of the branches, but concern for the whole vineyard.

For the entire vineyard, beginning with the grafted vine from the foreign soil to the very best vintage, Lord, belongs to You, now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. GARY G. MILLER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to five 1-minute speeches on each side.

HURRICANE VICTIM IS HURRICANE VILLAIN

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, she lost her house, she lost her way of life, and she lost her innocence. She had fled Katrina. She fled to Texas. But also fleeing with the good were the bad, and then the ugly happened.

Matthew Lindsey, registered sex offender from Louisiana, fled to Texas. He got that free FEMA money and those free FEMA hotel rooms. But FEMA would not let Texas lawmen see their database and cross-check for criminals like Lindsey. It was private, they said.

So it was then while baby-sitting 12 kids at a shelter he molested this 8-year-old girl. Now one little girl has emotional scars that will forever be with her.

Lindsey was one of 146 sex perverts that took the name "hurricane victim" and became that hurricane villain.

Congress must stop this nonsense and make FEMA quit protecting the lawless. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and the Fraternal Order of Police supports such legislation. We cannot stop hurricanes; we can stop sex offenders. We can force FEMA to help the lawmen find the outlaws and thereby save the innocent.

And that's just the way it is.

IGNORING FISCAL CRISIS

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House we started the appropriations process, and that continues today, but the problem is that the Republican leadership and the President continue to ignore the fiscal crisis that they have created here in the Congress and across the country.

As you know, we passed a budget this week, but at the same time the debt continues to rise and so much of the money actually being spent is going towards the war in Iraq which is not really being addressed. In fact, many times, the budget simply masks that because it does not include the funding and the cost of the war in the budget itself.

So what I say today, rather than just focus on the appropriation bills and the different items back and forth, the Republican Congress should look at the overall picture. They just passed another tax cut bill, with tax cuts primarily going to large corporations, special interests, wealthy individuals, not the average American; and they continue to increase the debt.

Spending is also out of control, and they are not doing anything about it. Unfortunately, over the long term this leads to a fiscal crisis. We continue to go into debt. We don't have the money available to borrow for new production, and the Republicans need to address this fiscal crisis. They are not doing it, Mr. Speaker.

HOUSE PASSES REASONABLE BUDGET RESOLUTION

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week House Republicans voted to pass the fiscal year 2007 House budget resolution. I was pleased to support a reasonable budget that will fund our top priorities, continue our program policies, and increase accountability within Federal Government programs. I was especially pleased to see this budget will help cut the Federal deficit in half by 2009 without implementing any tax increases.

Yet, in keeping with their record of being the party of no, Democrats voted “no” on this budget. They voted “no” to even the smallest attempts on holding the line on spending, and they voted “no” to reforming outdated and ineffective government programs. You see, Democrats would rather just raise taxes on hardworking families.

Mr. Speaker, you can rest assured that House Republicans are going to continue to work to keep taxes low and maintain the pro-growth economic policies that have created 32 consecutive months of job growth. After all, if there is something we should all be saying “no” to, it is the Democrats’ tax and spend mentality.

REVEALING THE TRUTH

(Mr. EMANUEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, sometimes it takes a heated exchange to reveal the truth. People say things they would not normally say, or reflect their true thinking.

For instance, while debating the budget the other night, a member of the Republican leadership said, “If you earn \$40,000 a year and have a family of two, you don’t pay any taxes.” Well, that would be news to that middle-class family.

According to the Center of Budget and Policy Priorities, middle-class families paid an average of 13.6 percent of their income in Federal taxes in 2003. Additionally, these hardworking families pay State income taxes, property taxes, gasoline taxes, and sales taxes. If anything, middle-class families are paying too much in taxes.

But the truth serum clearly did not wear off, because the next day the same member of the Republican leadership sent out a press release titled “Fiscal Responsibility is Not an Option in This House.”

After 5 years of record budget deficits of \$3 trillion in new debt, for a total of \$9.6 trillion of debt, never were truer words spoken in that press release.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the truth about the Republican Congress has finally come out. Now the American people have a choice between leadership and the Republican Party that cuts taxes on the wealthy and leaves trillions of dollars of debt for the rest of us.

As Ronald Reagan once said, “Facts are a stubborn thing.” Mr. Speaker, it is time for a change. It is time for new priorities. It is time to give the people back their House.

HONORING CAMERON STAY

(Mr. PORTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a friend of mine, Cameron Stay, a friend from Henderson, Nevada. Cameron has been an inspiration for me. We had a chance to meet recently. He experienced a tragic motorcycle accident just a few months ago.

Cameron is a friend of Nevada and a friend of the country. He is a Green Valley High School graduate from Henderson, Nevada, in my district and has a college degree in criminal justice. He also was a firefighter with the BLM and with the Hotshots 777 group and worked for TAB Construction.

I mention Cameron today because he is an inspiration for me as a Member of Congress. As we look at issues ranging from world peace to education to health care to children and families, Cameron has been that inspiration for his courage, his enthusiasm, and his will to live a full life. He truly represents what this country is about; and today I would like to recognize Cameron and his mother, who is here today, Denise Olson and her husband, Stan, who are in the audience, and say thank you for sharing with us your son as an inspiration for us as Members of Congress.

SECURING OUR BORDERS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on Monday night, President Bush demonstrated his commitment to securing our country. By placing thousands of National Guard troops on our borders, he will help decrease illegal border crossings, stop drug trafficking, and prevent terrorism. As a veteran of the National Guard, I know our troops are well prepared to assist temporarily with this critical mission.

In December, the House of Representatives passed legislation to prevent illegal crossings by addressing the hiring of illegals and gaining control of our borders.

As the House and Senate now work to find a long-term solution to America’s immigration problem, House Republicans will continue to fight to ensure securing our borders remains the first priority. We will resist any frivolous lawsuits and protect American families.

In conclusion, God bless our troops and I will never forget September 11.

CONGRATULATING LESLI McCOLLUM GOOCH

(Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, occasionally we have an opportunity to come to the floor to celebrate something. Lesli McCollum Gooch has been my legislative director for over 3 years. She began her service on Capitol Hill in the fall of 1999 as a Congressional Fellow for Marge Roukema of New Jersey. At the conclusion of the fellowship, Lesli served as Representative Roukema’s legislative director until the congresswoman retired at the end of the 107th Congress.

Lesli has been working on her Ph.D. for 10 years. She began working as a Graduate Fellow at Carl Albert Congressional Research and Study Center at the University of Oklahoma. In 1998, Lesli joined the University of Oklahoma’s Institute of Public Affairs. She received a Master’s in political science from the University of Oklahoma in 1999.

Leslie defended her dissertation on April 10, 2006, and graduated with her Doctorate of Philosophy degree on May 12, 2006.

Mr. Speaker, I will not call her “Doctor,” but do as I do, call her “Fudd” when you see her.

0915

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5385, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 821 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 821

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5385) making appropriations for the military quality of life functions of the Department of Defense, military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. Points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI are waived except for title IV. During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment

has caused it to be printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 8 of rule XVIII. Amendments so printed shall be considered as read. When the committee rises and reports the bill back to the House with a recommendation that the bill do pass, the previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOOZMAN). The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI), 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. Speaker, H. Res. 821 is an open rule. It provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and the ranking minority member of the Appropriations Committee. It waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. Under the rules of the House, the bill shall be read for amendment by paragraph. This rule waives points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI prohibiting unauthorized appropriations or legislative provisions in an appropriation bill, except as specified in the resolution. It authorizes the Chair to accord priority and recognition to Members who have preprinted their amendments in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, and it provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 821 and the underlying bill, H.R. 5385, the Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2007.

First, I want to thank and recognize Chairman WALSH and Chairman LEWIS for all of the work they have put into this bill. The committee did a great job of staying within the framework of the President's budget request and ensuring the needs of our veterans, those currently serving and their families.

Mr. Speaker, the underlying bill totals \$136.1 billion, which is an increase of almost \$14 billion over last year's level, more than 10 percent. Of this \$136 billion, the bill provides \$41.4 billion in mandatory spending and \$94.7 billion in discretionary spending.

The bill provides \$77.9 billion for veterans' programs, marking approximately a 10 percent increase over the 2006 enacted level. Particularly important is the \$32.7 billion for veterans' medical services, 11 percent more than the 2006 enacted level and \$38 million above the President's request.

Additionally, the committee followed the recommendations of various veterans groups to make sure more funds are provided to meet the needs of veterans returning from combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. I must also empha-

size to the veterans back home in the 11th Congressional District of Georgia, northwest Georgia particularly, and all across this country, that this bill does not, I want to repeat, it does not contain any new fees for veterans' medical services or prescription drugs. It does, however, increase mandatory veterans' benefits by \$4.2 billion over the 2006 level.

So, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5385 also includes significant increases in funding to improve the lives of our veterans and their families. It provides an additional \$25 million to open a minimum of 10 new community based outpatient clinics and an additional \$20 million to make facility improvements to existing State veterans' homes.

Further, this bill increases basic medical research by \$13 million; and it includes an additional \$12 million to begin upgrades to VA medical research facilities nationwide.

In regards to military construction, this bill provides \$10.6 billion: \$5.6 billion for active duty construction, a billion dollars in construction for our reserve components, and \$4 billion for the construction of housing for our servicemembers and their families.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5385 provides \$21 billion, an increase of \$1 billion over current levels, to fund the health defense program allowing for the ongoing preparation of our brave soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines, while caring for their families back home.

Without question, we are again in a tough budget year; and while the underlying bill may not be perfect, it does ensure that scarce resources are allocated in the most effective, efficient and responsible manner possible.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to this debate. I encourage my colleagues to support the rule and the underlying bill.

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

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding me this time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. MATSUI asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks, and include extraneous material.)

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, the rule before us will allow the House to consider the fiscal year 2007 Military Quality of Life and Veterans Administration Appropriations bill. All Members know that the support in this bill for military housing, for veterans' health care, and for retiree benefits is part of the promise we made to the men and women when they joined our Armed Forces.

As we consider this bill, there should be little disagreement over the tremendous demands being placed on the Veterans Administration and on the military construction accounts.

In 1995, the VA treated 2.6 million veterans and their families. By the end of this year, that number will have

more than doubled to an estimated 5.4 million people. This places additional stress on the many hospitals and the VA network. These World War II-era buildings are badly in need of upgrades at the cost of billions over the next 5 to 10 years.

It was for this reason, increased strain in time of war, that the Democrats have consistently criticized the administration's less-than-adequate funding for veterans and veterans' health care.

Last year, the administration admitted to accounting errors which underestimated the demand for veterans' services by \$3 billion in fiscal years 2005 and 2006. It turned out that the administration had failed to account for the new veterans, those returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. After Democrats, the American Legion, the Disabled American Veterans and many other veterans organizations expressed outrage, steps were taken retroactively to address the shortfall.

With that backdrop, this year's appropriations bill does increase veterans' medical services by \$2.6 billion over last year's amount. Unfortunately, it does so by employing a budget gimmick.

This year's shortsighted budget did not provide full funding to meet this Nation's veterans' health care needs in a time of war. So the Military Quality of Life Appropriations Subcommittee was forced to boost money for veterans using money originally designated for military housing and then pay for military housing by declaring that money emergency funding.

In truth, it was no emergency. It was simply a shell game that ignored the principle of shared sacrifice upon which our Nation has relied in every other time of war, except this one. These budget gimmicks should come as no surprise. Even to the casual observer, this majority has shown disregard for budget matters. After all, 3 years into the Iraq War, the administration and this majority continue to fund it with "emergency spending."

We are using a credit card to pay for war and sending the bill to our children and our grandchildren. Nonetheless, it must be noted that the only reason this bill comes close to meeting the health needs of so many veterans is because of this gimmick. And the bill pays for construction of some housing for military families, but again only because of this gimmick. Many Members on both sides of the aisle are frustrated with this approach.

Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government cannot go back on our responsibility to support our troops, assist their families, and continue our commitment to the veterans. This responsibility is particularly important in a time of war. With troops fighting the war in Iraq, they should not be the only ones to make sacrifices; they must be shared by all Americans. No loopholes for a select few, no kicking

the can down the road for another generation to deal with by way of increasing the national debt.

In cities and towns across America, our constituents notice when Congress uses these gimmicks. My local paper, in fact, hit on this very theme of sacrifice in time of war earlier this week, and I include for the RECORD an editorial from the Sacramento Bee. Its title says it all: "Where's the Sacrifice." I could not agree more.

[From the SACRAMENTO BEE, MAY 16, 2006]

WHERE'S THE SACRIFICE?

The Republican majority in Congress wants to go into the November elections bragging that they've cut taxes again. The House and Senate just extended record-high Bush tax cuts until 2010. They call it a political victory.

Will the American people really buy this one-note chant again?

It represents the triumph of rigid ideology over practical reality.

At a time of war, these members of Congress are demanding sacrifice only of the young people fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. The tax cuts of 2001, 2002 and 2003 have given us record-high deficits and debt, driving this country into a financial mess political leaders are passing on to future generations.

The tax cutters rely on two fallacious arguments.

The first is the "starve the beast" idea. Tax cuts, the theory goes, will reduce government revenues and choke off government spending, making government smaller. Even conservative economists now reject that hypothesis. For example, economists William Niskanen and Peter Van Doren of the Cato Institute show convincingly that since 1981, for each one percentage point decline in tax revenues, federal spending increases by about one-half percent of GDP. Government spending grows because tax cuts make government look cheaper than it actually is, so people want more of it. A tax increase does a better job of reducing government because it forces people to pay for government services.

At least "starve the beast" proponents were honest in saying that tax cuts would reduce government revenues.

Today you have members of Congress actually saying the opposite: "Lower tax rates equal more federal revenue." The facts show otherwise. Bush tax cuts have contributed to revenues dropping in 2004 to the lowest level as a share of the U.S. economy since 1950. Where revenues typically have been 17 percent to 20 percent of the economy, in 2004 they were 16.3 percent, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

A CBO report, "Analyzing the Economic and Budgetary Effects of a 10 Percent Cut in Income Tax Rates," shows that a 10 percent cut in income tax rates lowers revenues by \$775 billion over 10 years.

So when tax cut proponents say that tax cuts benefit the Treasury, take it with a grain of salt.

The tax cut vote was a party line vote. Voters know whom to blame for the nation's financial mess come November.

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time and for his leadership on getting this rule together and also to Chairman DREIER and the members of the Rules Committee for their help and support.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bill that we can be very proud of. After all, we are a Nation at war, and the way we treat our veterans of past wars is a very clear signal to our current active duty people as to how they will be treated in the future. And the commitments we have made in the past are being met in this bill.

One of the key issues always in the Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill is veterans' medical care, the Veterans Health Administration. We have provided almost a 13 percent increase in veterans' medical care in this bill, a remarkable increase, although consistent with the last 6 or 7 years where we have dramatically ramped up funding.

No other budget within the Federal Government's entire purview has received the increases that the Veterans Health Administration has.

Clearly Congress, especially the House, establishes its priorities by the funds it provides, it allocates, it appropriates on the discretionary side of the budget. If that is any indication, our commitment to our Nation's veterans is the highest priority of the House of Representatives and indeed the Congress.

We have also provided additional resources for the benefits administration to make sure that we bring down the time frames that veterans are forced to wait until their benefits issues are resolved. We are working on reducing those delays.

We have also mandated that the Veterans Administration create a minimum of 10 new veterans' outreach clinics. This is part of the CARES Commission statement. People all over the country, veterans all over the country, are benefiting from these new veterans' clinics. The quality of health care has improved dramatically. We are getting to the veterans much sooner, and the process that they follow, they can be treated at the clinics or, if it is a more serious health issue, they can then be referred to the hospital.

□ 0930

But we are getting veterans into the system much sooner, and the view on the part of veterans and their service organizations is that this is a very important major improvement and breakthrough in veterans care. Additionally, we provided more money for mental health.

One of the real focuses of this subcommittee has been not only mental health, which it has been, but also the transition from active duty to veterans status. What we found is that because of the difficulties, very serious challenges to find a safe place for our soldiers in Afghanistan or in Iraq, many

of them are coming back with very serious mental health issues, post-traumatic stress disorder and other issues that have caused great stress on the soldier, sailor, airman, marine and their families, additionally, when they return.

One of the things that we will require is that all of our active duty people enter into a dialogue with our mental health professionals within the service while they are active in the field.

Currently, if a soldier has a concern about their mental health, or they are upset or they are depressed or they are anxious about things and they want to get some advice, they have to voluntarily go forward, step forward. People worry about a stigma. How does that affect my record in the future if I go and seek out help?

What we have stated, stipulated in this bill, is that every one of our active duty people will have, as part of their service, a regular routine of working with mental health professionals, psychiatrists, psychologists, counselors, so that there is no stigma, that everybody is in the mix. That way we think that our folks who are in very stressful situations, very dangerous situations, will be more at ease in how they go about getting this very important aspect of their health in order.

Additionally, this subcommittee is responsible for the defense health, TRICARE for Life, et cetera. While the increase is not as substantial as it is in veterans, it is a healthy increase. My view is that as we go forward into conference with the Senate, hopefully we will be able to add additional resources within the defense health portion of this budget to make sure that we are meeting needs.

Our subcommittee traveled last year to Europe. We visited Landstuhl hospital in Germany. It is truly remarkable the quality of care that our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines are receiving there.

In the field, the Medevac units, the quality of care in the combat zone is beyond description. It is that good. In the history of war, there has never been health care like we are providing today. We can be very proud of that. But we have to make sure that the resources are there, that they are allocated to make sure that those needs are met.

One last point, and that is on the military construction, we have a lot of money in this bill to roll out the 2005 BRAC. The Army, which is very dependent upon this, asked us to get as much money forward as we could, so we did. That was a priority for us, Army is going through transformation, they are going through BRAC. We have people moving from Europe to the U.S., from one place in Asia to another, from places in Asia back to the U.S., and it is all part of this process.

We want to make sure that they had the resources up front so that they could get this moving and meet the commitments that they have made,

not only to us, to the taxpayers, but to the troops.

As I said at the outset, Mr. Speaker, this is a bill that we can all be very, very proud of. It has been a bill that we have worked very closely on in a bipartisan way with my opposite number on the Democratic side, Mr. EDWARDS, we have collaborated well.

I would like to, just again, thank the Rules Committee for the rule.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS).

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I have had the privilege of representing over 40,000 soldiers from Texas who have fought for our country in Iraq. I have one of the larger veterans populations in America, and that is why I am grateful to have the privilege to work with Chairman WALSH in my position as ranking member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs.

I will talk about the substance of the bill that will be on the floor in a few moments after the rule debate is over. But let me just list four reasons why I oppose this particular rule to bring our bill to the floor.

First, as I understand this rule, it could possibly leave as much as a half a billion dollars in vital military construction programs during a time of war at risk to a technical point of order on this floor. This whole issue evolved late last night, so perhaps someone could clarify this.

I would urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, Republican and Democratic alike, to not use such a technical budget question to put at risk critical infrastructure that is needed to support our troops during a time of war; whether they are serving here at home, or they are in Iraq, Afghanistan or elsewhere.

I don't understand why the Rules Committee, which on a daily basis, bill after bill after bill, bills that are far less important than supporting our veterans or military troops, military construction and defense health care, that the Rules Committee waives technical points of order on a routine basis. I am not sure if my understanding is correct why they didn't do the same for something as important as half a billion dollars investment in military infrastructure.

The second reason I oppose this rule and urge my colleagues to vote against this rule is that the Obey amendment was not allowed. The Obey amendment would have protected that \$500 million of military construction funding by paying for it, following the pay-as-you-go principle, rather than putting it under emergency spending, which could allow Members of this House potentially to strike that crucial funding.

Secondly, I was disappointed the Rules Committee refused to protect my amendment that I intended to bring on this bill today, that would have brought defense health care spending back up to the level that President

Bush said is needed this year to maintain the quality of care for our troops and our retirees that Mr. WALSH referenced, and that we all should have a right to be proud of.

As a consequence of that Rules Committee decision, we could end up passing this bill today at a funding level that is \$735 million below administration's designation of what is needed to maintain military health care quality this year. That could be a tragedy to have any risk of reducing military health care services, especially during the time of war.

The next reason I oppose this rule is that Congressman FARR's amendment was not protected. It was an amendment that was going to add \$1.8 billion to veterans programs, important veterans programs. I will talk later in cooperation with Chairman WALSH about what I think is good in this bill for veterans and some of the increases for veterans health care spending, which he and I and members of the committee all supported.

But Mr. FARR wanted to go a step further and say we should not be freezing VA research, health research dollars. He wanted to say it is not right to say to a combat veteran who is making \$29,000 a year, that you weren't wounded in combat, you haven't earned the right to get VA health care in a VA hospital because you are too wealthy.

That is kind of ironic, because just earlier this week, the House voted to give Lee Raymond, the just retired ExxonMobil CEO who got a \$400 million retirement package, gave him a \$2 million dividend. Mr. FARR wanted to say if we can give Mr. Lee Raymond of ExxonMobil and all of his hundreds of millions of dollars of platinum parachute retirement programs, a \$2 million dividend tax cut, shouldn't we be able to say to veterans making \$30- or \$35,000 a year, you too have earned the right to get VA health care, along with other veterans?

Mr. FARR wanted to have an amendment that enforced the law that we passed on a bipartisan basis in the late 1990s that said the VA shouldn't reduce the number of beds for veterans nursing home care.

These amendments don't take away any good things from the amendment of the bill, which I will talk about during the bill's debate. But my objection is with the Rules Committee setting one standard for unimportant bills that will, for partisan reasons, and unimportant reasons, will waive technical points of order on bills coming to this floor and do it routinely.

Yet when we come to amendments intended to try to guarantee military construction during a time of war, intended to try to help more veterans get better health care and nursing home care, the Rules Committee, on a partisan basis, said, no, we are not going to allow Democrats to have those kinds of amendments offered and protected on the floor.

For all of those reasons, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this rule today.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, before yielding to my good friend from Texas, Judge CARTER, talking about concerns that he has, I want to make sure that all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle understand that the committee, for the first time ever, for the first time ever, used a veterans service organization's independent budget as a baseline for this fiscal 2007 funding, and essentially adopted the veterans' group recommendations to increase funds by 6.3 percent.

In regard to defense health, the defense health program is increased by \$1 billion over the last year. So the total funding of \$21 billion for defense health is the same as the budget request.

I want to also say, Mr. Speaker, that I had the distinct honor of traveling last summer with subcommittee chairman WALSH, as we visited some of our cemeteries in Europe, at Anzio and Normandy, our fallen soldiers in World War II and also Bella Woods, for the Marines that fell during World War I.

To see the compassion of Chairman WALSH and what he and our colleagues that served, that have the honor of serving on his committee, on both sides of the aisle, was a moving, moving experience for me. I know how important the work of this subcommittee is.

I commend Members on both sides of the aisle for their hard work in bringing this good budget. I wish we could do more, but I think the compassion is there on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to rise to say that one of the great blessings in my life that has been bestowed upon me is that I have been given a district now where we have almost 50,000 of the people who stand on the wall and defend our Nation, Fort Hood, Texas.

It has made me realize the real duty that we have to the American soldier, the American military personnel. Being on this subcommittee and being able to try to do what is good for these men and women who give their duty, honor, to our Nation every day, is a great blessing to me personally.

This bill that we have got here today is an honest attempt, within the resources, to do a great job for our military. I think, quite frankly, we have done a great job.

I would urge, and I listened to what Mr. EDWARDS had to say. Mr. EDWARDS and I worked together. He also is a very good friend of Fort Hood.

I would urge my colleagues, as they look at, as we proceed in this debate, that they, first and foremost, keep in mind that soldier, sailor, airman and marine, that stand on the wall every day and defend this Nation's freedom. As they look for technical challenges and other things that may occur, hopefully, will be corrected, that they will take that soldier's best interest in mind first.

This is, if there is a piece of legislation that goes to the Congress at any time, that thinks about the individual guy carrying a rifle, this is it.

□ 0945

If we can, we have to; and we must make sure they have the best health care, the best living facilities, the best facilities on post, the best equipment, the best that we can give them. I think we have done our very best to do that, and so I rise to speak on behalf of the American soldier and ask this House to keep the American soldier in mind in this debate.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas to respond to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, let me make two comments.

First, let me say I fully associate myself with the views expressed by my friend and colleague, the Representative of Fort Hood, Mr. CARTER. We all should consider our troops as the number one priority in whatever decisions are made today. That is far more important than any technical budget issue that can be brought up, especially during a time of war.

In terms of the gentleman from Georgia, he said that this budget provides the same amount of funding, in so many words, for defense health care as requested by the administration. I think if the gentleman will look more carefully into the budget request, what he will find is that, in addition to the appropriated funds, the administration had proposed an additional \$735 million in fees that I hope this Congress will clearly, vociferously oppose.

Our subcommittee certainly didn't endorse those fee increases. Those fee increases would put a 200 percent health insurance premium on men and women who have served our military for 20 and 30 years. But as a consequence of Congress not having made the decision and, in fact, the Armed Services Committee having passed a bill recently saying that we will not increase those fees, in effect, this bill will fund defense health care this year by \$735 million less than President Bush said was needed to maintain our quality health care system for our troops and for our military retirees.

That is why I had hoped the Rules Committee in all of its wisdom would have been willing to do what it does on a regular basis, to protect my \$735 million amendment to get defense health care spending back where President Bush says it needs to be, to protect my amendment from a technical budget point of order. Unfortunately, the Rules Committee chose to weigh in on the side of budget technicalities that it ignores on a regular basis and didn't weigh in on the side of protecting our present quality of defense health care for our troops.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Texas, the minority member of the subcommittee, I very much

respect. I very much respect the work that he has done.

I mentioned that trip last summer. Of course, Representative EDWARDS was a part of that. Representative CARTER, my good friend from Texas, was also a part of that trip when we visited those military cemeteries and looked at MILCON construction in Europe and the importance of all these things we do.

I agree with what the gentleman said in regard to the administration proposing to increase fees for our military retirees under age 65, certain categories of veterans in copays and deductibles, to be able to raise, I think he mentioned the figure of 700 and something million dollars. He was opposed to it, the subcommittee was opposed to it, the entire committee was opposed to it, and we rejected it as we did last year when the administration wanted to do that.

I commend him, and I commend the chairman and the entire committee for their work in regard to that. We are not really in any disagreement in regard to the points that he just made, and I commend him for his work.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, this morning, I am not even going to talk about the fact that on this side of the aisle we feel that this bill is short by at least \$1.8 billion in providing the kind of health and medical care that we think ought to be provided for our veterans.

But I want to talk about two other problems in the bill. Because this bill, first of all, continues the fiction that somehow it is likely, or desirable, that \$735 million in additional fees will be laid onto our retired military. I do not believe that that should happen, and I do not believe that will happen. And if it doesn't, then this bill has a \$735 million hole that it is going to have to fill.

Secondly, this bill has a very interesting budget gimmick that essentially allows this bill to come to the floor \$500 million above the budget resolution that was adopted just 2 nights ago by the Republican majority.

Here is what happened. The administration sent down in the military construction bill their request to move ahead with about 310 military infrastructure projects. What the committee did was to designate 20 of those projects, and there is nothing emergency about those projects, but they need to proceed. What the committee did was essentially to take 20 of those projects and simply label the expenditures for those projects as being emergency.

Why did they do that? Because it then made room in the bill for the committee to add projects of their own totaling \$507 million. So that is a \$507 million gimmick which allows this bill to come to the floor in reality \$507 mil-

lion above the Republican budget resolution.

As a result of the rule which is now being brought to the floor, there will be several choices that people will have to make. Members will now be free to strike the emergency designation for those projects. If they do, then the bill has to be taken off the floor because it exceeds the budget cap, unless the committee itself moves to simply take all of those projects out of the bill. As a result, if those projects are taken out of the bill, we then have a hole in the administration request. If they aren't taken out of the bill, then we, in effect, are \$507 million above the budget that the Republicans pledged their loyalty to just 2 days ago. And in addition to that, down the line you are still going to have to find \$735 million to make up for the fiction that there is some possibility in this place that those additional fees ought to be laid on our retired military.

I think this is another quaint example of the majority party fealty to their own budget resolution and we are forced to encounter these ridiculous budgetary gimmicks because the majority party refused to fix the problem. I offered an amendment in committee to try to fix the problem, at least to fix the problem of the \$507 million. I simply suggested that we support an amendment which would cut the size of the tax cut for people making a million dollars, and they are going to get a \$114,000 tax cut this year. We simply suggested that if you can cut the size of that \$114,000 tax cut by 1,400 bucks, you could pay on the square, without any gimmicks, for that \$507 million.

That is what we should have done. But the majority party thought that it was more important to deliver a \$114,000 tax cut to millionaires than it was to play straight with the budget process and to play straight with their own budget resolution and to play straight with the American people.

Very interesting. Very interesting.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers at this time, so I will reserve the balance of my time for the purpose of closing.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5½ minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate the gentlewoman's courtesy in permitting me to speak on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I, too, am sad that we don't have maximum flexibility under the way the rule is structured to speak to the needs of American veterans; and I will vote against it. But I hope that we can spend this time also focusing on some broader issues.

Luckily, there is a provision that will permit me to provide an amendment today to help with the cleanup of the vast toxic legacy that America faces in every State of the Union from unexploded munitions and military toxins, from training exercises, from old military depots, from having shells lobbed by generations of cadets at West

Point that have been in the Storm King Forest. Every State in the Union, over 3,000 sites, have been identified as areas that need cleanup.

I want to say I appreciate what Mr. WALSH, Mr. EDWARDS and Mr. FARR have done with this important military quality of life committee in starting to focus on this. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, the real problem is that Congress has been missing in action when it comes to cleaning up this toxic legacy.

I had a Member of this body yesterday tell me, well, we really don't need to put more money in it. He wasn't sure that it was worth it. Let's just have barbed wire around them, keep people out and save the money for things that are more important. This is a Member that I deeply respect but who betrayed a tragic lack of understanding of exactly the scope and magnitude of this problem and what would be the benefit of handling it properly.

I could tell this gentleman that there were dozens of cases where innocent civilians, in some cases children, have been killed because bombs have turned up in the back of a subdivision that people have just walked away from. Or the gentleman rototilling his yard in Five Points, Texas, rototilling up a bomb. Or three times since I have been in Congress we have had to pull firefighters out of forest fires because bombs were exploding, generated by the heat.

Now these are not things that we can simply walk away from. There are areas where munitions break down over time and the toxic leaks into the groundwater which creates a larger problem.

There is also the notion that there are 10 million, 20 million, 30 million acres or more, nobody knows exactly how much, polluted or potentially polluted that is not available for hunting and fishing, that is not available for redevelopment, for housing, for industrial use, to be put back on the tax rolls.

Ultimately, this is a responsibility that the Department of Defense and the Federal Government is going to have to assume. Putting up barbed wire and walking away doesn't solve the problem.

But one of the things that I would hope would focus attention by Members of this assembly is not just the long-term benefits, not just cleaning it up, not just returning it to productive use but think about who is at risk, because it is our soldiers, their families, the employees of these bases and their neighbors that are most at risk.

□ 1000

What is to be solved by kicking the can down the road and ignoring it?

Last, but by no means least, if we get the technology right that will enable us to find out whether it is a hubcap or a 105-millimeter shell that is buried under the ground, that just doesn't help us clean up these 3,000 sites in the United States. That same technology

would save the lives of our soldiers right now who are at risk every day in Iraq from roadside bombs, from land mines. That is how I lost my first constituent in Iraq, was a young man killed by a land mine.

By Congress continuing to be missing in action not taking a significant step to clean up this toxic explosive legacy, we are not just putting at risk the environment, we are not just putting at risk children who are playing in subdivisions or firefighters who will fight in the next forest fire where there are bombs and toxic legacy, they are putting at risk our soldiers, our men and women overseas who won't benefit from the techniques and the technology.

I appreciate what the subcommittee has done trying to train the attention. It is time for this body to step up and agitate to make their job a little harder and for our friends on the Appropriations Committee in Defense appropriations to invest in doing this right.

I oppose the rule. I look forward to bringing an amendment later in the debate to be able to at least put a little bit of money to deal with the problem in other parts of the United States now.

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

I thank the gentleman for his passion on this issue and the very clear presentation that he made. I want to remind him and my colleagues that I think we authorized an additional \$250 million in the Defense Authorization Bill of 2007 which we passed last week.

In regard to specifically, he mentioned about the technology that could be used for ferreting out improvised explosive devices, and he mentioned, of course, that the first soldier from his district was killed by one of those devices. And I know that Members on both sides of the aisle have certainly experienced that. This particular Member from the 11th of Georgia has experienced it as well. So it is an important issue, and it is clear that we are doing everything we can to try to defend against these cowardly attacks of improvised explosive devices.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to reserve the balance of my time for purposes of closing.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers. I understand the gentleman has no additional speakers.

Mr. GINGREY. I have no additional speakers.

Ms. MATSUI. Then I will proceed to my closing.

Mr. Speaker, I will be asking Members for a "no" vote on the previous question. If the previous question is defeated, I will amend the rule so we can consider three important amendments that were not included in this rule. These amendments will help fix the funding shortfalls in this bill.

I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of these amendments and extraneous materials immediately prior to the vote.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. MATSUI. The first amendment by Ranking Member OBEY would pay for the \$507 million cost for 20 routine military construction projects instead of designating them as "emergency spending" so that the funding would not count against the bill's allocation.

The Obey amendment pays for the 20 projects by reducing the tax cuts for people making more than \$1 million a year by \$1,400 or 1 percent.

The second amendment by subcommittee Ranking Member EDWARDS provides the \$735 million needed to fully fund the Defense Health Program throughout the next year. The cost of the amendment is offset by reducing by 2 percent the tax cut for those making over \$1 million annually.

The third amendment by Representative FARR, would increase veterans health care by \$1.82 billion and pay for it by reducing the average tax cut for those with incomes above \$1 million a year by about \$5,000, leaving them with \$109,025.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments together will help us meet the obligations we have to the members of our military, our veterans and their families. This Nation made a promise to those serving in the military that they would receive quality health care in return for their valiant service to this country, and now that wounded soldiers are returning to their homes, they deserve the best medical treatment and care available.

We can fix this today if we allow these amendments to be considered on the floor. But the only way that will happen is if we defeat the previous question.

I want to assure my colleagues that a "no" vote will not prevent us from considering the Military Quality of Life Veterans Appropriations bill under an open rule. But a "no" vote will allow us to vote on these important amendments.

Vote "no" on the previous question.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I would again like to thank Subcommittee Chairman WALSH, ranking minority member EDWARDS, and Chairman LEWIS for leading the committee in the production and shepherding of this bill.

We can never do enough for our veterans. I think we all want to, but understand that this bill represents a victory for our serviceman and women in all stages of service, from recruitment to retirement.

I encourage my colleagues to support this rule and underlying bill. And so I rise, again, in support of the rule, and as I say, in support of the underlying bill in recognition of its importance to the men and women who have and will continue to serve and protect America. Our servicemen and women put their lives on the line each and every day and we have a responsibility to support

them in any and every way possible as they make these significant sacrifices for the safety and security of this great Nation. We must provide them with everything that they need, not only to succeed in their military duty, but also to enjoy the quality of life that they and their families so much deserve.

Again, Mr. Speaker, with spending totaling \$94.7 billion, this bill includes significant increases to the veterans medical care and benefits, military construction and the Defense Health Care Program. I encourage, then, my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support both this rule and the underlying bill for the sake of those who spend their lives defending ours.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I could not be present today because of a family medical emergency and I would like to submit this statement for the RECORD in opposition to the previous question and H. Res. 821, the rule providing for consideration of the FY2007 Military Quality of Life appropriations bill (H.R. 5385).

The Veterans' Administration has treated more than 144,000 returning veterans from Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, and nearly 30,000 veterans are waiting in line for their first appointment—nearly double the number last year. However, funding for veterans and military retiree health care has barely kept pace with the increasing demand. As a result our young men and women will return home from Iraq and Afghanistan to a health care system that is struggling to take care of current veterans—let alone new ones.

While the bill before us today is certainly an improvement over last year's bill, it still underfunds critical programs and services that our veterans and military retirees rely on. For instance, even as the Defense Authorization Bill (H.R. 5122) we passed last week rightfully rejected the President's plan to increase fees for military retirees, this bill still falls \$735 million short of the level needed to ensure that military retirees do not face having their TRICARE fees doubled or tripled. In addition, this bill uses a budgeting gimmick to designate \$507 million for 20 military construction projects as emergency spending so that the committee could keep the overall total under the bill's allocation level—jeopardizing this critical funding by leaving it vulnerable to procedural points of order that could strip it from this bill. Finally, this bill provides \$25.4 billion for veteran's medical services—\$2.6 billion more than last year, but still \$400 million below the recommendation of the Independent Budget and \$2.8 billion below the level recommended by the House Veterans Affairs Committee Democrats.

Unfortunately, Democratic amendments to address these shortcomings were rejected by Republicans on the Appropriations Committee and are blocked from being considered here today by this rule. These pragmatic measures would have made this a stronger bill that fulfills our promise to our military retirees and veterans. I urge the defeat of the previous question and this rule so that we can debate critical amendments to ensure that veterans and military retirees get the timely, quality, and affordable health care they deserve.

The material previously referred to by Ms. MATSUI is as follows:

PREVIOUS QUESTION STATEMENT H. RES. 821—
RULE FOR H.R. 5385 FY06 MILITARY QUALITY
OF LIFE—VA APPROPRIATIONS

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 2. Notwithstanding any other provision of this resolution, it shall be in order to consider the amendments printed in section 3, which may be offered only in the order specified, may be offered only by the Member designated or a designee, shall be considered as read, shall not be subject to amendment except pro forma amendments for the purpose of debate, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived.

SEC. 3. The amendments referred to in section 2 are as follows:

(a) Amendment to be offered by Representative OBEY of Wisconsin.

AMENDMENT TO H.R. 5385, AS REPORTED
OFFERED BY MR. OBEY OF WISCONSIN

Page 58, line 20, strike “2011.” and all that follows through line 25 and insert “2011.”.

Page 59, line 4, strike “2011.” and all that follows through line 9 and insert “2011.”.

Page 59, line 13, strike “2011.” and all that follows through line 18 and insert “2011.”.

Page 59, line 22, strike “2011.” and all that follows through page 60, line 2, and insert “2011.”.

Page 60, line 6, strike “2011.” and all that follows through line 11 and insert “2011.”.

Page 60, line 15, strike “2011.” and all that follows through line 20 and insert “2011.”.

At the end of title IV (page 60, after line 20), insert the following new section:

SEC. 401. In the case of taxpayers with income in excess of \$1,000,000, for the calendar year beginning in 2007, the amount of tax reduction resulting from the enactment of Public Laws 107-16, 108-27, and 108-311 shall be reduced by 1.23 percent.

(b) Amendment to be offered by Representative Edwards of Texas

AMENDMENT TO H.R. 5385, AS REPORTED
OFFERED BY MR. EDWARDS OF TEXAS

Page 19, line 8, strike “\$21,065,163,000” and insert “\$21,800,163,000”.

Page 19, line 9, strike “\$20,218,205,000” and insert “\$20,953,205,000”.

At the end of title I (page 35, after line 2), insert the following new section:

SEC. 136. In the case of taxpayers with income in excess of \$1,000,000, for the calendar year beginning in 2007, the amount of tax reduction resulting from the enactment of Public Laws 107-16, 108-27, and 108-311 shall be reduced by 1.78 percent.

(c) Amendment to be offered by Representative FARR of California

AMENDMENT TO H.R. 5385, AS REPORTED
OFFERED BY MR. FARR OF CALIFORNIA

Page 39, line 22, strike “\$25,412,000,000” and insert “\$26,875,000,000”.

Page 41, line 1, strike “\$3,277,000,000” and insert “\$3,390,000,000”.

Page 42, line 2, strike “\$412,000,000” and insert “\$460,000,000”.

Page 42, line 14, strike “\$1,480,764,000” and insert “\$1,553,764,000”.

Page 44, line 21, strike “\$69,499,000” and insert “\$77,499,000”.

Page 45, line 13, strike “\$283,670,000” and insert “\$399,000,000”.

At the end of title II (page 56, after line 8), insert the following new section:

SEC. 223. In the case of taxpayers with income in excess of \$1,000,000, for the calendar year beginning in 2007, the amount of tax reduction resulting from the enactment of

Public Laws 107-16, 108-27, and 108-311 shall be reduced by 4.4 percent.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT
IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the opposition, at least for the moment, to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives, (VI, 308-311) describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as “a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.” To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that “the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition” in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: “The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.”

Because the vote today may look bad for the Republican majority they will say “the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.” But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.”

Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled “Amending Special Rules” states: “a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.” (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.”

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

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

Mr. GINGREY. 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. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for electronic voting, if ordered, on the question of adoption of the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 211, nays 186, not voting 35, as follows:

[Roll No. 173]

YEAS—211

Aderholt	Gallegly	Mica
Akin	Garrett (NJ)	Miller (FL)
Alexander	Gerlach	Miller (MI)
Bachus	Gibbons	Miller, Gary
Baker	Gilchrest	Moran (KS)
Barrett (SC)	Gillmor	Murphy
Bartlett (MD)	Gingrey	Myrick
Barton (TX)	Goode	Neugebauer
Bass	Goodlatte	Ney
Biggert	Granger	Northup
Bilirakis	Graves	Norwood
Bishop (UT)	Green (WI)	Nunes
Blackburn	Gutknecht	Nussle
Blunt	Hall	Osborne
Boehlert	Harris	Otter
Boehner	Hart	Oxley
Bonilla	Hastings (WA)	Paul
Bono	Hayes	Pence
Boozman	Hayworth	Peterson (PA)
Boustany	Hefley	Petri
Bradley (NH)	Hensarling	Pickering
Brady (TX)	Hergert	Pitts
Brown (SC)	Hobson	Poe
Brown-Waite,	Hoekstra	Pombo
Ginny	Hostettler	Porter
Burgess	Hulshof	Price (GA)
Burton (IN)	Hunter	Pryce (OH)
Buyer	Hyde	Putnam
Calvert	Inglis (SC)	Radanovich
Camp (MI)	Issa	Ramstad
Campbell (CA)	Istook	Regula
Cannon	Jenkins	Rehberg
Cantor	Jindal	Reichert
Capito	Johnson (CT)	Renzi
Carter	Johnson (IL)	Rogers (AL)
Castle	Johnson, Sam	Rogers (KY)
Chabot	Jones (NC)	Rohrabacher
Chocola	Keller	Ros-Lehtinen
Coble	Kelly	Royce
Cole (OK)	Kennedy (MN)	Ryan (WI)
Conaway	King (IA)	Ryun (KS)
Crenshaw	King (NY)	Saxton
Culberson	Kingston	Schwarz (MI)
Davis, Jo Ann	Kirk	Sensenbrenner
Davis, Tom	Kline	Sessions
Deal (GA)	Knollenberg	Shadegg
DeLay	Kolbe	Shaw
Dent	Kuhl (NY)	Shays
Diaz-Balart, M.	LaHood	Sherwood
Doolittle	Latham	Shimkus
Drake	LaTourette	Shuster
Dreier	Lewis (CA)	Simmons
Duncan	Lewis (KY)	Simpson
Ehlers	Linder	Smith (NJ)
Emerson	LoBiondo	Smith (TX)
Everett	Lucas	Sodrel
Feeney	Lungren, Daniel	Souder
Ferguson	E.	Stearns
Fitzpatrick (PA)	Mack	Sullivan
Flake	Marchant	Sweeney
Foley	McCaul (TX)	Tancredo
Forbes	McCotter	Taylor (NC)
Fortenberry	McHenry	Terry
Fox	McHugh	Thornberry
Franks (AZ)	McKeon	Tiahrt
Frelinghuysen	McMorris	Tiberi

Turner	Weldon (FL)
Upton	Weldon (PA)
Walden (OR)	Weller
Walsh	Westmoreland
Wamp	Whitfield

NAYS—186

Abercrombie	Green, Al	Neal (MA)
Ackerman	Green, Gene	Obey
Allen	Grijalva	Olver
Baca	Gutierrez	Ortiz
Baird	Harman	Owens
Baldwin	Hastings (FL)	Pallone
Barrow	Herseth	Pascrell
Bean	Higgins	Pastor
Becerra	Hinchey	Payne
Berkley	Hinojosa	Pelosi
Berman	Holden	Peterson (MN)
Berry	Holt	Pomeroy
Bishop (NY)	Honda	Price (NC)
Blumenauer	Hooley	Rahall
Boren	Hoyer	Rangel
Boswell	Inslee	Reyes
Boucher	Israel	Ross
Boyd	Jackson (IL)	Rothman
Brady (PA)	Jackson-Lee	Roybal-Allard
Brown (OH)	(TX)	Ruppersberger
Brown, Corrine	Jefferson	Rush
Butterfield	Johnson, E. B.	Ryan (OH)
Capps	Jones (OH)	Sabo
Capuano	Kanjorski	Salazar
Cardin	Kaptur	Sanchez, Linda
Caroza	Kildee	T.
Carnahan	Kilpatrick (MI)	Sanchez, Loretta
Carson	Kind	Schakowsky
Case	Kucinich	Schiff
Chandler	Langevin	Schwartz (PA)
Chandler	Lantos	Scott (GA)
Clay	Larsen (WA)	Scott (VA)
Cleaver	Lee	Serrano
Clyburn	Levin	Sherman
Conyers	Lipinski	Skelton
Cooper	Lofgren, Zoe	Slaughter
Costa	Lowey	Snyder
Costello	Lynch	Solis
Cramer	Maloney	Spratt
Crowley	Markey	Tanner
Cuellar	Marshall	Tauscher
Cummings	Matheson	Taylor (MS)
Davis (AL)	Matsui	Thompson (CA)
Davis (CA)	McCarthy	Thompson (MS)
Davis (IL)	McCarthy	Tierney
Davis (TN)	McCollum (MN)	Towns
DeFazio	McDermott	Udall (CO)
DeGette	McGovern	Udall (NM)
DeLauro	McIntyre	Van Hollen
Dicks	McNulty	Velázquez
Dingell	Meehan	Visclosky
Doggett	Meek (FL)	Wasserman
Doyle	Meeke (NY)	Schultz
Edwards	Melancon	Waters
Emanuel	Michaud	Watson
Engel	Millender-	Watt
Eshoo	McDonald	Waxman
Etheridge	Miller (NC)	Weiner
Farr	Miller, George	Wexler
Filner	Mollohan	Woolsey
Ford	Moore (KS)	Wu
Frank (MA)	Moore (WI)	Wynn
Gonzalez	Murtha	
Gordon	Nadler	
	Napolitano	

NOT VOTING—35

Andrews	Gohmert
Beauprez	Kennedy (RI)
Bishop (GA)	Larson (CT)
Bonner	Leach
Cubin	Lewis (GA)
Davis (FL)	Manzullo
Davis (KY)	McCrery
Diaz-Balart, L.	McKinney
English (PA)	Moran (VA)
Evans	Musgrave
Fattah	Murphy
Fossella	Pearce

Wicker	Wilson (NM)
Wilson (NM)	Wilson (SC)
Wilson (SC)	Wolf
Wolf	Young (FL)

Platts	Reynolds
Rogers (MI)	Sanders
Schmidt	Smith (WA)
Stark	Strickland
Stupak	Thomas
Young (AK)	

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

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered. The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 216, noes 187, not voting 29, as follows:

[Roll No. 174]

AYES—216

Abercrombie	Gilchrest	Norwood
Aderholt	Gillmor	Nunes
Akin	Gingrey	Nussle
Alexander	Goode	Osborne
Bachus	Goodlatte	Otter
Baker	Granger	Oxley
Barrett (SC)	Graves	Paul
Bartlett (MD)	Green (WI)	Pence
Barton (TX)	Gutknecht	Peterson (PA)
Bass	Hall	Petri
Biggert	Harris	Pickering
Bilirakis	Hart	Pitts
Bishop (UT)	Hastings (WA)	Poe
Blackburn	Hayes	Pombo
Blunt	Hayworth	Porter
Boehlert	Hefley	Price (GA)
Boehner	Hensarling	Pryce (OH)
Bonilla	Herger	Putnam
Bono	Hobson	Radanovich
Boozman	Hoekstra	Ramstad
Boustany	Hostettler	Regula
Bradley (NH)	Hulshof	Rehberg
Brady (TX)	Hunter	Reichert
Brown (SC)	Hyde	Renzi
Brown-Waite,	Inglis (SC)	Rogers (AL)
Ginny	Issa	Rogers (KY)
Burgess	Istook	Rogers (MI)
Burton (IN)	Jenkins	Rohrabacher
Buyer	Jindal	Ros-Lehtinen
Calvert	Johnson (CT)	Royce
Camp (MI)	Johnson (IL)	Ryan (WI)
Campbell (CA)	Johnson, Sam	Ryun (KS)
Cannon	Jones (NC)	Saxton
Cantor	Keller	Schwarz (MI)
Capito	Kelly	Sensenbrenner
Carter	Kennedy (MN)	Sessions
Castle	King (IA)	Shadegg
Chabot	King (NY)	Shaw
Chocola	Kingston	Shays
Coble	Kirk	Sherwood
Cole (OK)	Klaine	Shimkus
Conaway	Knollenberg	Shuster
Crenshaw	Kolbe	Simmons
Culberson	Kuhl (NY)	Simpson
Davis, Jo Ann	LaHood	Smith (NJ)
Davis, Tom	Latham	Smith (TX)
Deal (GA)	LaTourette	Sodrel
DeLay	Leach	Souder
Dent	Lewis (CA)	Stearns
Diaz-Balart, M.	Lewis (KY)	Sullivan
Doolittle	Linder	Sweeney
Drake	LoBiondo	Tancredo
Dreier	Lucas	Taylor (NC)
Duncan	Lungren, Daniel	Terry
Ehlers	E.	Thornberry
Emerson	Mack	Tiahrt
Everett	Marchant	Tiberi
Feeney	McCaul (TX)	Turner
Ferguson	McCotter	Upton
Fitzpatrick (PA)	McHenry	Walden (OR)
Flake	McHugh	Walsh
Foley	McKeon	Wamp
Forbes	McMorris	Weldon (FL)
Fortenberry	Mica	Weldon (PA)
Fox	Miller (FL)	Weller
Franks (AZ)	Miller (MI)	Westmoreland
Frelinghuysen	Miller, Gary	Whitfield
	Moran (KS)	Wicker
	Murphy	Wilson (NM)
	Myrick	Wilson (SC)
	Neugebauer	Wolf
	Ney	Young (FL)
	Northup	

NOES—187

Ackerman	Barrow	Berry
Allen	Bean	Bishop (NY)
Baca	Becerra	Blumenauer
Baird	Berkley	Boren
Baldwin	Berman	Boswell

□ 1034

Mr. RANGEL changed his vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania changed his vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the previous question was ordered. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

Boucher	Holt	Owens
Boyd	Honda	Pallone
Brady (PA)	Hooley	Pascarell
Brown (OH)	Hoyer	Pastor
Brown, Corrine	Inslee	Payne
Butterfield	Israel	Pelosi
Capps	Jackson (IL)	Peterson (MN)
Capuano	Jackson-Lee	Pomeroy
Cardin	(TX)	Price (NC)
Cardoza	Jefferson	Rahall
Carnahan	Johnson, E. B.	Rangel
Carson	Jones (OH)	Reyes
Case	Kanjorski	Ross
Chandler	Kaptur	Rothman
Clay	Kildee	Roybal-Allard
Cleaver	Kilpatrick (MI)	Ruppersberger
Clyburn	Kind	Rush
Conyers	Kucinich	Ryan (OH)
Cooper	Langevin	Sabo
Costa	Lantos	Salazar
Costello	Larsen (WA)	Sánchez, Linda
Cramer	Lee	T.
Crowley	Levin	Sánchez, Loretta
Cuellar	Lipinski	Schakowsky
Cummings	Lofgren, Zoe	Schiff
Davis (AL)	Lowe	Schwartz (PA)
Davis (CA)	Lynch	Scott (GA)
Davis (IL)	Maloney	Scott (VA)
Davis (TN)	Markey	Serrano
DeFazio	Marshall	Sherman
DeGette	Matheson	Skelton
Delahunt	Matsui	Slaughter
DeLauro	McCarthy	Snyder
Dicks	McCollum (MN)	Solis
Dingell	McDermott	Spratt
Doggett	McGovern	Tanner
Doyle	McIntyre	Tauscher
Edwards	McKinney	Taylor (MS)
Emanuel	McNulty	Thompson (CA)
Engel	Meehan	Thompson (MS)
Eshoo	Meek (FL)	Tierney
Etheridge	Meeke (NY)	Towns
Farr	Melancon	Udall (CO)
Filner	Michaud	Udall (NM)
Ford	Millender-	Udall (NM)
Frank (MA)	McDonald	Van Hollen
Gonzalez	Miller (NC)	Velázquez
Gordon	Miller, George	Vislosky
Green, Al	Mollohan	Wasserman
Green, Gene	Moore (KS)	Schultz
Grijalva	Moore (WI)	Waters
Gutierrez	Murtha	Watson
Harman	Nadler	Watt
Hastings (FL)	Napolitano	Waxman
Herseth	Neal (MA)	Weiner
Higgins	Oberstar	Wexler
Hinche	Obey	Woolsey
Hinojosa	Olver	Wu
Holden	Ortiz	Wynn

NOT VOTING—29

Andrews	Gohmert	Reynolds
Beauprez	Kennedy (RI)	Sanders
Bishop (GA)	Larson (CT)	Schmidt
Bonner	Lewis (GA)	Smith (WA)
Cubin	Manzullo	Stark
Davis (FL)	McCreery	Strickland
Davis (KY)	Moran (VA)	Stupak
English (PA)	Musgrave	Thomas
Evans	Pearce	Young (AK)
Pattah	Platts	

□ 1043

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.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, earlier today, I was unavoidably detained and missed two rollcall votes.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote No. 173, On Ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 821, the Rule for H.R. 5385; and "aye" on rollcall vote No. 174, On Adoption of the Rule for H.R. 5385.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 193. An act to increase the penalties for violations by television and radio broadcasters of the prohibitions against transmission of obscene, indecent, and profane language.

The message also announced that the Senate agrees to the amendment of the House of Representatives to the amendment of the Senate to the text of the bill (H.R. 1499) "An Act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow members of the Armed Forces serving in a combat zone to make contributions to their individual retirement plans even if the compensation on which such contribution is based is excluded from gross income, and for other purposes."

The message also announced that pursuant to section 1928a-1928d of title 22, United States Code, as amended, the Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, appoints the following Senators to the Senate Delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, during the 109th Congress:

The Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY).

The Senator from Colorado (Mr. AL-LARD).

The Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS).

The Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH).

The Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN).

The message also announced that pursuant to section 1928a-1928d of title 22, United States Code, as amended, the Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, appoints the following Senators as members of the Senate Delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, during the 109th Congress:

The Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY).

The Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN).

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 and include extraneous material on H.R. 5385, and that I may include tabular material on the same.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1045

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOOZMAN). Pursuant to House Resolu-

tion 821 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. 5385.

□ 1045

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. 5385) making appropriations for the military quality of life functions of the Department of Defense, military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, 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 read the first time.

The gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

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

Mr. Chairman, today I am proud to present the Fiscal Year 2007 Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for consideration of the House.

The Appropriations Committee has dedicated to providing a suitable quality of life for our servicemen and women from recruitment through retirement. I believe this bill is fiscally responsible, while improving the quality of life for our all-volunteer force throughout their military careers and beyond. It also builds upon initiatives begun last year to get the Defense Department and the Department of Veterans Affairs to be more cooperative and expand synergies that exist between them.

The bill totals \$136.1 billion. It stays within our discretionary allocation of \$94.7 billion, which is \$824 million below the budget request. But, more importantly, the bill is \$8.5 billion over last year's level after adjusting VA medical services for contingency funding.

The increases above last year are in four areas: veterans medical care, active duty military medical care, housing allowances for military families, and the first year of major construction for the new BRAC round recommendations.

Mr. Chairman, the bill continues to improve military health care and recommends \$21 billion for fiscal year 2007 for the defense health program. This is a sizeable increase of \$1 billion above last year's level and represents more than a 40 percent increase in this budget since fiscal year 2003.

For veterans medical care, the bill recommends \$25.4 billion, a \$2.9 billion increase, or 12.7 percent, over last year's level. This program has increased \$7.6 billion, or 43 percent, since

2004. I do not know what could speak more for the priorities of this House or this Congress or our committee than this commitment to our Nation's veterans.

For military construction, including funding to support the global war on terrorism, the bill provides \$16.3 billion. The remainder of the bill funds a variety of defense programs and four related agencies, most of which are funded at the budget request.

I would like to mention that an additional \$40 million in funding is recommended for two programs to accelerate environmental clean-up at formerly used defense sites and closed installations dating back to the 1988 BRAC round.

Mr. Chairman, we have a responsibility to make sure the limited resources we have are spent efficiently and effectively and that programs achieve their mission. We are, after all, at war; and we need to make sure that our current active duty personnel understand that the commitments to our former warfighters are kept. If we keep our promises to our former warfighters. We will keep our promises to those who are fighting today. This bill accomplishes that, while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the chairman of the full committee, Chairman LEWIS, for his vision and leadership and for the allocation that he has provided our subcommittee, probably the most gen-

erous of all of the subcommittee allocations.

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to thank sincerely my ranking member and colleague and friend, Mr. EDWARDS of Texas, for his hard work. He knows these issues cold. He is a good collaborator, a good person to work with. I respect his thoughts, I respect his work ethic, and I think this is a product of both of our vision.

I would also like to thank Mr. OBEY, as ranking member of the full committee, for working with us throughout this process. While we may have some differences, I think overall clearly this is a bipartisan bill that expresses the views of this House that our veterans and our active duty service personnel are our highest priority.

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATION BILL 2006 (H.R. 5385)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
TITLE I - DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE					
Military construction, Army.....	1,757,507	2,059,762	1,756,298	-1,209	-303,464
Rescissions.....	-19,746	---	-43,348	-23,602	-43,348
Total.....	1,737,761	2,059,762	1,712,950	-24,811	-346,812
Military construction, Navy and Marine Corps.....	1,145,570	1,162,038	1,193,834	+48,264	+31,796
Rescissions.....	-50,037	---	-38,000	+12,037	-38,000
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	291,219	---	---	-291,219	---
Total.....	1,386,752	1,162,038	1,155,834	-230,918	-6,204
Military construction, Air Force.....	1,275,645	1,156,148	1,187,550	-88,095	+31,402
Rescissions.....	-29,100	---	-2,694	+26,406	-2,694
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	52,612	---	---	-52,612	---
Total.....	1,299,157	1,156,148	1,184,856	-114,301	+28,708
Military construction, Defense-Wide.....	998,766	1,208,198	1,107,606	+108,840	-100,592
Rescissions.....	-20,000	---	-110,229	-90,229	-110,229
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	45,000	---	---	-45,000	---
Total.....	1,023,766	1,208,198	997,377	-26,389	-210,821
=====					
Total, Active components.....	5,447,436	5,586,146	5,051,017	-396,419	-535,129
Military construction, Army National Guard.....	517,919	473,197	512,873	-5,046	+39,676
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	374,300	---	---	-374,300	---
Total.....	892,219	473,197	512,873	-379,346	+39,676
Military construction, Air National Guard.....	312,956	125,788	207,088	-105,868	+81,300
Rescissions.....	-13,700	---	---	+13,700	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	35,000	---	---	-35,000	---
Total.....	334,256	125,788	207,088	-127,168	+81,300
Military construction, Army Reserve.....	151,043	166,487	167,774	+16,731	+1,287
Military construction, Navy Reserve.....	46,395	48,408	55,158	+8,763	+6,750
Rescissions.....	-16,560	---	---	+16,560	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	120,132	---	---	-120,132	---
Total.....	149,967	48,408	55,158	-94,809	+6,750
Military construction, Air Force Reserve.....	104,824	44,936	56,836	-47,988	+11,900
Rescissions.....	-13,815	---	---	+13,815	---
Total.....	91,009	44,936	56,836	-34,173	+11,900
=====					
Total, Reserve components.....	1,618,494	858,816	999,729	-618,765	+140,913
=====					
Total, Military construction.....	7,065,930	6,444,962	6,050,746	-1,015,184	-394,216
Appropriations.....	(6,310,625)	(6,444,962)	(6,245,017)	(-65,608)	(-199,945)
Emergency appropriations.....	(918,263)	---	---	(-918,263)	---
Rescissions.....	(-162,958)	---	(-194,271)	(-31,313)	(-194,271)
=====					
North Atlantic Treaty Organization Security Investment Program.....	204,789	220,985	200,985	-3,804	-20,000
Rescissions.....	-30,000	---	---	+30,000	---
Total.....	174,789	220,985	200,985	+26,196	-20,000

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATION BILL 2006 (H.R. 5385)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Family housing construction, Army.....	544,140	594,991	578,791	+34,651	-16,200
Rescissions.....	-16,000	---	---	+16,000	---
Total.....	528,140	594,991	578,791	+50,651	-16,200
Family housing operation and maintenance, Army.....	795,953	676,829	674,657	-121,296	-2,172
Family housing construction, Navy and Marine Corps....	216,753	305,071	308,956	+92,203	+3,885
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	86,165	---	---	-86,165	---
Total.....	302,918	305,071	308,956	+6,038	+3,885
Family housing operation and maintenance, Navy and Marine Corps.....	582,773	509,126	509,126	-73,647	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	48,889	---	---	-48,889	---
Total.....	631,662	509,126	509,126	-122,536	---
Family housing construction, Air Force.....	1,090,868	1,183,138	1,169,138	+78,270	-14,000
Rescissions.....	-43,900	---	-66,200	-22,300	-66,200
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	278,000	---	---	-278,000	---
Total.....	1,324,968	1,183,138	1,102,938	-222,030	-80,200
Family housing operation and maintenance, Air Force... Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	759,270 47,019	755,071 ---	755,071 ---	-4,199 -47,019	--- ---
Total.....	806,289	755,071	755,071	-51,218	---
Family housing construction, Defense-Wide.....	---	8,808	8,808	+8,808	---
Family housing operation and maintenance, Defense-Wide	45,927	48,506	48,506	+2,579	---
Department of Defense Family Housing Improvement Fund.....	2,475	2,500	2,500	+25	---
Total, Family housing.....	4,438,332	4,084,040	3,989,353	-448,979	-94,687
Appropriations.....	(4,038,159)	(4,084,040)	(4,055,553)	(+17,394)	(-28,487)
Emergency appropriations.....	(460,073)	---	---	(-460,073)	---
Rescissions.....	(-59,900)	---	(-66,200)	(-6,300)	(-66,200)
Chemical demilitarization construction, Defense-Wide..	---	130,993	90,993	+90,993	-40,000
Base realignment and closure:					
Base realignment and closure account, 1990.....	252,279	191,220	216,220	-36,059	+25,000
Base realignment and closure account, 2005.....	1,489,421	5,626,223	5,309,876	+3,820,455	-316,347
Total, Base realignment and closure.....	1,741,700	5,817,443	5,526,096	+3,784,396	-291,347
Basic Allowance for Housing: 1/					
Army.....	3,880,723	3,687,905	3,687,905	-192,818	---
Navy.....	3,511,570	4,135,061	4,135,061	+623,491	---
Marine Corps.....	1,166,686	1,350,921	1,350,921	+184,235	---
Air Force.....	3,162,073	2,934,327	2,934,327	-227,746	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	6,526	---	---	-6,526	---
Total.....	3,168,599	2,934,327	2,934,327	-234,272	---
Army National Guard.....	444,819	469,109	469,109	+24,290	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	32,294	---	---	-32,294	---
Total.....	477,113	469,109	469,109	-8,004	---
Air National Guard.....	238,396	277,533	277,533	+39,137	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	10,289	---	---	-10,289	---
Total.....	248,685	277,533	277,533	+28,848	---

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATION BILL 2006 (H.R. 5385)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Army Reserve.....	306,642	347,607	347,607	+40,965	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	361	---	---	-361	---
Total.....	307,003	347,607	347,607	+40,604	---
Navy Reserve.....	189,141	208,838	208,838	+19,697	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	1,053	---	---	-1,053	---
Total.....	190,194	208,838	208,838	+18,644	---
Marine Corps Reserve.....	40,134	43,082	43,082	+2,948	---
Air Force Reserve.....	69,357	76,218	76,218	+6,861	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	85	---	---	-85	---
Total.....	69,442	76,218	76,218	+6,776	---
=====					
Total, Basic Allowance for Housing.....	13,060,149	13,530,601	13,530,601	+470,452	---
Appropriations.....	(13,009,541)	(13,530,601)	(13,530,601)	(+521,060)	---
Emergency appropriations.....	(50,608)	---	---	(-50,608)	---
Facilities Sustainment, Restoration and Modernization: 1/					
Army.....	1,832,607	1,810,774	1,810,774	-21,833	---
Navy.....	1,331,521	1,201,313	1,201,313	-130,208	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	215,499	---	---	-215,499	---
Total.....	1,547,020	1,201,313	1,201,313	-345,707	---
Marine Corps.....	548,420	473,141	473,141	-75,279	---
Air Force.....	1,827,246	1,684,019	1,684,019	-143,227	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	69,005	---	---	-69,005	---
Total.....	1,896,251	1,684,019	1,684,019	-212,232	---
Defense-Wide.....	115,731	86,386	86,386	-29,345	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	5,238	---	---	-5,238	---
Total.....	120,969	86,386	86,386	-34,583	---
Army National Guard.....	392,579	387,882	387,882	-4,697	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	49,217	---	---	-49,217	---
Total.....	441,796	387,882	387,882	-53,914	---
Air National Guard.....	177,993	255,322	255,322	+77,329	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	13,557	---	---	-13,557	---
Total.....	191,550	255,322	255,322	+63,772	---
Army Reserve.....	202,326	215,890	215,890	+13,564	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	1,128	---	---	-1,128	---
Total.....	203,454	215,890	215,890	+12,436	---
Navy Reserve.....	67,110	52,136	52,136	-14,974	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	310,024	---	---	-310,024	---
Total.....	377,134	52,136	52,136	-324,998	---
Marine Corps Reserve.....	10,004	9,579	9,579	-425	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	1,094	---	---	-1,094	---
Total.....	11,098	9,579	9,579	-1,519	---

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATION BILL 2006 (H.R. 5385)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Air Force Reserve.....	49,860	59,849	59,849	+9,989	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	1,917	---	---	-1,917	---
Total.....	51,777	59,849	59,849	+8,072	---
=====					
Total, Facilities Sustainment, Restoration and Modernization.....	7,222,076	6,236,291	6,236,291	-985,785	---
Appropriations.....	(6,555,397)	(6,236,291)	(6,236,291)	(-319,106)	---
Emergency appropriations.....	(666,679)	---	---	(-666,679)	---
=====					
Environmental Restoration: 1/					
Army.....	403,786	413,794	413,794	+10,008	---
Navy.....	302,222	304,409	304,409	+2,187	---
Air Force.....	402,396	423,871	423,871	+21,475	---
Defense-Wide.....	27,885	18,431	18,431	-9,454	---
Formerly used Defense sites.....	254,352	242,790	257,790	+3,438	+15,000
Total, Environmental Restoration.....	1,390,641	1,403,295	1,418,295	+27,654	+15,000
=====					
Defense Health Program: 1/					
Operation and maintenance.....	19,106,789	20,498,163	20,218,205	+1,111,416	-279,958
Rescission.....	---	---	-40,042	-40,042	-40,042
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	120,000	---	---	-120,000	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	172,958	---	---	-172,958	---
Total, Operation and maintenance.....	19,399,747	20,498,163	20,178,163	+778,416	-320,000
=====					
Procurement.....	375,328	396,355	402,855	+27,527	+6,500
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	28,592	---	---	-28,592	---
Total, Procurement.....	403,920	396,355	402,855	-1,065	+6,500
=====					
Research and development.....	536,883	130,603	444,103	-92,780	+313,500
=====					
Total, Defense Health Program.....	20,340,550	21,025,121	21,025,121	+684,571	---
Appropriations.....	(20,019,000)	(21,025,121)	(21,065,163)	(+1,046,163)	(+40,042)
Emergency appropriations.....	(321,550)	---	---	(-321,550)	---
=====					
Total, title I.....	55,434,167	58,893,731	58,068,481	+2,634,314	-825,250
Appropriations.....	(53,269,852)	(58,893,731)	(58,368,994)	(+5,099,142)	(-524,737)
Emergency appropriations.....	(2,417,173)	---	---	(-2,417,173)	---
Rescissions.....	(-252,858)	---	(-300,513)	(-47,655)	(-300,513)
=====					

1/ Funding for these programs in fiscal year 2006 was included in the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2006. Amounts are shown here for comparison purposes.

TITLE II - DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Veterans Benefits Administration

Compensation and pensions.....	33,897,787	38,007,095	38,007,095	+4,109,308	---
Readjustment benefits.....	3,309,234	3,262,006	3,262,006	-47,228	---
Veterans insurance and indemnities.....	45,907	49,850	49,850	+3,943	---
Veterans housing benefit program fund program account (indefinite).....	64,586	196,692	196,692	+132,106	---
(Limitation on direct loans).....	(500)	(500)	(500)	---	---
Credit subsidy.....	-112,000	-100,000	-100,000	+12,000	---
Administrative expenses.....	153,575	153,185	153,185	-390	---
Vocational rehabilitation loans program account.....	53	53	67	+14	+14
(Limitation on direct loans).....	(4,242)	(4,242)	(3,369)	(-873)	(-873)
Administrative expenses.....	305	305	305	---	---

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATION BILL 2006 (H.R. 5385)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Native American veteran housing loan program account.. (Limitation on direct loans).....	580 (30,000)	615 (30,000)	615 (30,000)	+35 ---	--- ---
Total, Veterans Benefits Administration.....	37,360,027	41,569,801	41,569,815	+4,209,788	+14
Veterans Health Administration					
Medical services.....	21,322,141	25,512,000	25,412,000	+4,089,859	-100,000
Emergency appropriations.....	1,225,000	---	---	-1,225,000	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	198,265	---	---	-198,265	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	27,000	---	---	-27,000	---
Subtotal, Medical Services.....	22,772,406	25,512,000	25,412,000	+2,639,594	-100,000
Medical administration.....	2,858,442	3,177,000	3,277,000	+418,558	+100,000
Medical facilities.....	3,297,669	3,569,000	3,594,000	+296,331	+25,000
Medical and prosthetic research.....	412,000	399,000	412,000	---	+13,000
Medical care cost recovery collections:					
Offsetting collections.....	-2,170,000	-2,329,000	-2,329,000	-159,000	---
Appropriations (indefinite).....	2,170,000	2,329,000	2,329,000	+159,000	---
Total, Veterans Health Administration.....	29,340,517	32,657,000	32,695,000	+3,354,483	+38,000
Departmental Administration					
General operating expenses.....	1,410,520	1,480,764	1,480,764	+70,244	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	24,871	---	---	-24,871	---
Information technology systems.....	1,213,820	1,257,000	1,302,330	+88,510	+45,330
National Cemetery Administration.....	156,447	160,733	160,733	+4,286	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	200	---	---	-200	---
Office of Inspector General.....	70,174	69,499	69,499	-675	---
Construction, major projects.....	607,100	399,000	283,670	-323,430	-115,330
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	367,500	---	---	-367,500	---
Construction, minor projects.....	198,937	198,000	210,000	+11,063	+12,000
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	1,800	---	---	-1,800	---
Grants for construction of State extended care facilities.....	85,000	85,000	105,000	+20,000	+20,000
Grants for the construction of State veterans cemeteries.....	32,000	32,000	32,000	---	---
Disaster Compensation for Veterans (Emergency) (P.L. 109-148).....	3,000	---	---	-3,000	---
Total, Departmental Administration.....	4,171,369	3,681,996	3,643,996	-527,373	-38,000
Total, title II.....	70,871,913	77,908,797	77,908,811	+7,036,898	+14
Appropriations.....	(69,024,277)	(77,908,797)	(77,908,811)	(+8,884,534)	(+14)
Emergency appropriations.....	(1,847,636)	---	---	(-1,847,636)	---
(Limitation on direct loans).....	(34,742)	(34,742)	(33,869)	(-873)	(-873)
Discretionary.....	33,666,399	36,493,154	36,493,168	+2,826,769	+14
Mandatory.....	37,205,514	41,415,643	41,415,643	+4,210,129	---
TITLE III - RELATED AGENCIES					
American Battle Monuments Commission					
Salaries and expenses.....	35,888	35,838	37,088	+1,200	+1,250
Foreign currency fluctuations account.....	15,098	4,900	4,900	-10,198	---
Total, American Battle Monuments Commission.....	50,986	40,738	41,988	-8,998	+1,250

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATION BILL 2006 (H.R. 5385)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request

U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims					
Salaries and expenses.....	18,607	19,790	19,790	+1,183	---
Department of Defense - Civil					
Cemeterial Expenses, Army					
Salaries and expenses.....	28,760	26,550	26,550	-2,210	---
Armed Forces Retirement Home					
Operation and maintenance.....	56,463	54,846	54,846	-1,617	---
Capital program.....	1,236	---	---	-1,236	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	65,800	---	---	-65,800	---
Total, Armed Forces Retirement Home.....	123,499	54,846	54,846	-68,653	---
=====					
Total, title III.....	221,852	141,924	143,174	-78,678	+1,250
Appropriations.....	(156,052)	(141,924)	(143,174)	(-12,878)	(+1,250)
Emergency appropriations.....	(65,800)	---	---	(-65,800)	---
TITLE IV - DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS					
Military Construction, Army (contingency operations).....	---	---	379,300	+379,300	+379,300
Military Construction, Navy and Marine Corps (contingency operations).....	---	---	26,037	+26,037	+26,037
Military Construction, Air Force (contingency operations).....	---	---	49,923	+49,923	+49,923
Military Construction, Defense-Wide (contingency operations).....	---	---	44,500	+44,500	+44,500
Military Construction, Army National Guard (contingency operations).....	---	---	5,530	+5,530	+5,530
Military Construction, Army Reserve (contingency operations).....	---	---	1,713	+1,713	+1,713
Total, Title IV.....	---	---	507,003	+507,003	+507,003
=====					
Grand total.....	126,527,932	136,944,452	136,120,466	+9,592,534	-823,986
Appropriations.....	(122,450,181)	(136,944,452)	(136,420,979)	(+13,970,798)	(-523,473)
Emergency appropriations.....	(4,330,609)	---	---	(-4,330,609)	---
Rescissions.....	(-252,858)	---	(-300,513)	(-47,655)	(-300,513)
=====					

Note: FY 2006 enacted figures for Title I and III reflect a 1% across the board cut (P.L. 109-148). Title II is exempt.

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATION BILL 2006 (H.R. 5385)
 (Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET RECAP					
Scorekeeping adjustments:					
Emergency appropriations defense.....	-2,417,173	---	-507,003	+1,910,170	-507,003
Emergency appropriations non-defense.....	-1,913,436	---	---	+1,913,436	---
ATB adjustment.....	-230	---	---	+230	---
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Total, adjustments.....	-4,330,839	---	-507,003	+3,823,836	-507,003
Total (including adjustments).....	122,197,093	136,944,452	136,120,466	+13,923,373	-823,986
Amounts in this bill.....	---	---	---	---	---
Scorekeeping adjustments.....	(-4,330,839)	---	(-507,003)	(+3,823,836)	(-507,003)
Prior year outlays.....	---	---	---	---	---
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
Total mandatory and discretionary.....	122,197,093	136,944,452	136,120,466	+13,923,373	-823,986
Mandatory.....	(37,205,514)	(41,415,643)	(41,415,643)	(+4,210,129)	---
Mandatory (prior year).....	---	---	---	---	---
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Mandatory (total).....	(37,205,514)	(41,415,643)	(41,415,643)	(+4,210,129)	---
Discretionary.....	(84,991,579)	(95,528,809)	(94,704,823)	(+9,713,244)	(-823,986)
Discretionary (prior year).....	---	---	---	---	---
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Discretionary (total).....	(84,991,579)	(95,528,809)	(94,704,823)	(+9,713,244)	(-823,986)
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATION BILL 2006 (H.R. 5385)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request

RECAP BY FUNCTION					
Mandatory.....	37,205,514	41,415,643	41,415,643	+4,210,129	---
Prior year outlays.....	---	---	---	---	---
Total, Mandatory.....	37,205,514	41,415,643	41,415,643	+4,210,129	---

General purpose discretionary:					
Defense.....	53,016,994	58,893,731	58,068,481	+5,051,487	-825,250
Prior year outlays.....	---	---	---	---	---
Total, Defense.....	53,016,994	58,893,731	58,068,481	+5,051,487	-825,250
Nondefense.....	31,974,585	36,635,078	36,636,342	+4,661,757	+1,264
Prior year outlays.....	---	---	---	---	---
Total, Nondefense.....	31,974,585	36,635,078	36,636,342	+4,661,757	+1,264

Subtotal, General purpose discretionary.....	84,991,579	95,528,809	94,704,823	+9,713,244	-823,986
Prior year outlays.....	---	---	---	---	---
Total General purpose discretionary.....	84,991,579	95,528,809	94,704,823	+9,713,244	-823,986
=====					
Grand total, Mandatory and Discretionary.....	122,197,093	136,944,452	136,120,466	+13,923,373	-823,986
=====					

DISCRETIONARY 302B ALLOCATION

GENERAL PURPOSE.....	84,991,579	95,528,809	94,704,823	+9,713,244	-823,986
302B ALLOCATION.....	44,143,000	---	94,705,000	+50,562,000	+94,705,000
OVER/UNDER.....	40,848,579	95,528,809	-177	-40,848,756	-95,528,986

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

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

Mr. Chairman and Members, there are three reasons why I intend to support this bill.

First, it has a significant increase in funding for VA health care, approximately \$3 billion, even though I believe the VA needs and deserves more. The increase is significant, it is real, and it is important.

Secondly, this bill includes military construction funding. It is vital to support our troops and their families during a time of war. And also it includes military construction funding needed to implement the BRAC proposals.

Thirdly, I am going to support this bill because Chairman WALSH's leadership in this effort was, at every step of the way, professional and bipartisan. This is the kind of leadership I believe Americans would want and expect from Congress when we are dealing with military and defense and veterans issues.

I salute the chairman for that leadership, for his extensive hearings, for listening to all members of his subcommittee and the Appropriations Committee and Members throughout this House, and for having numerous hearings, listening to veterans and other organizations testify and have input on this bill.

Mr. Chairman, I want to be clear on my position. In my opinion, the House budget resolution passed earlier this week would have better served our Nation if it had been less willing to give the just-retired Exxon CEO a \$2 million dividend tax cut and had saved that money for deficit reduction and providing more funding for defense, military construction, veterans health care and defense health care, which we have in this bill.

I did not support that budget resolution, which was passed on a partisan basis. And today, very quickly after that resolution's passage, we start to see the impact of it in real terms. In real terms, our subcommittee was allocated \$824 million less than President Bush felt we needed in this area for VA funding, defense health care, and military construction.

Had we had a better budget resolution, a bipartisan budget resolution, I do not think we would have had to cut \$824 million from the President's request for the important responsibilities under the jurisdiction of this subcommittee.

But the reality is that the budget resolution has passed the House, and the House leadership intends to implement those budget rules and numbers, at least for now, and our subcommittee had to deal with those numbers.

I think the subcommittee dealt with the limited budget, in my opinion an inadequate budget, in a responsible way, a bipartisan way, and tried to put the limited dollars in the highest priority needs.

I want to talk about what is good in this bill, given that we had so many fewer dollars than the President had asked for in this area. One, the VA health care increase for about \$3 billion, I think that is important. It is a huge turnaround from a year or 2 ago, where I, many Democrats, veterans organizations, were pleading with the Republican leadership and the administration to more adequately fund VA health care, because we felt the administration budget request, particularly last year, would have caused significant and serious cuts in VA health care during a time of war.

This is a great turnaround from that and is supported on a bipartisan basis to increase VA health care spending by \$3 billion. I am glad, frankly, that the OMB in particular and the administration have heard the voices of Congress and our Nation's veterans that we are going to adequately fund and significantly increase funding for VA health care.

I do want to point out this is a not a Cadillac budget, if anyone wants to suggest that, for our veterans health care system. Because the fact is and the challenge is that the VA system has seen a net increase of veterans needing VA health care between 150 and 250,000 a year.

The reality is that, even this year, the number of Iraqi war veterans needing VA health care is significantly higher than what we had projected, or the VA had projected, and we need to keep our eye on that.

In addition to the increase in VA health care funding which I commend, I want to pay special focus and tribute to Chairman WALSH's leadership on mental health care. I think it is vital that we provide our veterans who have served in combat, risked their lives, given so much for our country, receive the health care they deserve, whether it is mental health care, or to deal with their physical wounds.

In many cases, Mr. Chairman, mental health care wounds last longer than physical wounds; and I think one of Chairman WALSH's great legacies in Congress will have been to send a clear message to the VA and the Congress that we must make VA mental health care a priority. I salute the chairman for that legacy and that leadership.

Mr. Chairman, I am glad that we on a bipartisan basis rejected the Administration's proposal to have a \$250 enrollment fee for men and women who served in uniform to be considered for VA health care.

Mr. Chairman, I believe the Congress believes that our veterans paid their enrollment fee when they put on our country's uniform and agreed to go into harm's way.

We also in a bipartisan manner rejected the Administration's proposal to go from \$8 dollars to \$15 for a copay for veterans prescription drugs. That may not sound like a big increase for many. But when you are an 80-year-old World War II veteran and you are taking six,

seven, or eight drugs a month, that prescription copay increase would have created a lot of harm. I salute the subcommittee and the leadership of the subcommittee for rejecting that proposal.

Finally, and Chairman WALSH mentioned this earlier, I think the entire Congress, as well as this committee, ought to be proud of the quality of military health care services our troops wounded in combat are receiving. I was proud to be on the trip to Germany where we went to the Landstuhl Hospital where our medical personnel are saving lives every day.

Mr. Chairman, it is because of the decisions and the budget funding of Congress that men and women are alive today that would have died in any other previous war. That is a great tribute to the effort and leadership of this Congress on defense health care spending.

Finally, I think it is good that we are having the \$6.5 billion increase in military construction funding. I also want to put that in perspective, though. Do not let anyone conclude, Mr. Chairman, that that is a Cadillac budget for military construction. That pays for vitally needed construction to support our troops fighting the war on terrorism and those fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. It also is needed to help implement the Base Realignment and Closing Commission recommendations, which will cost taxpayers additional funding up front but will save billions of dollars in the out years.

Mr. Chairman, let me just say my concerns. My biggest single concern is that, because of the inadequate budget allocation to this subcommittee, again, \$824 million less than the President requested, we actually have a bill that underfunds defense health care spending by \$735 million less than President Bush said was needed to maintain our quality of care system.

If I felt that the final bill were going to underfund defense health care that drastically, I simply could not vote for this bill. But I hope and I trust that we will work on a bipartisan basis from now to the final passage of the conference report on this bill to find those dollars, because I hope we all agree it would be morally wrong to cut the quality of defense health care for our troops and our military retirees, especially during a time of war.

My second concern is, we have got a huge backlog of cleaning up past military installations that have been closed. I want to urge the administration which, along with the previous administration, frankly, did not recognize the need for these programs.

Thirdly, while we increase VA spending, health care spending by about \$3 billion, because of the inadequate allocation for our subcommittee, we had to almost effectively freeze VA health care research. We are going this year from a backlog for veterans having their claims considered by the VA from being an average of 167 days to 185 days.

Mr. Chairman, I urge the VA and I urge Congress to take a look at that. We do not need to be moving backwards, because so often, especially for our older veterans, justice delayed is justice denied.

Mr. Chairman, I also wish the same week we gave the retired, just-retired Exxon CEO a \$2 million dividend tax cut we do not say that if you are a veteran making 28 or \$29,000 a year, you make too much money to deserve VA care if you did not have combat wounds. I think our veterans making \$28,000, \$29,000, \$30,000 have earned the right to receive VA care.

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But having expressed those concerns, I have to salute this subcommittee and its leadership for working on a solid, professional, bipartisan basis to take a limited budget, a budget almost \$1 billion below the President's request for this area, and putting the money where it was most needed in very, very positive ways.

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

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, at this time, I would yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Colorado, the chairman of the Readiness and Military Construction Subcommittee on the House Armed Services Committee, Mr. HEFLEY, for 3 minutes.

Mr. HEFLEY. I thank the gentleman very much for yielding.

As chairman of the authorizing committee for much of this bill, I rise today in support of H.R. 5385.

This is a good bill. It provides more than \$16 billion for military construction activities for the Department of Defense, including more than \$5 billion to implement Base Realignment and Closure decisions and \$4 billion for family housing for military personnel. It will make meaningful improvements in the facilities which our military people and their families live and work.

At the same time, I don't want to argue that it is a perfect bill. For instance, I would have liked to see an increase in funding for military construction facilities restoration accounts. I would also have preferred full funding of the BRAC's 2005 account, as cuts in this account will impact DOD's ability to implement BRAC moves in a timely manner. However, in general, it is a good bill which I am pleased to support.

With respect to the MILCON projects appropriated within the bill, I would note that they largely mirror those projects authorized in the Defense Authorization Act that passed the House last week. This approach whereby specific projects are both authorized and appropriated is unique to military construction activities and is a longstanding practice. Over time, it has helped ensure that construction activities for the Department of Defense are reviewed by multiple bodies within the

Congress to ensure that they are viable, affordable, and necessary.

This year, through close scrutiny of the President's budget request, the authorizing and appropriating committees found numerous projects and requests that were flawed, unnecessary, or of low priority. By cutting those projects, we were able to do some of the more crucial projects.

The projects added to this bill are critical to military readiness requirements, such as the child development centers for families of military personnel, alert complexes for pilots, fighter jets that patrol the skies over our cities, and urban training facilities to teach our servicemembers how to fight in city environments.

On a final note, Mr. Chairman, I would like to acknowledge the members and the staff of the Military Quality of Life Subcommittee for their efforts. Their professionalism and willingness to maintain the working relationship and spirit of cooperation between our two committees is extraordinary. I especially want to thank Chairman WALSH and Ranking Member EDWARDS and their fine staff for their help in this process, and applaud them for producing such a very good bill.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds.

I didn't earlier salute Chairman HEFLEY and Mr. ORTIZ, the chairman and ranking member, respectively, of the Armed Services Committee that authorizes these programs.

It is not often and certainly not always, many times not often that the authorizers and appropriators work so closely together, and I salute the leadership on both sides of the aisle of the authorizing appropriations committee for doing this in the right way and doing it together. I thank Chairman Hefley for his leadership in that area.

I would like to now recognize Mr. BLUMENAUER of Oregon for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy in permitting me to speak. I appreciate Mr. EDWARDS' leadership, that of Chairman WALSH, and my good friend, SAM FARR, for taking the attention to the problem of the toxic and explosive legacy of 225 years of military operations in the United States. We are not talking about problems overseas, we are talking about communities in every single State in the Union.

Mr. FARR's experience with Fort Ord over, I don't know, over 15 years now, has demonstrated the scope and scale of the promise, if we do it right, there are tremendous opportunities. Many of these bases are jewels that can be returned to productive use.

His experience has also shown how complicated they can be; that if we don't have the right plan, we don't invest the resources, it can drag on and on and on. Sadly, we have over 3,000 sites around the country that still are a part of this toxic legacy.

I do appreciate what the subcommittee has done. You have a dif-

ficult job. I wouldn't want to have to balance those equities. But I am here today arguing for more attention and more resources to deal with accelerating the problem in the past and the promises of the past.

I am going to offer an amendment in a few minutes that would transfer from the 2005 BRAC account money that will be used to deal with the first four rounds and those communities that are waiting.

Now, there are going to be some who will say, well, you are offsetting a much bigger number than the mere \$77 million. And that is because the 5.3 billion, an increase of \$3.6 billion that is technically set aside for 2005 is not going to be spent. The payout rate is something like 5 percent for this next year. You are not going to use it. It is a phony number. You can safely transfer resources to help people who have already suffered closure and who have not been dealt with fairly by this Congress. You can look at Mather Air Force Base in California, closed in the first round, and their cleanup isn't slated to be completed until 2072. That is unconscionable.

I would respectfully request that Congress no longer be missing in action when it comes to cleaning up the bombs, the munitions, the fuel depot, the multiple problems that have been left by communities, for communities to deal with, and impede the recycling. On base closures under BRAC, the unexploded bombs and chemical contamination prevents 140,000 acres on closed and realigned bases from being transferred right now to local communities for redevelopment.

The last point I would make is that it goes far beyond this subcommittee. Again, I appreciate their attention and the work they have done, but we have to have the appropriations committee and the authorizing committees to get serious about this. We have an up and down cycle where we put some money in and then the money goes away. We transfer it in areas when all of a sudden there is a huge problem that gets the attention, like Spring Valley in Washington, DC. on the campus of the American University. That is where we tested and developed chemical weapons during World War I.

We have had three cleanups to try and solve that problem. The more that we focus on this, the more that we invest on an ongoing basis, the more that we develop the techniques, the technology, it is not just going to save people around the country from this problem, but that same technology that will help us figure out whether it is a hub cap or a 105 millimeter shell will be able to be used to protect our soldiers in Iraq. That is how I lost my first constituent, was a land mine.

Now, I would suggest that, if we get serious about this, we will not only accelerate the technology and the research that will make our communities safer and healthier here at home, but it will protect lives of our service people

overseas and will also deal with the vast amounts of munitions and land mines that are scattered all around the world that kill innocent victims every day.

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

What I would like to do is ask, if there is no objection of my colleague from Texas, I have two brief colloquies that I would like to enter into with two of my colleagues.

At this time, Mr. Chairman, I would yield for the purpose of colloquy 2 minutes to Mr. WICKER of Mississippi, a member of the committee.

Mr. WICKER. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, may I say initially that I certainly support the passage of H.R. 5385 and urge my colleagues to cast an "aye" vote. But I rise at this point to enter into a colloquy with Chairman WALSH regarding Columbus Air Force Base in Columbus, Mississippi.

During fiscal year 2006 military quality of life appropriations process, funding was authorized and provided for the first phase of the mission support complex at Columbus Air Force Base. Currently, mission support facilities are spread across the base and are too small for their functions. The proposed mission support complex will consolidate many of the command and control functions into one complex adjacent to the wing headquarters. Also, this new facility will meet new force protection antiterrorism standards.

Funding for the second and final phase of this complex is needed to complete the project. I realize this project was not authorized in the House version of the 2007 Defense Authorization Act, and this fact prevented the project from being funded in this appropriation bill, Mr. Chairman. However, I hope the chairman will work with me as this bill moves through conference in order to complete the project on schedule.

Mr. WALSH. If the gentleman will yield for the purpose of colloquy, I thank the gentlemen for bringing this issue to our attention.

Funding in the amount of \$10 million was provided in last year's bill, fiscal year 2006, to begin construction of this project. I appreciate the importance of completing this project on time, and the committee will keep the gentleman's concerns in mind as we go to conference with the Senate. I know this is also a priority for the gentleman's Senators from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. I thank the chairman very much for yielding and this colloquy.

Mr. WALSH. Now, Mr. Chairman, I would yield 30 seconds to my colleague, Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina, for a brief statement.

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. I thank the gentleman for yielding. And I know Chairman WALSH and Representative BEAUPREZ from Colorado have been working to solve veterans'

needs in Colorado. And, Mr. Chairman, I would respectfully ask unanimous consent to submit for the RECORD the following statement by my friend and colleague Representative BEAUPREZ from Colorado.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's request will be handled under general leave.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I would like to recognize the gentleman from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ) for 2 minutes.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague from Texas for this time and for his work on this bill.

I support this bill because it represents a vast improvement over the administration's budget request. But I don't think that we have in this bill the answer, the sufficient funds that we need particularly for our VA health care system.

I know without a doubt that all of my colleagues in this House want to support our veterans, but the fact remains that the Veterans Administration is chronically underfunded, and it is struggling to provide very basic services and benefits to the veterans as we have promised them.

The answer to our VA funding problem? Let's adequately fund the VA in the budget so that the veterans will receive the kind of care that they were promised when they signed up to defend this country.

While I am pleased that the Appropriations Committee saw fit to increase the VA funding from the wholly inadequate amount that the President had suggested, I am disappointed that the efforts of several of my colleagues, including Mr. FARR, to provide an additional \$2.6 billion for our critical health care needs of our Nation's veterans was not successful in this committee.

□ 1115

As a member of the Blue Dog Coalition, I believe fiscal responsibility should be one of the Federal Government's top priorities, but there should be no higher priority than honoring the promises that we have made to our veterans.

We cannot in good conscience balance this budget or reduce the deficit at their expense. How we treat our veterans, how we treat our veterans is a sign of our character as a Nation. The men and women who have sacrificed so much in defense of our country deserve no less than the very best that we have to offer in return.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER), the chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee of the House.

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the good work of Chairman WALSH and my good friend CHET EDWARDS on the bill. I have never questioned the sincerity of both of you in your service for my comrades and the

men and women who wear the uniform. I appreciate your service.

I appreciate the advocacy also of the previous speaker, but I also have to disagree with some of her words in context because I think what we have done here is put together a pretty good bill.

Also, at the same time, I have to turn to the administration and express my appreciation to them to send one of the largest increases of any Department once again to Congress. I think it reflects our commitment to care for the veterans who need us most. It also ensures the seamless transition from military to civilian life and to provide our veterans with economic opportunities. At a time when most Federal spending will see very few increases, this spending increase for veterans will rise another 10 percent for fiscal year 2007.

After the budget shortfall that I identified last summer, I commend VA Secretary Nicholson for taking the challenge presented last year as we examined the concerns with regard to VA's budgeting process within the model that is used. Secretary Nicholson took ownership of the fiscal year 2007 budget, and it appears that improving the integrity of the process has born fruit with this legislation.

I would also note that that responsibility did not rely solely upon the Secretary. We can demand accountability of others, but we also have to demand accountability to ourselves. So what I did was I also changed the process here in Congress and said for a long time we would take the counsel and advice from military service organizations and veterans service organizations and we receive that counsel after we put together the budget, and it had been done that way for decades. Now, does that even pass the straight face test? Does that even pass common sense? I think the answer is no.

So what we did was we changed the process on how we receive the testimony from our veterans organizations and military service organizations. Before that decision was made, I met with most of them at Carlisle Barracks in Pennsylvania at a veterans summit, and then the decision was made to sever the joint hearings and receive their testimony as soon as we received the President's budget and before we put together the budget use and estimates, extremely important.

So let me share with all my colleagues that this is something that has never been done before. This right here is the testimony of 19 veterans service organizations and military service organizations that was received prior to the formulation of the budget. What a radical thing to do. It only makes sense to do this. So I am really pleased, and as a matter of fact, it is reflected in what Chairman WALSH has been able to put together, and I have such deep respect for Chairman WALSH and what he has done here.

The other thing I would like to do is I agree with the gentleman from Texas

(Mr. EDWARDS) commending the leadership of Chairman WALSH on mental health. I also want to share and enlighten my colleagues with something we are dealing with.

In the VA, we are dealing with the consequences of many of these roadside bombs, and when I say the consequences, let me pause, and once again, I am going to applaud you again. When we created the four polytrauma centers, the ones in Palo Alto, Minneapolis, Tampa and Richmond, these polytrauma centers are caring for the traumatic brain injuries. These wounds that we are dealing with are so much different from wounds from other wars. The American people have placed such demand upon us, and rightfully so, to do all we can to care for the men and women who are serving us, and what do we do? We reach into the Treasury and we do everything to protect the torso. We have them in their body armor. We bought them a new helmet. That helmet is strapped on. The soldier then takes the body armor, they flip it up, they have got on the helmet, the roadside bomb explodes.

Now, typically in an explosion the torso will absorb part of the blast; but right now, we have protected the torso. So when the force comes in and hits the torso, the force goes up, and it disseminates, but that which goes up hits them in the face and goes up into the helmet and cannot escape. So as it goes up into the helmet and cannot escape, we now have more traumatic brain injury than ever before.

I am enlightening all my colleagues to this because I want to work with Mr. EDWARDS and the chairman because I think what we need to do is redesign a new helmet. We need to design a helmet that can have some type of vent system with regard to this force, at the same time not compromise the integrity of the helmet.

Will you join me in this one? We need to do this because when you visit our polytrauma centers and all the traumatic brain injury and the eye injuries that we are receiving, you will have your maxillofacial damage, but some of that can be taken care of. But these brain injuries are very severe, and so we need to look at this helmet, and I want to work with both of you to do that.

I also want to comment on, we are on the authorization side. You are ahead of us here, and we are working on the construction budget, and we have a tremendous challenge in front of us. I want to work with you.

On the construction side of this, it has been 15 years since we have built a VA hospital. So a lot of the institutional knowledge on how to build VA hospitals is no longer there, and this spending \$625 million for 170 beds, wow, is a lot of money. So our challenge is we have got Las Vegas and we have got Denver, we have got Orlando, New Orleans and Charleston, South Carolina. As we examine this collaborative effort between a medical university and a VA

and how we could share facilities, as we were working on that, then Katrina hits. So then we say, okay, we can leverage that perhaps in New Orleans, and that is what is being done right now between the VA and LSU.

But I want to work with both of you as we move on the construction budget and I commend you.

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

I want to thank Chairman BUYER for not only his kind comments but also even more importantly for his service to our country, his military service to our country in Operation Desert Storm in the first Iraqi war.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN).

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank both the chairman and the ranking member for putting together this legislation and for the appropriations.

It is interesting because I do not serve on Armed Services or obviously Appropriations or Defense approps, but I think every Member of this House is affected by what is in this bill because all of us have seen our young men and women who have come back, who have been injured, and that is what this bill is about, the VA medical facilities, the medical facilities for these service personnel who are injured, and it is great to hear some of the good things that are in this bill. I know it is under very strict limitations, but I want to thank the committee for doing this.

I want to talk about something that is very specific briefly, about an important project in my own area. Now, in Houston we do not have a base. We have a lot of reserve units, but we have the Ellington Field where they have F-16s, and we have a fire station that needs to be put in there. We have one that does not meet either Air Force standards or OSHA standards, and it is a facility that serves not only our Air National Guard but our Army National Guard, the U.S. Coast Guard, NASA, and of course, civil aircraft.

The existing facility, like I said, is rapidly deteriorating and does not meet either OSHA or Air Force standards. Roof leaks and lack of insulation result in equipment being destroyed and extremely high operating costs. The lack of adequate facilities and space do not allow for proper integration of female firefighters. Storage facilities do not exist and require hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of equipment to be stored outside, and traditional Guardsmen must store issued equipment at their homes.

New firefighting apparatus must be parked outside the station because they do not fit in the truck bays. Currently, our 147th has one fire truck valued at \$1 million which is unable to fit into the station, and the unit is expecting delivery of another one this year. This results in slower response times, degraded performance, and vehicle deterioration.

The funding I requested for this new fire station will not only bring the facilities up to OSHA and Air Force standards but will protect the investments already made in the equipment in the base.

Plans are under way to move 2,300 Army, Navy and Marine Corps Reserve troops from elsewhere in the Houston area to Ellington to make it really a joint Reserve base. As this happens, we must ensure there is sufficient infrastructure to support these units.

Again, the fourth largest city in the country affecting not only Johnson Space Center and the petrochemical industry, but I would appreciate any consideration by the committee during the conference report.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE), a member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I certainly want to commend the committee chairman, as well as the ranking minority member, for working on this very important bill.

Coming from Florida, I represent the highest number of veterans of any Member of Congress. We have worked very hard in the last few years that I have been here to make sure that veterans' needs are adequately funded. Obviously, this bill before us today has a record level of funding for veterans' needs.

The committee, for the first time, used the veterans service organizations' independent budget as kind of the baseline for the fiscal year 2007 funding. Obviously, the veterans groups want to make sure that every single need is met. This appropriation does do exactly that. The total funding is \$2.6 billion above last year's level and \$100 million below the President's request.

We are improving health care substantially, as well as opening up additional community-based outpatient clinics. The C-BOCs are very, very well received in each one of our districts and do meet the veterans' needs.

Obviously, we were able to again ward off the additional fees that were proposed in the administration's budget.

We want to make sure that we continue to be able to go home and tell our veterans that this Congress, the people on this side of the aisle, people on the other side of the aisle, recognize the need to make sure that our veterans, whether they are from World War II or whether they are coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan, that they are adequately cared for.

The bill also contains an additional \$20 million over last year's level for veterans nursing homes, and I again want to commend the chairman of the committee.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) for the purpose of a colloquy.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Chairman, as you know, many veterans live hours from major hospitals, making it very difficult for them to get the care they need; and oftentimes, for those who have to travel there two or three times a week, they have a terrible quality of life. That is why our local veterans health care clinics, known as Community-Based Outpatient Clinics, are just so important to deliver quality care for veterans. These have been stalled in recent years; yet, my understanding is that in this bill there is a strong commitment of \$25 million to build the highest priority Community-Based Outpatient Clinics in the country. Is that the case?

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

Mr. BRADY of Texas. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Texas for his concern for veterans and for his leadership on this important area of veterans health care, community outreach clinics; and, yes, in fact, the subcommittee prioritized \$25 million for the VA to open up 10 of the highest priority CBOCs in the country, and so the gentleman is correct.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Well, let me just conclude with this. One of my communities, Conroe, the veterans and I have worked for a number of years to try to make this a reality. This is great news for our veterans; and, more importantly, I think it is great news for all those communities that will get help for their veterans care, and I will just tell you that we are grateful for Chairman WALSH's leadership. This is just awful good news.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman.

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

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

□ 1130

Ms. LEE. Mr. Chairman, thank you for yielding, and I want to enter into a colloquy with the chairman of the subcommittee, Mr. WALSH.

I want to thank the gentleman for his hard work on this bill and also for his dedication to our brave young men and women serving abroad. I come to the floor today to raise an issue that I know is very important to all of us, as well as to you, Mr. Chairman, on the issue of the mental health of our troops who are deployed in harm's way.

An investigative report this week by the Hartford Courant, based on records obtained from a Freedom of Information Act request, revealed, and I quote: "United States military troops with severe psychological problems were sent to Iraq or kept in combat even when superiors had been aware of signs of mental illness."

We all know that going to war can be psychologically very difficult, yet it was found that less than one in 300

troops received a referral to mental health professionals before being sent to war. Still, the Pentagon's own physicians have estimated that one in 11 troops going into conflict suffer from some form of major depression, anxiety, or post-traumatic stress disorder.

The 1998 Defense Authorization Act included explicit direction to the Defense Department to include an assessment of mental health in its medical tracking system for troops deployed overseas. However, the Department's predeployment health assessment form has only one question on mental health.

Mr. Chairman, I believe this is a disservice to our troops, and I understand that there is additional money for the military services to begin to integrate mandatory mental health services into the standard operating procedures for our soldiers. I support the chairman in that effort, and I look forward to working with him on the initial assessment of mental health for troops being deployed and to ensure that the intent of the 1998 law is fully implemented.

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

Ms. LEE. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding and I thank her for expressing her concern on this very important issue. This is a priority of the highest order for our subcommittee. We take it very seriously.

As you heard Mr. EDWARDS say, we have moved on this issue in a number of ways. So I want to assure the gentlewoman from California that I agree with her on the need for the increased mental health screening and appreciate her intention in raising this issue. I want to assure her that we will be mindful of this issue as we move this bill forward.

Ms. LEE. Let me just thank the gentleman for his attention to this issue, and I look forward to working with him and the ranking member to be ensure it is moved forward and is addressed as he just stated.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN).

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. I thank the gentleman for yielding. Mr. Chairman, soon our country will be rightfully commemorating the sacrifices made by our military servicemembers on Memorial Day, and words alone can never sufficiently express our gratitude for their service and their dedication to our country, especially those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

Today, the House is considering H.R. 5385, a bill that would fund essential medical programs for our courageous veterans. With the return of our servicemembers from Iraq and Afghanistan in particular, we have learned last year that the demands on our veterans health care system have risen at a rate for which we were not prepared.

While I am pleased that H.R. 5385 contains significant increases from last year and does not recommend the administration's fee increases for TRICARE recipients, I am still concerned that this bill does not fully reflect the needs of our returning troops, nor does it guarantee that our veterans receive the very best health care.

I encourage my colleagues to support increased funding so that our veterans have accessible, timely, and affordable health care. I especially support more funding for mental health assessments for servicemembers returning from abroad, particularly now that our troops are stretched incredibly thin and the psychological burdens and the stresses on them are tremendous. We need to make sure that they have sufficient support when they return home, whether it is counseling services or other things, to help them fully integrate into society. It has an effect on them, their families, and society as a whole.

Mr. Chairman, I sincerely hope that we learn from past mistakes that we cannot and must not shortchange the veterans who have so selflessly served our country. Mr. Chairman, it is our job and our duty to ensure that our veterans receive the benefits that they were promised and the recognition that they deserve.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), a member of the committee.

Mr. KIRK. I thank the chairman.

As a member of the subcommittee, I strongly support this bipartisan bill, and it contains a key reform to ensure that Americans in uniform, veterans, sailors, and their families, will join together in a new joint VA-Navy Hospital to be built in north Chicago, Illinois.

I have worked on this for 5 years. In 2000, the previous administration announced plans to close the north Chicago VA, saying that veterans in northern Illinois could easily get to downtown Chicago in just 30 minutes. Only a Washington consultant with a map and a string would think that.

We knew that we could do much better; that we could dramatically improve health care for veterans who wore green, who wore white, who wore blue, and their families, at a joint Navy-VA facility. This bill begins the funding of that hospital. It includes \$23 million for the first joint VA-Navy Hospital in the country.

Already, we have moved many Navy services into the north Chicago VA, and this summer we will open several state-of-the-art rooms. But this embraces the new vision of a brand-new facility taking care of Americans in uniform, veterans, and their families.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to support the Military Quality of Life Appropriations Bill (H.R. 5385). This is an improvement, albeit a small one, over the President's budget request for the Department of Veterans Affairs. In total, the Committee provided an additional \$635 million above the President's budget. Everyone on my side of the aisle—and all of

the veteran service organizations—viewed that figure as inadequate. Several of my colleagues—including Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. FARR, and Mr. OBEY—did their best to get the committee to fund adequately hospital construction, personnel hiring, and health care delivery initiatives that are vital to meeting our veterans needs. Instead, the committee voted to give still more tax cuts to millionaires.

Whom do we value more—those who make millions, or those whose valor made it possible for the millionaires to flourish in peace and freedom in the first place?

On January 17, 2003, the Bush Administration stopped enrolling new Priority 8 veterans for VA medical care, and the President's budget continues this restrictive policy. This Republican policy has denied health care to 273,000 and prevented 1 million veterans, who make as little as \$26,902, from enrolling in VA health care. Those who are eligible are often forced to wait in line for care. As VA officials admitted to Congress in February, the VA has treated more than 144,000 returning veterans from Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, and nearly 30,000 veterans are waiting in line for their first appointment—double the number last year.

Nearly a third of returning veterans from Iraq or Afghanistan have been diagnosed with mental disorders, with nearly half of those PTSD, according to the VA. The number of troops back this year from Iraq and Afghanistan with post-traumatic stress disorder could total 15,000 or more—five times higher than the VA predicted. And as the Kansas City Star noted on April 30, the “miscalculation on PTSD echoes last year's underestimation by the Bush administration of how many Iraq and Afghanistan veterans would need medical treatment.”

The President and his Congressional allies don't seem to have any problem paying for the weapons of war, but they do seem to have a problem paying for the consequences of war. But the country that sends its people into combat—its sons and daughters, its husbands and wives, its sisters and brothers—has a sacred obligation to take care of those people when they come home—and to care for their survivors when they do not. It is an obligation that goes back to Abraham Lincoln in 1865. It is an obligation we have never fully met—under administrations and Congresses of both parties.

This budget, while better than what the President submitted, does not truly meet that obligation. Any member of this body who has committed this country to a war costing \$400 billion can surely find it in their hearts to their budget to produce the \$2 billion that the veteran's organizations say is missing in this bill. Yet this bill fails to provide \$6 billion from what current veterans need over the next 5 years for their health care. I hope that next year we will pass a budget that veterans feel meets their needs, rather than one they view as “the best they could get.”

Finally, there is a VA clinic in my district leasing space at Fort Monmouth which is scheduled to close under the 2005 BRAC recommendations. Secretary Nicholson has pledged to me in writing that this clinic will stay open through 2010 at its present location and working to maintain its location in Monmouth County beyond that. While the Pentagon must take into account the care and well-being of the veterans served by the base when following BRAC procedures, the VA

must have sufficient resources meet the veteran's needs. In this case, it means having the resources to acquire a much needed facility after the Army leaves town. At present those resources are not there. I look forward to working with my colleague to ensure that the veterans of my district will continue to receive the same high quality care they currently have.

Mr. BEAUPREZ. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to acknowledge Chairman WALSH and the members of the Military Quality of Life—VA Appropriations Subcommittee for their willingness to work with the VA to meet the needs of Colorado's veteran population.

The VA's effort to coordinate and reassess the current and future health care needs of our Nation's veterans has been a monumental undertaking. The CARES report cited numerous locations throughout the VA's nationwide network of medical facilities that are in need of improvement. A replacement facility for the VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System in Denver was one of the top priorities listed in the CARES report. Unfortunately, the original plan to share facilities with the University of Colorado was deemed infeasible. After years of hard work and negotiations, the VA has finally found a workable solution that meets their needs, and will allow them to continue their 50-year working relationship with the University of Colorado.

I commend Chairman WALSH for his commitment to this project, and for helping the VA reprogram existing funds for the purchase of the land. This is a critical first step in accomplishing the mission at hand.

While there is still much to be done in order for this project to be a success, I am optimistic that we will be able to overcome the obstacles and provide the veterans of the Rocky Mountain region with the hospital they deserve.

Mr. Chairman, again, I want to thank Chairman WALSH for his commitment to our Nation's veterans, and more specifically to the health care needs of Colorado's veterans. Without question, this project could not move forward without his assistance.

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

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

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.

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. 5385

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 military quality of life functions of the Department of Defense, military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY (INCLUDING RESCISSION OF FUNDS)

For acquisition, construction, installation, and equipment of temporary or permanent public works, military installations, facilities, and real property for the Army as currently authorized by law, including personnel in the Army Corps of Engineers and other personal services necessary for the purposes of this appropriation, and for construction and operation of facilities in support of the functions of the Commander in Chief, \$1,756,298,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That of this amount, not to exceed \$220,830,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, architect and engineer services, and host nation support, as authorized by law, unless the Secretary of Defense determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor: *Provided further*, That of the funds appropriated for “Military Construction, Army” under Public Law 109-114, \$43,348,000 are hereby rescinded.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, NAVY AND MARINE CORPS

(INCLUDING RESCISSIONS OF FUNDS)

For acquisition, construction, installation, and equipment of temporary or permanent public works, naval installations, facilities, and real property for the Navy and Marine Corps as currently authorized by law, including personnel in the Naval Facilities Engineering Command and other personal services necessary for the purposes of this appropriation, \$1,193,834,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That of this amount, not to exceed \$72,857,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Secretary of Defense determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor: *Provided further*, That of the funds appropriated for “Military Construction, Navy and Marine Corps” under Public Law 108-132, \$30,000,000 are hereby rescinded: *Provided further*, That of the funds appropriated for “Military Construction, Navy and Marine Corps” under Public Law 108-324, \$8,000,000 are hereby rescinded.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, AIR FORCE

(INCLUDING RESCISSION OF FUNDS)

For acquisition, construction, installation, and equipment of temporary or permanent public works, military installations, facilities, and real property for the Air Force as currently authorized by law, \$1,187,550,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That of this amount, not to exceed \$97,504,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Secretary of Defense determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor: *Provided further*, That of the funds appropriated for “Military Construction, Air Force” under Public Law 108-324, \$2,694,000 are hereby rescinded.

Mr. WALSH (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the remainder of the bill through page 11, line 11 be considered as read, printed in the RECORD, and open to amendment at any point.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill through page 11, line 11, is as follows:

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, DEFENSE-WIDE
(INCLUDING TRANSFER AND RESCISSIONS OF FUNDS)

For acquisition, construction, installation, and equipment of temporary or permanent public works, installations, facilities, and real property for activities and agencies of the Department of Defense (other than the military departments), as currently authorized by law, \$1,107,606,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That such amounts of this appropriation as may be determined by the Secretary of Defense may be transferred to such appropriations of the Department of Defense available for military construction or family housing as the Secretary may designate, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes, and for the same time period, as the appropriation or fund to which transferred: *Provided further*, That of the amount appropriated, not to exceed \$172,950,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Secretary of Defense determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor: *Provided further*, That of the funds appropriated for "Military Construction, Defense-Wide" under Public Law 108-132, \$9,000,000 are hereby rescinded: *Provided further*, That of the funds appropriated for "Military Construction, Defense-Wide" under Public Law 108-324, \$43,000,000 are hereby rescinded: *Provided further*, That of the funds appropriated for "Military Construction, Defense-Wide" under Public Law 109-114, \$58,229,000 are hereby rescinded.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY NATIONAL
GUARD

For construction, acquisition, expansion, rehabilitation, and conversion of facilities for the training and administration of the Army National Guard, and contributions therefor, as authorized by chapter 1803 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, \$512,873,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, AIR NATIONAL
GUARD

For construction, acquisition, expansion, rehabilitation, and conversion of facilities for the training and administration of the Air National Guard, and contributions therefor, as authorized by chapter 1803 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, \$207,088,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY RESERVE

For construction, acquisition, expansion, rehabilitation, and conversion of facilities for the training and administration of the Army Reserve as authorized by chapter 1803 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, \$167,774,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, NAVY RESERVE

For construction, acquisition, expansion, rehabilitation, and conversion of facilities for the training and administration of the reserve components of the Navy and Marine Corps as authorized by chapter 1803 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, \$55,158,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, AIR FORCE RESERVE

For construction, acquisition, expansion, rehabilitation, and conversion of facilities for the training and administration of the Air Force Reserve as authorized by chapter 1803 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, \$56,836,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011.

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION
SECURITY INVESTMENT PROGRAM

For the United States share of the cost of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Security Investment Program for the acquisition and construction of military facilities and installations (including international military headquarters) and for related expenses for the collective defense of the North Atlantic Treaty Area as authorized by section 2806 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, \$200,985,000, to remain available until expended.

FAMILY HOUSING CONSTRUCTION, ARMY

For expenses of family housing for the Army for construction, including acquisition, replacement, addition, expansion, extension, and alteration, as authorized by law, \$578,791,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011.

FAMILY HOUSING OPERATION AND
MAINTENANCE, ARMY

For expenses of family housing for the Army for operation and maintenance, including debt payment, leasing, minor construction, principal and interest charges, and insurance premiums, as authorized by law, \$674,657,000.

FAMILY HOUSING CONSTRUCTION, NAVY AND
MARINE CORPS

For expenses of family housing for the Navy and Marine Corps for construction, including acquisition, replacement, addition, expansion, extension, and alteration, as authorized by law, \$308,956,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011.

FAMILY HOUSING OPERATION AND
MAINTENANCE, NAVY AND MARINE CORPS

For expenses of family housing for the Navy and Marine Corps for operation and maintenance, including debt payment, leasing, minor construction, principal and interest charges, and insurance premiums, as authorized by law, \$509,126,000.

FAMILY HOUSING CONSTRUCTION, AIR FORCE
(INCLUDING RESCISSIONS OF FUNDS)

For expenses of family housing for the Air Force for construction, including acquisition, replacement, addition, expansion, extension, and alteration, as authorized by law, \$1,169,138,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That of the funds appropriated for "Family Housing Construction, Air Force" under Public Law 108-324, \$23,400,000 are hereby rescinded: *Provided further*, That of the funds appropriated for "Family Housing Construction, Air Force" under Public Law 109-114, \$42,800,000 are hereby rescinded.

FAMILY HOUSING OPERATION AND
MAINTENANCE, AIR FORCE

For expenses of family housing for the Air Force for operation and maintenance, including debt payment, leasing, minor construction, principal and interest charges, and insurance premiums, as authorized by law, \$755,071,000.

FAMILY HOUSING CONSTRUCTION, DEFENSE-
WIDE

For expenses of family housing for the activities and agencies of the Department of Defense (other than the military departments) for construction, including acquisi-

tion, replacement, addition, expansion, extension, and alteration, as authorized by law, \$8,808,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011.

FAMILY HOUSING OPERATION AND
MAINTENANCE, DEFENSE-WIDE

For expenses of family housing for the activities and agencies of the Department of Defense (other than the military departments) for operation and maintenance, leasing, and minor construction, as authorized by law, \$48,506,000.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FAMILY HOUSING
IMPROVEMENT FUND

For the Department of Defense Family Housing Improvement Fund, \$2,500,000, to remain available until expended, for family housing initiatives undertaken pursuant to section 2883 of title 10, United States Code, providing alternative means of acquiring and improving military family housing and supporting facilities.

CHEMICAL DEMILITARIZATION CONSTRUCTION,
DEFENSE-WIDE
(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For expenses of construction, not otherwise provided for, necessary for the destruction of the United States stockpile of lethal chemical agents and munitions in accordance with the provisions of section 1412 of the Department of Defense Authorization Act, 1986 (50 U.S.C. 1521), and for the destruction of other chemical warfare materials that are not in the chemical weapon stockpile, as currently authorized by law, \$90,993,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That such amounts of this appropriation as may be determined by the Secretary of Defense may be transferred to such appropriations of the Department of Defense available for military construction as the Secretary may designate, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes, and for the same time period, as the appropriation to which transferred.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read. The Clerk read as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE
ACCOUNT 1990

For deposit into the Department of Defense Base Closure Account 1990, established by section 2906(a)(1) of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (10 U.S.C. 2687 note), \$216,220,000, to remain available until expended.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BLUMENAUER

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. BLUMENAUER:

Under the heading "DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE ACCOUNT 1990", insert after the dollar amount (page 11, line 17) the following: "(increased by \$27,500,000)".

Under the heading "DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE ACCOUNT 2005", insert after the dollar amount (page 11, line 24) the following: "(reduced by \$440,000,000)".

Under the heading "ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES", insert after the dollar amount (page 18, line 14) the following: "(increased by 50,000,000)".

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, I had the Clerk go ahead to read the numbers, because I think that we want to get one point clear from the outset. It looks like there is a big cut of \$440 million in order to be able to spend \$77,500,000. The point is, it is the same number.

There is a vast increase in the amount of money that has been set aside, a \$3.6 billion increase, for the

2005 base closure account. But we are not going to spend that money. The payout rate is only 5 percent. That is why you have to reduce it, under our arcane budget rules, by over \$400 million to get \$77 million back. The point is the tax dollars are exactly the same; and, additionally, the point, is where are we going to spend it?

I appreciate the opportunity to offer this amendment with my colleague Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE from Florida because we are trying to focus on the serious problem of the toxic legacy of military operations in this country. I have a map behind me where we have identified 3,398 sites around the country already. There are more that we are discovering.

The particular area we want to focus on today is that we are not spending adequate resources to deal with the bases that have already been closed. We have 140,000 acres that cannot be transferred because they haven't been adequately cleaned up from the previous BRAC closings. And this isn't just a case of, well, don't worry about it, put up some barbed wire and it will go away. These are problems that continue over time.

Unexploded ordnance has killed dozens of people. I have interesting little materials here. These are promotional materials that the Department of Defense gives to our soldiers to try and recognize it. This is a problem that threatens the health and well-being of our men and women in service right now on our bases.

One of my favorites is Larry the Lizard. This is being distributed in Southern California, coloring books, to tell children not to pick these things up. Now, if it is your son, your niece, your granddaughter, your little brother, maybe you feel better that there is a Larry the Lizard coloring book. But wouldn't you feel better if we stepped up and met our obligation and actually picked up those bombs, those unexploded munitions? I think you would. I know I would.

I think it is time that Congress no longer be missing in action on the issue of military cleanup. We don't know at this point whether there are 10 million acres or 40 million acres with unexploded ordnance.

Now, I appreciate, and I have expressed my admiration for this subcommittee's sinking their teeth into it and trying to do something, like my colleague, Mr. FARR, for his tireless championing of this cause. But this amendment today, this little amendment, shifting the same amount of money that will be spent from the most recent round of base closures with \$5.3 billion to increase the small amount of money that has been allocated to deal with prior facilities is a step in the right direction.

It would be a tragedy if we are going to continue to stretch this out over time. Our first obligation ought to be to those people who have suffered this experience before. Mather Air Force

Base in California isn't slated to be cleaned up until 2072 under the current rate of expenditure. They were closed in the first round. That is unconscionable.

At the rate we are going, it is a 200- to 300-year problem, and every delay means that we do not return the land to productive use. It means that people's lives are in jeopardy. We are coming up to fire season, and we are probably going to have to pull firefighters out of some of the forests where there had been training and there is a danger of the bombs exploding.

We are spending enough money on national defense that we can prioritize dealing with this toxic legacy that will make families safer at home and people around the world. Because, bear in mind, the sooner we develop this technology and refine the techniques, not only will it help us clean up here at home, that technology will be available to make our soldiers safe overseas as well.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. Chairman, while I certainly understand the intent of the gentleman's amendment and the sincerity with which he brings it, we can't accept this offset.

I understand the problem, and the subcommittee has included an increase of \$40 million for formerly used defense sites in the 1990 BRAC Round.

□ 1145

Additionally, we have included report language directing the Department of Defense to place a larger emphasis on these sites in future budgets. It is a problem. Clearly, it is a problem. Mr. FARR, Mr. BLUMENAUER, to their credit, have raised this issue. We are all concerned about it and we are moving on it. But, this is a bad way to go about it, and here is the reason. The gentleman's amendment would cut funds for the implementation of new BRAC rounds by \$440 million to get \$77 million. And the problem is the rate at which these funds are outlaid. Clearly, if we took the \$440 million out of the 2005 BRAC, that would further delay implementation of the BRAC, which would lead to problems just like this in the out years. If we use the \$440 million, it gets us \$77 million for these FUD sites, but it leaves \$363 million on the table that cannot, will not, won't be used by the Department.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WALSH. I would be happy to yield.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I want to understand this because I think it is very important. My understanding is the reason the offset of \$440 million is required is because they are not going to spend more than \$77 million this next year; is that correct?

Mr. WALSH. Reclaiming my time. While the funds may not be spent this year, they will be spent. They are need-

ed to implement this BRAC round. We learned from the last BRAC round that if we delay the initial investment, it costs far more in the long run to implement these BRACs.

I remind the gentleman again that he voted against the measure that would have delayed the implementation of the 2005 BRAC round, which is exactly what this amendment would do. Additionally, any delay in implementing BRAC reduces the savings and the efficiency of the BRAC that it is designated to promote. It may also cause the same types of environmental restoration problems at these current BRAC sites that we are experiencing from these past BRAC rounds. For that reason I oppose the gentleman's amendment.

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I certainly support this amendment. As the map showed, there are so many areas in this country where we have very, very dangerous sites. And let me tell you what the Army Corps of Engineers is doing about it. It not only is distributing coloring books, but it is also distributing, and it has U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on here, they also are distributing Frisbees telling kids to recognize, retreat and report when they see these live ordnances. I don't think this is the way that we should treat our young people, our neighbors who may live near these sites.

In my district there was the Brooksville Gunnery Range, and it was used during World War II for military practice. Since the Range's closure in 1946, thousands of my constituents have moved into the area and/or on adjacent lands that have not yet been surveyed. Unfortunately, inspections have found rockets, mortars and grenades, putting my constituents at substantial risk.

As a matter of fact, in one location there was a live ordnance found underneath a child's trampoline. Let me repeat that. There was a live ordnance found underneath a child's trampoline.

While the Army Corps of Engineers has been working to remove unexploded ordnances from Brooksville Gunnery Range, they must do more. We have to expand the area of exploration to make sure that we find and detonate all of the ordnances.

Now Brooksville is just one of these sites within my district and one of the sites in the United States. Jurisdiction over cleanup at these sites falls under these two major accounts which were mentioned here today, one, the formerly used defense sites account, and the BRAC 1990 account. So we are postponing and not adequately funding the cleanup, but we are working on 1990 sites. 1946 this range was closed.

The committee certainly has been working with us, and they understand that this is a large nationwide issue and urges the Department of Defense to increase funding in future years.

How much longer do we have to wait? It has been 60 years since this particular site was closed.

Fifty million dollars will go toward Formerly Used Defense Sites account, and \$27.5 million will go to the BRAC 1990 account.

In far too many cases, yesterday's military base is today's housing development. The last thing anyone wants to hear is that someone's child was seriously injured or killed while playing in his or her backyard, or as children often do, wandering through fields.

I don't think a Frisbee is the answer. I think that being responsive and actually making sure that we have adequate funds to clean up those sites is the necessary way to go.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, I want to just make one point, apropos the distinguished Chair of the subcommittee.

The \$5.3 billion that he is talking about, which will not be spent rapidly, is for all of base realignment and closure activity. That is for reconstruction, that is for building, that is for a whole range of things. It is not just the critical cleanup of the explosives. It is not where there is the critical danger.

So there is a whole range of things in there that I think any objective person on this floor would say is much less of a priority to save lives than what the gentlewoman from Florida pointed out. Our amendment focuses on putting the money where it is going to do the most—the clean up that is essential, that has been delayed and delayed and delayed.

I understand the Chair's concern that we don't want to delay the 2005 BRAC. Bear in mind, the amendment that we are offering deals with the people long before that, who have been waiting and waiting and waiting. I would suggest there is no fiscal impact that is going to hurt over the long haul. The financial incentives that he references will be available if we have the economy of scale for the ones that are more dangerous and are more delayed.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

I rise in support of the Blumenauer amendment. But before I do that, I want to really compliment Chairman WALSH. He did everything possible, with the bad figure he was given, to work out this account and to put some more money into it. But I think that the problem is so severe that we need this time to discuss it.

In essence, what Mr. BLUMENAUER has showed you with his map is that there are about 10 of these sites in every congressional district in the United States. It just averages out to that.

And what are they? Well, they are called UXOs, unexploded ordnances. Those are very serious things. Ordnances were developed to harm people, seriously harm people.

They are also called Former Used Defense sites. And those could just be

toxic wastes or other things. It is where the defense, back in the early wars and on the coastal areas, particularly Pacific coast, you had lookout areas and stuff like that. And there is a bunch of stuff in the ground, and that has to be cleaned up.

And then you also have military munitions response, MMR sites across this country.

Mr. BLUMENAUER is a true leader in being able to point out that this is sort of a huge Superfund, a Love Canal that might be in every congressional district. And I know it is just a matter of time before local newspapers who are starting to look at these maps and wondering where these things exist, and we in Congress are going to be hit right between the eyes and saying why didn't you do something about it if you knew it existed? And we know it has existed because it is a fact.

The geography is there. The sites are there. They have been on a list for a long time. And they cause problems. And of the ones that they are talking about, UXOs are the most serious problems of all. I know, in my own district, people have lost limbs from picking up boxes that they didn't know were explosive. Young kids, that they didn't know that there was an explosive device in it and dropped the box and blew off their arms and legs. So not enough attention is being paid to sort out these messes left behind by the services.

In fact, in our hearing, I am a member of the committee, in our hearing on April 5, the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Keith Easton, testified that it would take approximately \$350 million just to clean up the former military base, Fort Ord in California, a base in my district, which was closed in 1991. Yet, the Army has only requested \$45 million for clean up activities covered by the 1990 BRAC account, of which \$6.6 million would be allocated for Fort Ord. That means \$6.6 million out of what is needed is \$350 million. We are going to have to adjust some monies around here. And the priority in his amendment is let's do what we know has been caused by former base closures before we try to clean up all of the new ones, those that just closed this year.

So clearly, there is a disconnect between what our cleanup obligations are, and what are services budget has been made. And this cannot continue.

So I applaud Mr. BLUMENAUER in bringing this amendment. Nonetheless, billions of cleanup obligations are still pending and must be addressed. So if we don't deal with it today and don't get it adopted, we are going to be back here next year, and a lot of the Members in this House are going to understand that these sites are in their district and they are going to want to support this amendment. So I say this is either going to be done now or it can be later, but we have got to get to it.

I applaud Mr. WALSH for the effort he has made in trying to beef up the account, but I don't think it is enough.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

The question was taken; and the Chairman announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Oregon will be postponed. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE
ACCOUNT 2005

For deposit into the Department of Defense Base Closure Account 2005, established by section 2906A(a)(1) of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (10 U.S.C. 2687 note), \$5,309,876,000, to remain available until expended.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. DELAURO

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Ms. DELAURO:

Page 11, line 24, insert after the dollar amount the following: "(reduced by \$10,000,000)".

Page 19, line 8, insert after the dollar amount the following: "(increased by \$5,000,000)".

Ms. DELAURO (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Connecticut?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order against the gentlewoman's amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is reserved.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Chairman, after discussing this amendment with the chairman and the ranking member of the subcommittee, I intend to withdraw the amendment. So I will not seek a vote. And I thank my colleagues for giving me a few minutes to discuss a very important issue.

I believe that the issue of mental health services for our troops deploying or returning from combat is one that demands the attention of this body, if only for a few minutes today. And I know my colleague, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE, addressed this issue as well.

My amendment would increase funding for the Defense Health Program by \$10 million to establish a pilot program to provide in-person mental health assessments to servicemen when they deploy or return from combat. The offset is a reduction of \$10 million in the 1990 BRAC account.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment is about ensuring that we do a better job for those men and women in our military in need of mental health services. Currently, upon the return from combat, our troops are given only a paper questionnaire with just seven questions about their mental health, and that is

supposed to be enough to determine their mental health status. This is hardly sufficient for people who, for 12 or 18 months, have been constantly subjected to insurgent violence or the threat of insurgents attacks, or witnesses to horrific devastation and loss of life and, in many cases, will have to go back for a second or third tour.

According to both veterans and mental health experts, this screening process leads to an under reporting of mental health problems. As the Surgeon General Kevin Kiley put it recently, and I quote, "There's only so much we can do for large numbers of troops, and it is not like we wouldn't want to do more."

That is what is so important is to be able to give the Defense Department the needed resources to do right by our troops. As General Kiley says, do more than a seven question paper questionnaire.

With the number of Army suicides on the rise, the Army suicide rate last year was nearly 13 per 100,000 soldiers, the highest since 1999.

□ 1200

We are simply are not reaching all those men and women in uniform who need our help. In fact, the GAO recently reported that only 22 percent of the servicemembers who might have been at risk for suffering PTSD were ever referred for further mental health evaluation. The report also found that "DOD cannot provide reasonable assurance that OEF and OIF servicemembers who need referrals receive them."

Given that, we should allow the Defense Department to test whether an in-person screening will make the screening process more effective and improve the likelihood of their receiving a referral to receive the mental health services they need.

Recently, the Hartford Courant ran a series of mental health concerns facing our troops today, and I have distributed the series to every single office today. I strongly urge my colleagues to take the time to read it. The stories are poignant as well as tragic. It includes serious allegations that the Defense Department has deployed troops who are mentally unprepared for combat and that all too often antidepressant medication is the only form of treatment that fragile servicemembers can get while they are on the front lines.

We must take the time to assess the emotional well-being of our troops. Would we send a young man or woman into combat if they have suffered severe physical wounds? We would not. By the same token, we should not send them to fight if they are suffering severe emotional wounds. The Defense Department has made great strides in the past 30 years in testing and understanding PTSD and other forms of combat stress. We need to do more. I hope someday this body will get the opportunity to provide the Pentagon with the adequate resources to continue to improve its mental health awareness.

I thank Chairman WALSH and I thank Mr. EDWARDS for their willingness to let me speak on this amendment. They are among the strongest supporters of our military that we have in this Congress. I know they share the concerns, the concerns of so many in this body about this issue. I look forward to continuing my work with them on this important issue.

Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Connecticut?

There was no objection.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read. The Clerk read as follows:

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, ARMY

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Army on active duty, \$3,687,905,000.

Mr. WALSH (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the remainder of the bill through page 19, line 3 be considered as read, printed in the RECORD, and open to amendment at any point.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill through page 19, line 3, is as follows:

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, NAVY

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Navy on active duty, \$4,135,061,000.

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, MARINE CORPS

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Marine Corps on active duty, \$1,350,921,000.

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, AIR FORCE

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Air Force on active duty, \$2,934,327,000.

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Army National Guard on active duty, \$469,109,000.

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, AIR NATIONAL GUARD

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Air National Guard on active duty, \$277,533,000.

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, ARMY RESERVE

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Army Reserve on active duty, \$347,607,000.

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, NAVY RESERVE

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Naval Reserve on active duty, \$208,838,000.

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, MARINE CORPS RESERVE

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Marine Corps Reserve on active duty, \$43,082,000.

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, AIR FORCE RESERVE

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Air Force Reserve on active duty, \$76,218,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, ARMY

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Army, \$1,810,774,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, NAVY

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Navy, \$1,201,313,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, MARINE CORPS

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Marine Corps, \$473,141,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, AIR FORCE

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Air Force, \$1,684,019,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, DEFENSE-WIDE

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Department of Defense, \$86,386,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Army National Guard, \$387,882,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, AIR NATIONAL GUARD

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Air National Guard, \$255,322,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, ARMY RESERVE

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Army Reserve, \$215,890,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, NAVY RESERVE

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Navy Reserve, \$52,136,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, MARINE CORPS RESERVE

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Marine Corps Reserve, \$9,579,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, AIR FORCE RESERVE

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Air Force Reserve, \$59,849,000.

THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION ACCOUNTS ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, ARMY (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the Department of the Army, \$413,794,000, to remain available until transferred: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the Army shall, upon determining that such funds are required for environmental restoration, reduction and recycling of hazardous waste, removal of unsafe buildings and debris of the Department of the Army, or for similar purposes, transfer the funds made available by this appropriation to other appropriations made available to the Department of the Army, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same time period as the appropriations to which transferred: *Provided further*, That upon a determination that all or part of the funds transferred from this appropriation are not necessary for the purposes provided herein, such amounts may be transferred back to this appropriation.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, NAVY (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the Department of the Navy, \$304,409,000, to remain available until transferred: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the Navy shall, upon determining that such funds are required for environmental restoration, reduction and recycling of hazardous waste, removal of unsafe buildings

and debris of the Department of the Navy, or for similar purposes, transfer the funds made available by this appropriation to other appropriations made available to the Department of the Navy, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same time period as the appropriations to which transferred: *Provided further*, That upon a determination that all or part of the funds transferred from this appropriation are not necessary for the purposes provided herein, such amounts may be transferred back to this appropriation.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, AIR FORCE
(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the Department of the Air Force, \$423,871,000, to remain available until transferred: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the Air Force shall, upon determining that such funds are required for environmental restoration, reduction and recycling of hazardous waste, removal of unsafe buildings and debris of the Department of the Air Force, or for similar purposes, transfer the funds made available by this appropriation to other appropriations made available to the Department of the Air Force, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same time period as the appropriations to which transferred: *Provided further*, That upon a determination that all or part of the funds transferred from this appropriation are not necessary for the purposes provided herein, such amounts may be transferred back to this appropriation.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, DEFENSE-WIDE
(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the Department of Defense, \$18,431,000, to remain available until transferred: *Provided*, That the Secretary of Defense shall, upon determining that such funds are required for environmental restoration, reduction and recycling of hazardous waste, removal of unsafe buildings and debris of the Department of Defense, or for similar purposes, transfer the funds made available by this appropriation to other appropriations made available to the Department of Defense, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same time period as the appropriations to which transferred: *Provided further*, That upon a determination that all or part of the funds transferred from this appropriation are not necessary for the purposes provided herein, such amounts may be transferred back to this appropriation.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, FORMERLY
USED DEFENSE SITES
(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the Department of the Army, \$257,790,000, to remain available until transferred: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the Army shall, upon determining that such funds are required for environmental restoration, reduction and recycling of hazardous waste, removal of unsafe buildings and debris at sites formerly used by the Department of Defense, transfer the funds made available by this appropriation to other appropriations made available to the Department of the Army, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same time period as the appropriations to which transferred: *Provided further*, That upon a determination that all or part of the funds transferred from this appropriation are not necessary for the purposes provided herein, such amounts may be transferred back to this appropriation.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.
The Clerk read as follows:

DEFENSE HEALTH PROGRAM
(INCLUDING RESCISSION OF FUNDS)

For expenses, not otherwise provided for, for medical and health care programs of the

Department of Defense, as authorized by law, \$21,065,163,000, of which \$20,218,205,000 shall be for operation and maintenance, of which not to exceed one percent shall remain available until September 30, 2008, and of which up to \$10,638,784,000 may be available for contracts entered into under the TRICARE program; of which \$402,855,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2009, shall be for procurement; and of which \$444,103,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2008, shall be for research, development, test and evaluation: *Provided*, That notwithstanding any other provision of law, of the amount made available under this heading for research, development, test and evaluation, not less than \$7,000,000 shall be available for HIV prevention educational activities undertaken in connection with U.S. military training, exercises, and humanitarian assistance activities conducted primarily in African nations: *Provided further*, That of the funds provided for "Defense Health Program", operations and maintenance under title VI of Public Law 109-148, \$40,042,000 are hereby rescinded.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. EDWARDS

MR. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to considering the amendment at this point in the reading?

Without objection, the Clerk will report the amendment.

There was no objection.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. EDWARDS:
Page 19, line 8, strike "\$21,065,163,000" and insert "\$21,800,163,000".

Page 19, line 9, strike "\$20,218,205,000" and insert "\$20,953,205,000".

At the end of title I (page 35, after line 2), insert the following new section:

SEC. 136. In the case of taxpayers with income in excess of \$1,000,000, for the calendar year beginning in 2007, the amount of tax reduction resulting from the enactment of Public Laws 107-16, 108-27, and 108-311 shall be reduced by 1.78 percent.

MR. EDWARDS (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

MR. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order against the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. A point of order is reserved.

The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

MR. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I am not going to take up 5 minutes because we had a discussion of this, but I would like to remind all Members what this is about.

Because of what I think was a budget resolution passed on a partisan basis earlier this week, our subcommittee's allocation was \$824 million less than President Bush said we needed to pay for VA health care, military construction, and defense health care. As a consequence of our rejecting on a bipartisan basis the administration's gimmick to try to find funding for defense health care, because we rejected the idea of having a 200 percent increase in TRICARE premiums for men and

women who served our country for 20 and 30 years, we ended up with \$735 million less for defense health care spending than President Bush, the administration, said we need.

My amendment would put back that \$735 million and would pay for it by asking those Americans during a time of war who made over \$1 million a year to accept a \$112,000 tax cut on average rather than a \$114,000 tax cut. I think that is a fair request given Americans' principle of shared sacrifice during time of war. Let us ask those making over \$1 million a year to give up less than 2 percent of their tax cuts in order to fund defense health care during a time of war at the level the President said was needed.

POINT OF ORDER

MR. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I make a point of order against the amendment because it proposes to change existing law and constitutes legislation on an appropriation bill and therefore violates clause 2 of rule XXI.

The rule states in pertinent part: "An amendment to a general appropriation bill shall not be in order if changing existing law." The amendment changes the application of existing law.

I ask for a ruling from the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

If not, the Chair will rule.

The amendment proposes to prescribe a rule of law regarding the Federal income tax. As such, it constitutes legislation in violation of clause 2(c) of rule XXI.

The point of order is sustained. The amendment is not in order.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS
(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 101. None of the funds made available in this title shall be expended for payments under a cost-plus-a-fixed-fee contract for construction, where cost estimates exceed \$25,000, to be performed within the United States, except Alaska, without the specific approval in writing of the Secretary of Defense setting forth the reasons therefor.

SEC. 102. Funds made available in this title for construction shall be available for hire of passenger motor vehicles.

MR. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the remainder of the bill through page 39, line 8 be considered as read, printed in the RECORD, and open to amendment at any point.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill through page 39, line 8, is as follows:

SEC. 103. Funds made available in this title for construction may be used for advances to the Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, for the construction of access roads as authorized by section 210 of title 23, United States Code, when projects authorized therein are certified as important to the national defense by the Secretary of Defense.

SEC. 104. None of the funds made available in this title may be used to begin construction of new bases in the United States for which specific appropriations have not been made.

SEC. 105. None of the funds made available in this title shall be used for purchase of land or land easements in excess of 100 percent of the value as determined by the Army Corps of Engineers or the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, except: (1) where there is a determination of value by a Federal court; (2) purchases negotiated by the Attorney General or the designee of the Attorney General; (3) where the estimated value is less than \$25,000; or (4) as otherwise determined by the Secretary of Defense to be in the public interest.

SEC. 106. None of the funds made available in this title shall be used to: (1) acquire land; (2) provide for site preparation; or (3) install utilities for any family housing, except housing for which funds have been made available in annual Acts making appropriations for military construction.

SEC. 107. None of the funds made available in this title for minor construction may be used to transfer or relocate any activity from one base or installation to another, without prior notification to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

SEC. 108. None of the funds made available in this title may be used for the procurement of steel for any construction project or activity for which American steel producers, fabricators, and manufacturers have been denied the opportunity to compete for such steel procurement.

SEC. 109. None of the funds available to the Department of Defense for military construction or family housing during the current fiscal year may be used to pay real property taxes in any foreign nation.

SEC. 110. None of the funds made available in this title may be used to initiate a new installation overseas without prior notification to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

SEC. 111. None of the funds made available in this title may be obligated for architect and engineer contracts estimated by the Government to exceed \$500,000 for projects to be accomplished in Japan, in any North Atlantic Treaty Organization member country, or in countries bordering the Arabian Sea, unless such contracts are awarded to United States firms or United States firms in joint venture with host nation firms.

SEC. 112. None of the funds made available in this title for military construction in the United States territories and possessions in the Pacific and on Kwajalein Atoll, or in countries bordering the Arabian Sea, may be used to award any contract estimated by the Government to exceed \$1,000,000 to a foreign contractor: *Provided*, That this section shall not be applicable to contract awards for which the lowest responsive and responsible bid of a United States contractor exceeds the lowest responsive and responsible bid of a foreign contractor by greater than 20 percent: *Provided further*, That this section shall not apply to contract awards for military construction on Kwajalein Atoll for which the lowest responsive and responsible bid is submitted by a Marshallese contractor.

SEC. 113. The Secretary of Defense is to inform the appropriate committees of both Houses of Congress, including the Committees on Appropriations, of the plans and scope of any proposed military exercise involving United States personnel 30 days prior to its occurring, if amounts expended for construction, either temporary or permanent, are anticipated to exceed \$100,000.

SEC. 114. Not more than 20 percent of the funds made available in this title which are

limited for obligation during the current fiscal year shall be obligated during the last two months of the fiscal year.

SEC. 115. Funds appropriated to the Department of Defense for construction in prior years shall be available for construction authorized for each such military department by the authorizations enacted into law during the current session of Congress.

SEC. 116. For military construction or family housing projects that are being completed with funds otherwise expired or lapsed for obligation, expired or lapsed funds may be used to pay the cost of associated supervision, inspection, overhead, engineering and design on those projects and on subsequent claims, if any.

SEC. 117. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any funds made available to a military department or defense agency for the construction of military projects may be obligated for a military construction project or contract, or for any portion of such a project or contract, at any time before the end of the fourth fiscal year after the fiscal year for which funds for such project were made available, if the funds obligated for such project: (1) are obligated from funds available for military construction projects; and (2) do not exceed the amount appropriated for such project, plus any amount by which the cost of such project is increased pursuant to law.

SEC. 118. The Secretary of Defense is to provide the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress with an annual report by February 15, containing details of the specific actions proposed to be taken by the Department of Defense during the current fiscal year to encourage other member nations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Japan, Korea, and United States allies bordering the Arabian Sea to assume a greater share of the common defense burden of such nations and the United States.

SEC. 119. In addition to any other transfer authority available to the Department of Defense, proceeds deposited to the Department of Defense Base Closure Account established by section 207(a)(1) of the Defense Authorization Amendments and Base Closure and Realignment Act (10 U.S.C. 2687 note) pursuant to section 207(a)(2)(C) of such Act, may be transferred to the account established by section 2906(a)(1) of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (10 U.S.C. 2687 note), to be merged with, and to be available for the same purposes and the same time period as that account.

SEC. 120. Subject to 30 days prior notification to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress, such additional amounts as may be determined by the Secretary of Defense may be transferred to: (1) the Department of Defense Family Housing Improvement Fund from amounts appropriated for construction in "Family Housing" accounts, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same period of time as amounts appropriated directly to the Fund; or (2) the Department of Defense Military Unaccompanied Housing Improvement Fund from amounts appropriated for construction of military unaccompanied housing in "Military Construction" accounts, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same period of time as amounts appropriated directly to the Fund: *Provided*, That appropriations made available to the Funds shall be available to cover the costs, as defined in section 502(5) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, of direct loans or loan guarantees issued by the Department of Defense pursuant to the provisions of subchapter IV of chapter 169 of title 10, United States Code, pertaining to alternative means of acquiring and improving military family housing, mili-

tary unaccompanied housing, and supporting facilities.

SEC. 121. None of the funds made available in this title may be obligated for Partnership for Peace Programs in the New Independent States of the former Soviet Union.

SEC. 122. (a) Not later than 60 days before issuing any solicitation for a contract with the private sector for military family housing the Secretary of the military department concerned shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress the notice described in subsection (b).

(b)(1) A notice referred to in subsection (a) is a notice of any guarantee (including the making of mortgage or rental payments) proposed to be made by the Secretary to the private party under the contract involved in the event of—

(A) the closure or realignment of the installation for which housing is provided under the contract;

(B) a reduction in force of units stationed at such installation; or

(C) the extended deployment overseas of units stationed at such installation.

(2) Each notice under this subsection shall specify the nature of the guarantee involved and assess the extent and likelihood, if any, of the liability of the Federal Government with respect to the guarantee.

SEC. 123. In addition to any other transfer authority available to the Department of Defense, amounts may be transferred from the accounts established by sections 2906(a)(1) and 2906A(a)(1) of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (10 U.S.C. 2687 note), to the fund established by section 1013(d) of the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 3374) to pay for expenses associated with the Homeowners Assistance Program. Any amounts transferred shall be merged with and be available for the same purposes and for the same time period as the fund to which transferred.

SEC. 124. Notwithstanding this or any other provision of law, funds made available in this title for operation and maintenance of family housing shall be the exclusive source of funds for repair and maintenance of all family housing units, including general or flag officer quarters: *Provided*, That not more than \$35,000 per unit may be spent annually for the maintenance and repair of any general or flag officer quarters without 30 days prior notification to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress, except that an after-the-fact notification shall be submitted if the limitation is exceeded solely due to costs associated with environmental remediation that could not be reasonably anticipated at the time of the budget submission: *Provided further*, That the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) is to report annually to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress all operation and maintenance expenditures for each individual general or flag officer quarters for the prior fiscal year: *Provided further*, That nothing in this section precludes the Secretary of a military department, after notifying the congressional defense committees and waiting 21 days, from using funds derived under section 2601, chapter 403, chapter 603, or chapter 903 of title 10, United States Code, for the maintenance or repair of general and flag officer quarters at the military service academy under the jurisdiction of that Secretary: *Provided further*, That each Secretary of a military department shall provide an annual report by February 15 to the congressional defense committees on the amount of funds that were derived under section 2601, chapter 403, chapter 603, or chapter

903 of title 10, United States Code, in the previous year and were obligated for the construction, improvement, repair, or maintenance of any military facility or infrastructure.

SEC. 125. None of the funds made available in this title under the heading "North Atlantic Treaty Organization Security Investment Program", and no funds appropriated for any fiscal year before fiscal year 2007 for that program that remain available for obligation, may be obligated or expended for the conduct of studies of missile defense.

SEC. 126. Whenever the Secretary of Defense or any other official of the Department of Defense is requested by the subcommittee on Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives or the subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate to respond to a question or inquiry submitted by the chairman or another member of that subcommittee pursuant to a subcommittee hearing or other activity, the Secretary (or other official) shall respond to the request, in writing, within 21 days of the date on which the request is transmitted to the Secretary (or other official).

SEC. 127. Amounts contained in the Ford Island Improvement Account established by subsection (h) of section 2814 of title 10, United States Code, are appropriated and shall be available until expended for the purposes specified in subsection (i)(1) of such section or until transferred pursuant to subsection (i)(3) of such section.

SEC. 128. None of the funds made available in this title, or in any Act making appropriations for military construction which remain available for obligation, may be obligated or expended to carry out a military construction project at or for a military installation approved for closure, or at a military installation for the purposes of supporting a function that has been approved for realignment to another installation, in 2005 under the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (part A of title XXIX of Public Law 101-510; 10 U.S.C. 2687 note), unless such a project at a military installation approved for realignment will support a continuing mission or function at that installation or a new mission or function that is planned for that installation, or unless the Secretary of Defense certifies that the cost to the United States of carrying out such project would be less than the cost to the United States of cancelling such project, or if the project is at an active component base that shall be established as an enclave or in the case of projects having multi-agency use, that another Government agency has indicated it will assume ownership of the completed project. The Secretary of Defense may not transfer funds made available as a result of this limitation from any military construction project, land acquisition, or family housing project to another account or use such funds for another purpose or project without the prior approval of the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress. This section shall not apply to military construction projects, land acquisition, or family housing projects for which the project is vital to the national security or the protection of health, safety, or environmental quality: *Provided*, That the Secretary of Defense shall notify the congressional defense committees within seven days of a decision to carry out such a military construction project.

SEC. 129. During the 5-year period after appropriations available in this Act to the Department of Defense for military construction and family housing operation and main-

tenance and construction have expired for obligation, upon a determination that such appropriations will not be necessary for the liquidation of obligations or for making authorized adjustments to such appropriations for obligations incurred during the period of availability of such appropriations, unobligated balances of such appropriations may be transferred into the appropriation "Foreign Currency Fluctuations, Construction, Defense," to be merged with and to be available for the same time period and for the same purposes as the appropriation to which transferred.

SEC. 130. None of the funds appropriated in this title available for the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS) or TRICARE shall be available for the reimbursement of any health care provider for inpatient mental health service for care received when a patient is referred to a provider of inpatient mental health care or residential treatment care by a medical or health care professional having an economic interest in the facility to which the patient is referred: *Provided*, That this limitation does not apply in the case of inpatient mental health services provided under the program for persons with disabilities under subsection (d) of section 1079 of title 10, United States Code, provided as partial hospital care, or provided pursuant to a waiver authorized by the Secretary of Defense because of medical or psychological circumstances of the patient that are confirmed by a health professional who is not a Federal employee after a review, pursuant to rules prescribed by the Secretary, which takes into account the appropriate level of care for the patient, the intensity of services required by the patient, and the availability of that care.

SEC. 131. (a) The Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, may carry out a program to distribute surplus dental and medical equipment of the Department of Defense, at no cost to the Department of Defense, to Indian Health Service facilities and to federally-qualified health centers (within the meaning of section 1905(1)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(1)(2)(B))).

(b) In carrying out this provision, the Secretary of Defense shall give the Indian Health Service a property disposal priority equal to the priority given to the Department of Defense and its twelve special screening programs in distribution of surplus dental and medical supplies and equipment.

SEC. 132. Notwithstanding any other provision of law or regulation, the Secretary of Defense may adjust wage rates for civilian employees hired for certain health care occupations as authorized for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs by section 7455 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 133. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, that not more than 35 percent of funds provided in this title for environmental remediation may be obligated under indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity contracts with a total contract value of \$130,000,000 or higher.

SEC. 134. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, funds available to the Department of Defense in this title shall be made available to provide transportation of medical supplies and equipment, on a non-reimbursable basis, to American Samoa, and funds available to the Department of Defense in this title shall be made available to provide transportation of medical supplies and equipment, on a nonreimbursable basis, to the Indian Health Service when it is in conjunction with a civil-military project.

SEC. 135. (1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law or regulation, the Secretary of Defense may exercise the provisions of

section 7403(g) of title 38, United States Code, for occupations listed in section 7403(a)(2) of title 38, United States Code, as well as the following:

Pharmacists, Audiologists, and Dental Hygienists.

(2) The requirements of section 7403(g)(1)(A) of title 38, United States Code, shall apply.

(3) The limitations of section 7403(g)(1)(B) of title 38, United States Code, shall not apply.

TITLE II

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION

COMPENSATION AND PENSIONS

(INCLUDING TRANSFER 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, the Reinstated Entitlement Program for Survivors, 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 title IV of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 540 et seq.) and for other benefits as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. 107, 1312, 1977, and 2106, chapters 23, 51, 53, 55, and 61; 43 Stat. 122, 123; 45 Stat. 735; 76 Stat. 1198), \$38,007,095,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That not to exceed \$28,112,000 of the amount appropriated under this heading shall be reimbursed to "General operating expenses" and "Medical administration" for necessary expenses in implementing the provisions of chapters 51, 53, and 55 of title 38, United States Code, the funding source for which is specifically provided as the "Compensation and pensions" appropriation: *Provided further*, That such sums as may be earned on an actual qualifying patient basis, shall be reimbursed to "Medical care collections fund" to augment the funding of individual medical facilities for nursing home care provided to pensioners as authorized.

READJUSTMENT BENEFITS

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the payment of readjustment and rehabilitation benefits to or on behalf of veterans as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. chapters 21, 30, 31, 34, 35, 36, 39, 51, 53, 55, and 61), \$3,262,006,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That expenses for rehabilitation program services and assistance which the Secretary is authorized to provide under section 3104(a) of title 38, United States Code, other than under subsection (a)(1), (2), (5), and (11) of that section, shall be charged to this account.

VETERANS INSURANCE AND INDEMNITIES

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For military and naval insurance, national service life insurance, servicemen's indemnities, service-disabled veterans insurance, and veterans mortgage life insurance as authorized by title 38, United States Code, chapter 19; 70 Stat. 887; 72 Stat. 487, \$49,850,000, to remain available until expended.

VETERANS HOUSING BENEFIT PROGRAM FUND PROGRAM ACCOUNT

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the cost of direct and guaranteed loans, such sums as may be necessary to carry out the program, as authorized by subchapters I through III of chapter 37 of title 38, United States Code: *Provided*, That such costs, including the cost of modifying such loans, shall be as defined in section 502 of the

Congressional Budget Act of 1974: *Provided further*, That during fiscal year 2007, within the resources available, not to exceed \$500,000 in gross obligations for direct loans are authorized for specially adapted housing loans.

In addition, for administrative expenses to carry out the direct and guaranteed loan programs, \$153,185,000, which may be transferred to and merged with the appropriation for "General operating expenses".

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION LOANS PROGRAM ACCOUNT

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the cost of direct loans, \$67,000, as authorized by chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code: *Provided*, That such costs, including the cost of modifying such loans, shall be as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974: *Provided further*, That funds made available under this heading are available to subsidize gross obligations for the principal amount of direct loans not to exceed \$3,369,000.

In addition, for administrative expenses necessary to carry out the direct loan program, \$305,000, which may be transferred to and merged with the appropriation for "General operating expenses".

NATIVE AMERICAN VETERAN HOUSING LOAN PROGRAM ACCOUNT

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For administrative expenses to carry out the direct loan program authorized by subchapter V of chapter 37 of title 38, United States Code, \$615,000, which may be transferred to and merged with the appropriation for "General operating expenses": *Provided*, That no new loans in excess of \$30,000,000 may be made in fiscal year 2007.

GUARANTEED TRANSITIONAL HOUSING LOANS FOR HOMELESS VETERANS PROGRAM ACCOUNT

For the administrative expenses to carry out the guaranteed transitional housing loan program authorized by subchapter VI of chapter 37 of title 38, United States Code, not to exceed \$750,000 of the amounts appropriated by this Act for "General operating expenses" and "Medical administration" may be expended.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read. The Clerk read as follows:

VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION MEDICAL SERVICES

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses for furnishing, as authorized by law, inpatient and outpatient care and treatment to beneficiaries of the Department of Veterans Affairs and veterans described in section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code, including care and treatment in facilities not under the jurisdiction of the Department, and including medical supplies and equipment and salaries and expenses of health-care employees hired under title 38, United States Code, and aid to State homes as authorized by section 1741 of title 38, United States Code; \$25,412,000,000, plus reimbursements, of which not less than \$2,800,000,000 shall be expended for specialty mental health care: *Provided*, That of the funds made available under this heading, not to exceed \$1,100,000,000 shall be available until September 30, 2008: *Provided further*, That, notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish a priority for treatment for veterans who are service-connected disabled, lower income, or have special needs: *Provided further*, That, notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall give priority funding for the provision of basic medical benefits to veterans in enrollment priority groups 1

through 6: *Provided further*, That, notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may authorize the dispensing of prescription drugs from Veterans Health Administration facilities to enrolled veterans with privately written prescriptions based on requirements established by the Secretary: *Provided further*, That the implementation of the program described in the previous proviso shall incur no additional cost to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. FARR

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. FARR:

Page 39, line 22, strike "\$25,412,000,000" and insert "\$26,875,000,000".

Page 41, line 1, strike "\$3,277,000,000" and insert "\$3,390,000,000".

Page 42, line 2, strike "\$412,000,000" and insert "\$460,000,000".

Page 42, line 14, strike "\$1,480,764,000" and insert "\$1,553,764,000".

Page 44, line 21, strike "\$69,499,000" and insert "\$77,499,000".

Page 45, line 13, strike "\$283,670,000" and insert "\$399,000,000".

At the end of title II (page 56, after line 8), insert the following new section:

SEC. 223. In the case of taxpayers with income in excess of \$1,000,000, for the calendar year beginning in 2007, the amount of tax reduction resulting from the enactment of Public Laws 107-16, 108-27, and 108-311 shall be reduced by 4.4 percent.

Mr. FARR (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order against the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. A point of order is reserved.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, this amendment provides \$1.82 billion for veterans, particularly in the health care field. It is in 10 separate areas: mental health and prosthesis, patient workload backlog, research for prosthesis, nursing home beds for long-term care, priority 8 veterans health care for those veterans who earn as little as \$27,000 a year, improving the VA casework backlog that currently takes more than 6 months, money for VA hospital construction, medical administration, the VA IG's office, and unproven efficiencies.

Now, why should you be supporting this amendment? Well, Mr. Chairman, next week we will all be going home for Memorial Day recess. And on Memorial Day, we will all, as Members of Congress, get up and tell our veterans all the things we are doing for them. You ought to tell them about this amendment because this amendment does what veterans have asked us to do.

The figures that I have proposed here are the independent budget recommendations for mental health, prosthesis, medical and prosthetic research accounts, and staffing levels to improve timely care. The independent

budget was brought to the committee, and I want to applaud the chairman for allowing four veterans organizations to bring this, including AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Veterans of Foreign Wars. They provided our committee with a budget of what they thought needed to be done. And their budget estimates, according to the committee, were more on mark than the administration's figures last year.

So when you go home to the vets next week, you have a chance to tell them you supported the Farr amendment to add \$300 million for mental health and \$300 million for prosthetics. You can tell them that you have voted to add \$119 million for additional staffing for increased patient workload. You can tell them that you voted for \$48 million to pay for inflation in the medical and prosthesis research account.

This amendment is also because the adequate funding for vets has not been made by this bill. So we are helping this bill by adding also for the veterans nursing home beds. The current law requires that we provide 13,391 beds. We only have enough money for 11,100 beds. That is almost 3,000 beds below the level authorized in 1998. So we add \$471 million for nursing home care to bring nursing home beds back into compliance with the law.

This amendment would also allow 214,000 priority 8 veterans. Who are priority 8 veterans? Those are veterans who make as little as \$27,000 a year. You could claim poverty for the earned income tax credit at that salary, and all we are saying is we are going to make them eligible for the VA health care.

Every Member in this body should support this amendment because every Member has veterans who have been shut out of the VA's health system.

This amendment also pays for the backlog. It adds \$73 million to provide increased funding for general operations expenses to help reduce the claims in processing. Every Member has district offices that are working on veterans' cases, 74,000 vets who are waiting more than 6 months to have their claims processed and much longer in some cases. As of last week, that number increased by over 21,000 to 95,000 vets who are waiting just for an answer.

This amendment also restores money for three high-priority projects, hospital construction. Three hospital construction projects in Denver, Colorado; Madison, Wisconsin; and Columbia, Missouri, were cut in the base bill to provide allowances for other accounts. Congressman BEAUPREZ of Colorado sent a letter to the Appropriations Committee earlier this month supporting the Colorado project.

Where does this money come from? We do this by an offset. Mr. Chairman, since the Republican leadership enacted the tax cuts in 2001, we have learned from all the reports and all the

papers that the rich have gotten richer. Our progressive tax system is becoming less progressive. Time and again the majority has prioritized the needs of people making more than \$1 million a year ahead of the key investments such as health care for our veterans. As a result, our veterans will continue to wait too long for care. Many will not get the mental health assistance they need. Prosthetic research and services will be underfunded, and so-called "wealthy" lower priority veterans, those making as little as \$27,000 a year, will continue to be denied access.

This is going to be ruled out of order, and I hope the Members will insist that we get this funding.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I make a point against the amendment because it proposes to change existing law and constitutes legislation on an appropriation bill and therefore violates clause 2 of rule XXI.

The rule states in pertinent part: "An amendment to a general appropriation bill shall not be in order if changing existing law." This amendment changes the application of existing law.

I ask for a ruling from the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

If not, the Chair will rule.

The amendment proposes to prescribe a rule of law regarding the Federal income tax. As such, it constitutes legislation in violation of clause 2(c) of rule XXI.

The point of order is sustained. The amendment is not in order.

Mr. EVERETT. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, recently a concern about VA health care policy regarding certain anesthesia providers was brought to my attention. The VA is currently reviewing regulations to allow anesthesiologist assistants, also known as AAs, to provide care at VA medical facilities.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today to encourage the VA to continue to move forward to officially recognize AAs as anesthesia providers at VA medical facilities. AAs are a small but important contingent of mid-level anesthesia providers, who will be a welcome addition to the anesthesia care team at VA hospitals. In fact, the VA approved AAs to serve at VA facilities in February of 2004. It approved them in February of 2004. But because of bureaucrat delays, AAs are not recognized in the Veterans Health Administration's official provider handbook, not allowing them to practice.

□ 1215

Mr. Chairman, more than 2 years has passed since the decision was made to include AAs as VA anesthesia providers, yet the program is still on hold. If new specific qualification standards for AAs are needed, then the VA should say so and finalize the regulatory proc-

ess. In light of potential provider shortages at veterans medical facilities, veterans deserve to have every qualified caregiver as a resource. Anything else is a disservice to our veterans.

I know the chairman of the subcommittee is aware of this situation, and I look forward to working with him to have to help get the VA off the dime.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read. The Clerk read as follows:

MEDICAL ADMINISTRATION

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses in the administration of the medical, hospital, nursing home, domiciliary, construction, supply, and research activities, as authorized by law; administrative expenses in support of capital policy activities; and administrative and legal expenses of the Department for collecting and recovering amounts owed the Department as authorized under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, and the Federal Medical Care Recovery Act (42 U.S.C. 2651 et seq.); \$3,277,000,000, plus reimbursements, of which \$250,000,000 shall be available until September 30, 2008.

MEDICAL FACILITIES

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses for the maintenance and operation of hospitals, nursing homes, and domiciliary facilities and other necessary facilities for the Veterans Health Administration; for administrative expenses in support of planning, design, project management, real property acquisition and disposition, construction and renovation of any facility under the jurisdiction or for the use of the Department; for oversight, engineering and architectural activities not charged to project costs; for repairing, altering, improving or providing facilities in the several hospitals and homes under the jurisdiction of the Department, not otherwise provided for, either by contract or by the hire of temporary employees and purchase of materials; for leases of facilities; and for laundry and food services, \$3,594,000,000, plus reimbursements, of which \$250,000,000 shall be available until September 30, 2008.

MEDICAL AND PROSTHETIC RESEARCH

For necessary expenses in carrying out programs of medical and prosthetic research and development as authorized by chapter 73 of title 38, United States Code, to remain available until September 30, 2008, \$412,000,000, plus reimbursements.

Mr. WALSH (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the remainder of the bill through page 44, line 22, be considered as read, printed in the RECORD and open to amendment at any point.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill through page 44, line 22, is as follows:

DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION

GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES

For necessary operating expenses of the Department of Veterans Affairs, not otherwise provided for, including administrative expenses in support of Department-Wide capital planning, management and policy activities, uniforms or allowances therefor; not to exceed \$25,000 for official reception and representation expenses; hire of passenger motor vehicles; and reimbursement of the

General Services Administration for security guard services, and the Department of Defense for the cost of overseas employee mail, \$1,480,764,000: *Provided*, That expenses for services and assistance authorized under paragraphs (1), (2), (5), and (11) of section 3104(a) of title 38, United States Code, that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines are necessary to enable entitled veterans: (1) to the maximum extent feasible, to become employable and to obtain and maintain suitable employment; or (2) to achieve maximum independence in daily living, shall be charged to this account: *Provided further*, That the Veterans Benefits Administration shall be funded at not less than \$1,167,859,000: *Provided further*, That of the funds made available under this heading, not to exceed \$75,000,000 shall be available for obligation until September 30, 2008: *Provided further*, That from the funds made available under this heading, the Veterans Benefits Administration may purchase (one-for-one replacement basis only) up to two passenger motor vehicles for use in operations of that Administration in Manila, Philippines.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS

For necessary expenses for information technology systems and telecommunications support, including developmental information systems and operational information systems; for the capital asset acquisition of information technology systems, including management and related contractual costs of said acquisitions, including contractual costs associated with operations authorized by chapter 3109 of title 5, United States Code, \$1,302,330,000, plus reimbursements, to remain available until September 30, 2008: *Provided*, That none of these funds may be obligated until the Department of Veterans Affairs submits to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress, and such Committees approve, a plan for expenditure that: (1) meets the capital planning and investment control review requirements established by the Office of Management and Budget; (2) complies with the Department of Veterans Affairs enterprise architecture; (3) conforms with an established enterprise life cycle methodology; and (4) complies with the acquisition rules, requirements, guidelines, and systems acquisition management practices of the Federal Government: *Provided further*, That within 30 days of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress a reprogramming base letter which provides, by project, the costs included in this appropriation.

NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

For necessary expenses of the National Cemetery Administration for operations and maintenance, not otherwise provided for, including uniforms or allowances therefor; cemeterial expenses as authorized by law; purchase of one passenger motor vehicle for use in cemeterial operations; and hire of passenger motor vehicles, \$160,733,000, of which not to exceed \$8,037,000 shall be available until September 30, 2008.

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

For necessary expenses of the Office of Inspector General in carrying out the provisions of the Inspector General Act of 1978, \$69,499,000, to remain available until September 30, 2008.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read. The Clerk read as follows:

CONSTRUCTION, MAJOR PROJECTS

For constructing, altering, extending and improving any of the facilities including parking projects under the jurisdiction or for the use of the Department of Veterans Affairs, or for any of the purposes set forth in

sections 316, 2404, 2406, 8102, 8103, 8106, 8108, 8109, 8110, and 8122 of title 38, United States Code, including planning, architectural and engineering services, construction management services, maintenance or guarantee period services costs associated with equipment guarantees provided under the project, services of claims analysts, offsite utility and storm drainage system construction costs, and site acquisition, where the estimated cost of a project is more than the amount set forth in section 8104(a)(3)(A) of title 38, United States Code, or where funds for a project were made available in a previous major project appropriation, \$283,670,000, to remain available until expended, of which \$2,000,000 shall be to make reimbursements as provided in section 13 of the Contract Disputes Act of 1978 (41 U.S.C. 612) for claims paid for contract disputes: *Provided*, That except for advance planning activities, including needs assessments which may or may not lead to capital investments, and other capital asset management related activities, such as portfolio development and management activities, and investment strategy studies funded through the advance planning fund and the planning and design activities funded through the design fund, including needs assessments which may or may not lead to capital investments, none of the funds appropriated under this heading shall be used for any project which has not been approved by the Congress in the budgetary process: *Provided further*, That funds provided in this appropriation for fiscal year 2007, for each approved project shall be obligated: (1) by the awarding of a construction documents contract by September 30, 2007; and (2) by the awarding of a construction contract by September 30, 2008: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall promptly report in writing to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress any approved major construction project in which obligations are not incurred within the time limitations established above: *Provided further*, That none of the funds in this or any other Act may be used to reduce the mission, services or infrastructure, including land, of the 18 facilities on the Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) list requiring further study as specified by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs without prior approval of the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. MOORE OF WISCONSIN

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin:

Page 45, line 13, after the dollar amount, insert the following: “(increased by \$32,500,000)”.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order against the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman reserves a point of order.

The gentlewoman from Wisconsin is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Chairman, earlier this year, the VA made a priority request for \$32.5 million for urgent and necessary upgrades for the spinal cord injury unit at the Zablocki VA Medical Center in Milwaukee. However, the subcommittee mark made a point of zeroing out this project. My amendment would restore the funding for this requested priority.

Mr. Chairman, I can tell you that I am new to this body, so I was very curious as to why they would do this. Clearly the Zablocki spinal cord injury unit is not a “bridge to nowhere.” It is one of only 23 spinal cord injury units in the country, serving more than 500 veterans as in-patients and over 10,000 patients on an outpatient basis each year.

Nationally, there are over 44,000 veterans suffering from spinal cord injuries that are now paraplegic and quadriplegic. At such a critical time when we are at war and the number of injured soldiers continues to increase, I had to ask myself, Mr. Chairman, what are they doing and why are we doing this?

So what I did as a new Member is I went to something called the committee record, I believe, and what they said here is that they did this because this was of “relatively low priority.”

Well, I was really confused then, Mr. Chairman, because I then checked with the budget documentation submitted by the Department of Veterans Affairs and discovered that they had listed this as their number one priority for fiscal year 2007. Further, they went on to describe the spinal cord injury unit at Zablocki as having by far received the highest score under their project scoring session.

Mr. Chairman, I don’t stand under this E. Pluribus Unum boring Members on and on often. I am here because I truly am trying to understand how other projects with lower priority scores were, indeed, funded.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, I will submit for the RECORD this corroborating evidence that this indeed is a highest priority of the fiscal year 2007 projects.

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$283,670,000 for Construction, Major Projects for fiscal year 2007. This is a decrease of \$690,930,000 below the fiscal year 2006 enacted level and a decrease of \$115,330,000 below the budget request. When adjusted for supplemental funding, the recommendation is \$323,430,000 below the fiscal year 2006 enacted level.

The Committee recommendation does not include funding for refurbishment of operating rooms at the Columbia, Missouri VAMC, and refurbishment of the Spinal Cord Injury Center at the Milwaukee, Wisconsin VAMC, both of which are relatively low priority projects. The estimate submitted in the budget for the Capital Region Data Center project includes a contingency reserve of over 25 percent, well in excess of needs for such a project. The funding for this project is therefore reduced by \$5,000,000, leaving 12.5 percent for a contingency reserve. The Committee recommendation includes no funding for the replacement hospital in Denver, Colorado. The Committee notes that less than two years ago, when original planning funds were appropriated for the Denver facility, the estimated total cost of the project was \$328,000,000. The current estimate for the project is in the range of \$621,000,000, almost double the previous estimate. This is not the only instance of large cost growth for construction projects of the Department, but this is a project at a stage where work can be halted before significant and irreversible financial damage is done. The Committee is concerned with the rapid escalation in the cost of building new facilities and cautions the Department that few, if any, projects will be approved in the future if such costs are not brought under control.

The Committee recommendation also includes a general provision which places restrictions on the use of funds previously appropriated for a new facility in Biloxi, Mississippi. It is the Committee’s direction that no funds can be expended on a new facility unless it is a joint-use facility shared with Kessler Air Force Base.

The specific amounts recommended by the Committee are as follows:

Location and description	2007 request	Committee recommendation
Veterans Health Administration (VHA):		
American Lake, WA Seismic Correction, NHCUC & Dietetics	\$38,220	\$38,220
Columbia, MO, OR Replacement	25,830	0
Denver, CO Replacement Medical Center Facility	52,000	0
Long Beach, CA Seismic Correction, Bldg. 7 & 126	97,545	97,545
Milwaukee, WI Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Center	32,500	0
St. Louis (JB), MO Medical Facil Improv & Cem Exp	7,000	7,000
Advance planning fund: Various locations	39,255	39,255
Asbestos abatement: Various locations	5,000	5,000
Claims Analyses: Various locations	2,000	2,000
Judgment Fund: Various locations	2,000	2,000
Hazardous Waste: Various locations	2,000	2,000
Facility Security Fund: Various locations	4,000	4,000
Total VHA construction, major projects	307,350	197,020
National Cemetery Administration (NCA):		
Dallas/Fort Worth, TX Phase 2 Gravesite Expansion	13,000	13,000
Gerald B. H. Solomon-Saratoga, NY Phase 2 Gravesite Expansion	7,600	7,600
Great Lakes, MI Phase 1B Development	16,900	16,900
Design Fund: Various locations	2,300	2,300

TABLE 1-3 SUMMARY OF FY 2006 AND 2007 CARES CAPITAL PROJECTS

2006:				
10	Cleveland, OH	Cleveland-Brecksville Consolidation, Ph 2/2—Construction	FY05-2	\$87,300
4	Pittsburgh, PA	Consolidation of Campuses, Ph 2—Construction	FY05-3	82,500
22	Las Vegas, NV	New Medical Center Facility, Ph 2/3—Construction	FY05-6	199,000
8	Gainesville, FL	Correct Patient Privacy Deficiencies, Ph 2/2—Construction	FY05-7	76,400
20	Anchorage, AK	Outpatient Clinic & Regional Office, Ph 2/2—Construction	FY05-7	63,510
16	Biloxi 1, MS	Hospital Restoration/Consolidation	FY06-1	310,000
16	Fayetteville, AR	Clinical Addition, Ph-1—Design	FY06-5	5,800
	Various	Line Items		55,790
	New Orleans 2, LA	Restoration/Replacement of Medical Center Facility	N/A	75,000
Total 2006				\$955,300
2007:				
19	Denver, CO	Replacement Medical Center Facility	FY05-10	52,000
22	Long Beach, CA	Seismic Corrections—Bldgs 7 & 126	FY05-16	97,545
12	Milwaukee, WI	SCI Center	FY07-1	32,500
15	St. Louis (JB), MO	Medical Facility Improvements and Cemetery Expansion	FY07-1	7,000
20	American Lake, WA	Seismic Corrections—NHCU & Dietetics	FY07-8	38,220
15	Columbia, MO	Operating Room Suite Replacement	FY07-21	25,830
	Various	Line Items		54,255
Total 2007				\$307,350

¹This project received \$17.5M in FY2006 appropriations for design and an additional \$292.5M in FY 2006 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations.

²This project was added as a result of public law 109-148 the FY 2006 Emergency Supplemental Appropriation.

FY 2007 Top-Twenty Major Medical Facility Projects.—In accordance with section 8107 of United States Code 38, below are the top-twenty medical facility projects that were considered for the FY 2007 budget. These projects were selected based on the CARES capital criteria.

TABLE 4-9 FY 2007 VHA TOP-TWENTY MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY PROJECTS

VISN	Location	Project Title—Brief Description	Priority score	Estimated cost (000)	Annual cost (000)	Category
The projects listed below were funded in phases in prior years and are therefore considered as top priority projects until funding is complete. Priority scores are from the FY 2005 cycle project scoring session.						
1	4 Pittsburgh, PA	Consolidation of campus	.4532	\$189,205	\$5,805	General
2	22 Las Vegas, NV	New Medical Center Facility	.3981	\$406,000	\$142,000	General
3	19 Denver, CO	Replacement Medical Center Facility	.3424	\$621,000	\$255,700	General
4	8 Orlando, FL	New Medical Center Facility	.3314	\$347,700	\$138,030	General
5	8 San Juan, PR	Seismic Corrections—Bldg 1	.2888	\$145,200	\$324,000	Seismic
6	22 Los Angel, CA	Seismic Corrections—Bldgs. 500 & 501	.2536	\$79,900	\$461,000	Seismic
7	8 Lee County, FL	Outpatient Clinic	.2429	\$65,100	\$15,800	General
The project listed below was funded in a phase in a prior year and is therefore considered as a top priority projects until funding is completed. Priority score is from the FY 2006 cycle project scoring session.						
8	16 Fayetteville, AR	Clinical Addition	.2962	\$56,163	\$119,470	General
The projects listed below are additional projects considered for the FY 2007 planning cycle. The priority scores are from the FY 2007 project scoring session.						
9	12 Milwaukee, WI	Spinal Cord Injury Center	.4412	\$32,500	\$10,964	General
10	8 Bay Pines, FL	Inpatient & Outpatient Renovation & Construction	.4189	\$90,400	\$17,310	General
11	17 Dallas, TX	Clinical Expansion & Renovation	.4072	\$137,500	\$56,071	General
12	4 Butler, PA	Outpatient Clinic & Demolition	.4011	\$44,200	\$54,744	General
13	21 East Bay, CA	New Outpatient Clinic 2	.3993	\$44,000	\$10,547	General
14	22 Long Beach, CA	Seismic Corrections—Bldgs. 128 & 133	.3479	\$23,500	\$2,000	Seismic
15	15 St. Louis (JB), MO	Medical Facility Improvements and Cemetery Expansion	.3414	\$69,053	\$3,741	General
16	20 American Lake, WA	Seismic Corrections—NHCU and Dietetics	.3376	\$38,220	\$8,142	Seismic
17	20 Settle, WA	Mental Health & Research Bldg.	.3231	\$96,400	\$5,459	General
18	22 Loma Linda, CA	Outpatient Clinic	.3113	\$113,400	\$27,349	General
19	3 Northport, NY	Renovation of Residential & Ambulatory Care Areas	.2808	\$27,300	\$10,344	General
20	5 Washington, DC	Outpatient Expansion & Renovation	.2769	\$131,400	\$312,094	General

¹This project was withdrawn from consideration due the current project underway at Long Beach.

²This project is considered a top priority by VHA regardless of its priority score.

Mr. Chairman, I don't know what benchmarks are used with these scoring decisions, but truly it could not be based on the priorities of those valiant veterans that so readily serve our country and depend upon us for the treatments that this spinal cord injury unit provides, folks that are faced with irreversible catastrophic disabilities. This is a hard reality for these veterans and their families, and the very least we can do for them is to provide adequate facilities for them.

I can tell you, Mr. Chairman, that before I became a Member of this body, and indeed before I became a candidate for Congress, I had the opportunity to visit the Zablocki Spinal Cord Unit, and I can tell you that despite the dedication of the workers there, they are working under very, very hard conditions, outdated technology, limited space, it will not compensate for the

deteriorating conditions at that facility.

Those spinal cord injury patients, Mr. Chairman, are on the tenth floor, the tenth floor, and they are lacking any adequate safety evacuation criteria. Certainly they are lacking in any ability to maximize their mobility, functionality and independence.

The Department says this is the highest priority. Veterans have said this is the highest priority. I am at a loss as to why the subcommittee believes it is such a low priority.

Before I yield back, Mr. Chairman, I just want to say that I have listened to countless hours of speeches on this floor about veterans and our love for them and our concern for them. You know, Mr. Chairman, it is time for us to do what we say.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I make a point of order against the amendment because it is in violation of section 302(f) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974. The Committee on Appropriations filed a suballocation of budget totals for fiscal year 2007 on May 18, 2006. The adoption of this amendment would cause the subcommittee's allocation for budget authority made under section 302(b) to be exceeded and it is not permitted under section 302(f) of the Act.

I ask for a ruling of the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Chairman, I do, briefly.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlewoman from Wisconsin is recognized.

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Chairman, I understand that I will have to concede to the point of order, but I can tell you that I did not perceive that I had to provide an offset for this funding because it was deemed as the highest, the highest, priority.

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is conceded and sustained. The amendment is not in order.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the remainder of the bill through page 56, line 8, be considered as read, printed in the RECORD and open to amendment at any point.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill through page 56, line 8, is as follows:

CONSTRUCTION, MINOR PROJECTS

For constructing, altering, extending, and improving any of the facilities including parking projects under the jurisdiction or for the use of the Department of Veterans Affairs, including planning and assessments of needs which may lead to capital investments, architectural and engineering services, maintenance or guarantee period services costs associated with equipment guarantees provided under the project, services of claims analysts, offsite utility and storm drainage system construction costs, and site acquisition, or for any of the purposes set forth in sections 316, 2404, 2406, 8102, 8103, 8106, 8108, 8109, 8110, 8122, and 8162 of title 38, United States Code, where the estimated cost of a project is equal to or less than the amount set forth in section 8104(a)(3)(A) of title 38, United States Code, \$210,000,000, to remain available until expended, along with unobligated balances of previous "Construction, minor projects" appropriations which are hereby made available for any project where the estimated cost is equal to or less than the amount set forth in such section, for: (1) repairs to any of the nonmedical facilities under the jurisdiction or for the use of the Department which are necessary because of loss or damage caused by any natural disaster or catastrophe; and (2) temporary measures necessary to prevent or to minimize further loss by such causes.

GRANTS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF STATE EXTENDED CARE FACILITIES

For grants to assist States to acquire or construct State nursing home and domiciliary facilities and to remodel, modify or alter existing hospital, nursing home and domiciliary facilities in State homes, for furnishing care to veterans as authorized by sections 8131-8137 of title 38, United States Code, \$105,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That not less than \$20,000,000 shall be available only to correct life and patient safety deficiencies and minor modifications at existing facilities.

GRANTS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF STATE VETERANS CEMETERIES

For grants to aid States in establishing, expanding, or improving State veterans cemeteries as authorized by section 2408 of title 38, United States Code, \$32,000,000, to remain available until expended.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 201. Any appropriation for fiscal year 2007 for "Compensation and pensions", "Readjustment benefits", and "Veterans insurance and indemnities" may be transferred as necessary to any other of the mentioned ap-

propriations: *Provided*, That before a transfer may take place, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall request from the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress the authority to make the transfer and an approval is issued, or absent a response, a period of 30 days has elapsed.

SEC. 202. Appropriations available in this title for salaries and expenses shall be available for services authorized by section 3109 of title 5, United States Code, hire of passenger motor vehicles; lease of a facility or land or both; and uniforms or allowances therefore, as authorized by sections 5901-5902 of title 5, United States Code.

SEC. 203. No appropriations in this title (except the appropriations for "Construction, major projects", and "Construction, minor projects") shall be available for the purchase of any site for or toward the construction of any new hospital or home.

SEC. 204. No appropriations in this title shall be available for hospitalization or examination of any persons (except beneficiaries entitled under the laws bestowing such benefits to veterans, and persons receiving such treatment under sections 7901-7904 of title 5, United States Code or the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.)), unless reimbursement of cost is made to the "Medical services" account at such rates as may be fixed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

SEC. 205. Appropriations available in this title for "Compensation and pensions", "Readjustment benefits", and "Veterans insurance and indemnities" shall be available for payment of prior year accrued obligations required to be recorded by law against the corresponding prior year accounts within the last quarter of fiscal year 2006.

SEC. 206. Appropriations available in this title shall be available to pay prior year obligations of corresponding prior year appropriations accounts resulting from sections 3328(a), 3334, and 3712(a) of title 31, United States Code, except that if such obligations are from trust fund accounts they shall be payable from "Compensation and pensions".

SEC. 207. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, during fiscal year 2007, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, from the National Service Life Insurance Fund (38 U.S.C. 1920), the Veterans' Special Life Insurance Fund (38 U.S.C. 1923), and the United States Government Life Insurance Fund (38 U.S.C. 1955), reimburse the "General operating expenses" account for the cost of administration of the insurance programs financed through those accounts: *Provided*, That reimbursement shall be made only from the surplus earnings accumulated in an insurance program in fiscal year 2007 that are available for dividends in that program after claims have been paid and actuarially determined reserves have been set aside: *Provided further*, That if the cost of administration of an insurance program exceeds the amount of surplus earnings accumulated in that program, reimbursement shall be made only to the extent of such surplus earnings: *Provided further*, That the Secretary shall determine the cost of administration for fiscal year 2007 which is properly allocable to the provision of each insurance program and to the provision of any total disability income insurance included in such insurance program.

SEC. 208. Amounts deducted from enhanced-use lease proceeds to reimburse an account for expenses incurred by that account during a prior fiscal year for providing enhanced-use lease services, may be obligated during the fiscal year in which the proceeds are received.

SEC. 209. Funds available in this title or funds for salaries and other administrative expenses shall also be available to reimburse the Office of Resolution Management and the

Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication for all services provided at rates which will recover actual costs but not exceed \$31,246,000 for the Office of Resolution Management and \$3,059,000 for the Office of Employment and Discrimination Complaint Adjudication: *Provided*, That payments may be made in advance for services to be furnished based on estimated costs: *Provided further*, That amounts received shall be credited to "General operating expenses" for use by the office that provided the service.

SEC. 210. No appropriations in this title shall be available to enter into any new lease of real property if the estimated annual rental is more than \$300,000 unless the Secretary submits a report which the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress approve within 30 days following the date on which the report is received.

SEC. 211. No funds of the Department of Veterans Affairs shall be available for hospital care, nursing home care, or medical services provided to any person under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, for a non-service-connected disability described in section 1729(a)(2) of such title, unless that person has disclosed to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in such form as the Secretary may require, current, accurate third-party reimbursement information for purposes of section 1729 of such title: *Provided*, That the Secretary may recover, in the same manner as any other debt due the United States, the reasonable charges for such care or services from any person who does not make such disclosure as required: *Provided further*, That any amounts so recovered for care or services provided in a prior fiscal year may be obligated by the Secretary during the fiscal year in which amounts are received.

SEC. 212. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, at the discretion of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, proceeds or revenues derived from enhanced-use leasing activities (including disposal) may be deposited into the "Construction, major projects" and "Construction, minor projects" accounts and be used for construction (including site acquisition and disposition), alterations and improvements of any medical facility under the jurisdiction or for the use of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Such sums as realized are in addition to the amount provided for in "Construction, major projects" and "Construction, minor projects".

SEC. 213. Amounts made available under "Medical services" are available—

(1) for furnishing recreational facilities, supplies, and equipment; and

(2) for funeral expenses, burial expenses, and other expenses incidental to funerals and burials for beneficiaries receiving care in the Department.

SEC. 214. Such sums as may be deposited to the Medical Care Collections Fund pursuant to section 1729A of title 38, United States Code, may be transferred to "Medical services", to remain available until expended for the purposes of this account.

SEC. 215. Amounts made available for fiscal year 2007 under the "Medical services", "Medical administration", and "Medical facilities" accounts may be transferred among the accounts to the extent necessary to implement the restructuring of the Veterans Health Administration accounts: *Provided*, That before a transfer may take place, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall request from the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress the authority to make the transfer and an approval is issued.

SEC. 216. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall allow veterans eligible under existing Department of Veterans Affairs medical care

requirements and who reside in Alaska to obtain medical care services from medical facilities supported by the Indian Health Service or tribal organizations. The Secretary shall: (1) limit the application of this provision to rural Alaskan veterans in areas where an existing Department of Veterans Affairs facility or Veterans Affairs-contracted service is unavailable; (2) require participating veterans and facilities to comply with all appropriate rules and regulations, as established by the Secretary; (3) require this provision to be consistent with Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services activities; and (4) result in no additional cost to the Department of Veterans Affairs or the Indian Health Service.

SEC. 217. Such sums as may be deposited to the Department of Veterans Affairs Capital Asset Fund pursuant to section 8118 of title 38, United States Code, may be transferred to the "Construction, major projects" and "Construction, minor projects" accounts, to remain available until expended for the purposes of these accounts.

SEC. 218. None of the funds available to the Department of Veterans Affairs, in this Act or any other Act, may be used to replace the current system by which the Veterans Integrated Service Networks select and contract for diabetes monitoring supplies and equipment.

SEC. 219. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to implement any policy prohibiting the Directors of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks from conducting outreach or marketing to enroll new veterans within their respective Networks.

SEC. 220. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress a quarterly report on the financial status of the Veterans Health Administration.

SEC. 221. Amounts made available for the "Information technology systems" account may be transferred between projects: *Provided*, That no project may be increased or decreased by more than \$1,000,000 of cost prior to submitting a request to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress to make the transfer and an approval is issued, or absent a response, a period of 30 days has elapsed.

SEC. 222. The authority provided by section 2011 of title 38, United States Code, shall continue in effect through September 30, 2007.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. LYNCH

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. LYNCH:

At the end of title II (page 56, after line 8), insert the following:

SEC. 223. It is the sense of Congress that the Under Secretary for Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs should—

(1) increase research collaboration and cooperation with the National Institutes of Health in order to facilitate and accelerate research for the screening, diagnosing, and managing of the medical issues associated with hepatitis C; and

(2) do more to—

(A) improve screening and testing for hepatitis C among all veterans;

(B) provide tests to other veterans in the health care system of the Department of Veterans Affairs who have risk factors for hepatitis C; and

(C) participate in a national outreach effort to inform all veterans about the disease.

Mr. LYNCH (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I regretfully reserve a point of order against the gentleman's amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. A point of order is reserved.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Chairman, first of all, I want to thank Chairman WALSH and I want to thank Mr. EDWARDS of Texas for their great work on behalf of veterans. I know that their attempts here have been to provide as much support as possible for men and women in uniform.

My amendment, Mr. Chairman, acknowledges that the Department of Veterans Affairs is the largest single provider of medical care to people with hepatitis C and liver disease in the United States, and I have introduced this amendment because I believe that the VA can and should be in the lead on research areas associated with hepatitis C and liver disease, and, importantly, the VA should be at the cutting edge of research and work and collaboration with the NIH to ensure that strides that both agencies have made in this area can be shared, and so that our veterans have access to the best technologies and treatments available.

Mr. Chairman, right now, because of the great work being done by Dr. Joseph Vacanti of Harvard Medical School and Bioengineering Networks and MIT and Draper Labs and others, we are at a critical point in developing amazing and revolutionary technologies and procedures, including constructing an artificial liver assist device by which new microfabrication techniques will allow us to grow liver replacement tissues from our own cells, minimizing the risk of organ rejection and completely eliminating the need to wait for compatible organ donors.

Right now in America, we have 90,000 people waiting for organ transplants. We have 18,000 folks waiting for liver transplants. For veterans with liver disease, Dr. Vacanti's work means the possibility of living a full life with hepatitis C without worrying about getting on a list for liver transplant. We now have an opportunity to revolutionize the way in which we treat liver disease, and this research needs to be funded.

Mr. Chairman, I realize the great work that has been done by Chairman WALSH of New York and Mr. EDWARDS of Texas, and I realize there are limits to what we can do on any one bill. So I am going to pledge my support for this bill, I am going to agree to withdraw my amendment, but I just ask the chairman and the ranking member to continue to work with me on this.

Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

TITLE III

RELATED AGENCIES

AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION
SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses, not otherwise provided for, of the American Battle Monuments Commission, including the acquisition of land or interest in land in foreign countries; purchases and repair of uniforms for caretakers of national cemeteries and monuments outside of the United States and its territories and possessions; rent of office and garage space in foreign countries; purchase (one-for-one replacement basis only) and hire of passenger motor vehicles; not to exceed \$7,500 for official reception and representation expenses; and insurance of official motor vehicles in foreign countries, when required by law of such countries, \$37,088,000, to remain available until expended.

FOREIGN CURRENCY FLUCTUATIONS ACCOUNT

For necessary expenses, not otherwise provided for, of the American Battle Monuments Commission, \$4,900,000, to remain available until expended, for purposes authorized by section 2109 of title 36, United States Code.

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR
VETERANS CLAIMS

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses for the operation of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims as authorized by sections 7251-7298 of title 38, United States Code, \$19,790,000, of which \$1,260,000 shall be available for the purpose of providing financial assistance as described, and in accordance with the process and reporting procedures set forth, under this heading in Public Law 102-229.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE—CIVIL

CEMETERIAL EXPENSES, ARMY

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses, as authorized by law, for maintenance, operation, and improvement of Arlington National Cemetery and Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery, including the purchase of two passenger motor vehicles for replacement only, and not to exceed \$1,000 for official reception and representation expenses, \$26,550,000, to remain available until expended. In addition, such sums as may be necessary for parking maintenance, repairs and replacement, to be derived from the Lease of Department of Defense Real Property for Defense Agencies account.

ARMED FORCES RETIREMENT HOME

For expenses necessary for the Armed Forces Retirement Home to operate and maintain the Armed Forces Retirement Home—Washington, District of Columbia and the Armed Forces Retirement Home—Gulfport, Mississippi, to be paid from funds available in the Armed Forces Retirement Home Trust Fund, \$54,846,000.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. OBEY

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to consideration of the amendment at this point in the reading?

Without objection, the Clerk will report the amendment.

There was no objection.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 58, line 13 after "\$54,846,000", insert (increased by \$1) (reduced by \$1)

Page 58, line 20, strike "2011:" and all that follows through line 25 and insert "2011."

Page 59, line 4, strike "2011:" and all that follows through line 9 and insert "2011."

Page 59, line 13, strike “2011:” and all that follows through line 18 and insert “2011.”

Page 59, line 22, strike “2011:” and all that follows through page 60, line 2, and insert “2011.”

Page 60, line 6, strike “2011:” and all that follows through line 11 and insert “2011.”

Page 60, line 15, strike “2011:” and all that follows through line 20 and insert “2011.”

At the end of title IV (page 60, after line 20), insert the following new section:

SEC. 401. In the case of taxpayers with income in excess of \$1,000,000, for the calendar year beginning in 2007, the amount of tax reduction resulting from the enactment of Public Laws 107-16, 108-27, and 108-311 shall be reduced by 1.23 percent.

Mr. OBEY (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order against the gentleman's amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman reserves a point of order.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, as I indicated earlier in the debate, 2 days ago, the Republican majority passed a budget resolution which imposed a stringent ceiling on total appropriations for the year. The effect of that was to squeeze more than \$1 billion of badly needed money out of this bill.

What the committee has tried to do in response is that the administration in this bill asked for about 307 military construction projects, items like barracks and the like, and the committee essentially took 20 of them and designated those as “emergency spending” and that freed up \$507 million so that the committee could insert a number of projects which represented their highest priorities. That meant that the bill was effectively, if you are going to look at it in terms of budget accounting, \$507 million above the amount allowed by the budget ceiling.

That didn't even take into account the fact that the committee is proceeding on the assumption that a good number of additional fees which the White House wants to impose on veterans might, in fact, go into effect. I don't believe they will. We don't deal with that issue in this amendment, but we do deal with the first issue.

What we are simply suggesting is that we recognize that these projects requested by the White House are necessary, but we believe that they ought to be paid for. So what we suggested in committee and what I am asking on the floor is that we simply limit the size of the tax cut which is scheduled to take place for people who make over \$1 million, we are suggesting that we shrink that tax cut from \$114,000 on average for a person who makes over \$1 million, we are suggesting we shrink that by about \$1,400.

□ 1230

That is hardly going to lay a glove on the most wealthy people in this coun-

try, but it would enable this bill to proceed with honest accounting, meeting high-priority needs of the military at various bases throughout the country and the world.

So, Mr. Chairman, it is very simple, if you think that we ought to proceed with the military construction priorities laid out by the administration, and if you think that we ought to pay for those, then you would support this amendment.

If you do not, then you would oppose it. I would suggest this is a fiscally responsible way to meet critical military needs, and I would hope that the House would see fit to approve the amendment.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I make a point of order against the amendment because it proposes to change existing law and constitutes legislation on an appropriations bill, and therefore violates clause 2 of rule XXI.

The rule states, in pertinent part: “An amendment to a general appropriation bill shall not be in order if changing existing law.” The amendment changes the application of existing law. I ask for a ruling of the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I was here when the Budget Act was passed. And the purpose of that Budget Act was to reconcile spending with taxes to try to reduce the deficit.

So the purpose of the Budget Act is to try to see to it that appropriations, direct spending, and revenues all mesh in such a way as to reduce, to the greatest possible extent, the deficit.

That means that if this House takes an action on the tax side that provides large tax cuts, and if that action then imposes on the Appropriations Committee the requirement for deep cuts, that means that the two are, in fact, integrally connected.

It is hard for me to understand how a supposedly conservative party can take the position that we should proceed under the Budget Act to act in a way that pretends that what we do on the revenue side is irrelevant to what we do on the spending side.

This amendment, in my view, is within the spirit of the original intention of the Budget Act. Unfortunately, I must concede that under the way this House is being run these days, and under the rule under which this bill was brought to the floor, I must concede the point of order.

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is conceded and sustained. The amendment is not in order.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

TITLE IV
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS
MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY

For an additional amount for “Military Construction, Army”, \$379,300,000, to remain

available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That the amount under this heading is designated as making appropriations for contingency operations related to the global war on terrorism pursuant to section 402 of H. Con. Res. 376 (109th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2007.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I raise a point of order under clause 2 of rule XXI against the proviso beginning with “provided” on page 58, line 20 through page 58 line 25.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I insist that the point of order be extended to lie against the entire paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is made against the entire paragraph.

The gentlemen from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) may continue.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I would ask for a ruling of the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I regret that the gentlemen has asserted this point of order and put the House in this position. The budget resolution which the body adopted this week included a \$50 billion bridge fund for the war.

In this bill, we use the \$507 million from that fund to pay for urgent war-related military construction projects. This leaves the remaining \$49.3 billion for the Defense Subcommittee to allocate to other war-related expenditures. Every single one of these projects directly supports the war on terror. And every single one of them was included in the Defense Authorization Act that the House passed nearly unanimously last week.

These projects support specialized urban warfare training, mobilization of critical assets in the gulf region, and the easing of troop rotations abroad.

Mr. Chairman, what arises here is the Rules Committee did not protect that designation of emergency funding, and I regret that. But I greatly regret that the gentleman from Texas has raised this point of order.

Mr. Chairman, does the gentleman not understand that we are at war? Does he not understand that we have people in harm's way across the entire southern tier of Asia, that are being fired upon as we speak; that these funds are essential to fight the global war on terror, to bring democracy to these scattered points around the world, that these are soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines are in dire need of this support, of these expenditures?

There is a fiscal point to be made here, a principle to be expressed here. I understand that. But if an emergency situation is not described by a Nation at war, I do not know what determines what an emergency is.

These funds are essential. The battles that our men and women are fighting in Fallujah, in Bayji and Tikrit and Tal Afar and across Afghanistan are supported by the training that they receive here in the United States, the urban warfare training. Their familiarity with the weapons that they use,

the weapons systems that they use, the familiarity with each other, that is essential to unit cohesion.

These funds, Mr. Chairman and my colleagues, are essential to our war effort. I would urge the gentleman to withdraw his point of order, support the body of the bill, let us go forward with these essential funds that ensure the quality of life and the health and welfare of our fighting men and women across the globe.

The CHAIRMAN. Arguments should be confined to the question of order. The underlying substantive issues may be debated by pro forma amendment.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS) on the point of order

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I want to be clear about what this point of order would do. So I would like to raise this question of the Chair and perhaps other Members who would comment on this.

As I understand it, and I do think Members of this House on both sides of the aisle need to know what this point of order will do before the decision is made, as I understand it, this point of order will cut \$379 million out of Army military construction projects during a time of war.

I want to be clear and ask, Mr. Chairman, if I understand it, this will cut over \$100 million out of barracks and training facilities at Fort Drum, New York; it will cut a brigade complex at Fort Lewis, Washington. All of these are Army projects.

Mr. Chairman, I want to be clear whether this point of order is going to cut over \$45 million out of two projects at Fort Stewart, Georgia. Is it going to cut a shooting range at Camp Atterbury in Indiana? Is it going to cut the block-and-brace facility in the vehicle maintenance shop at Fort Campbell, Kentucky in the Blue Grass Depot in Kentucky?

Mr. Chairman, my inquiry regarding this point of order is to have all Members fully understand while we have Army soldiers in harm's way in Iraq and Afghanistan today, this point of order, if sustained by the Chair, is going to cut over \$379 million in Army projects, training, housing, other facilities that help support those troops that are risking their lives today, while we are debating technical points of order on the floor of the House.

Am I correct, Mr. Chairman, that the projects I listed, as well as additional Army military construction projects, would be cut by this point of order being made by the gentleman from Texas?

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order will excise the relevant paragraph, if sustained.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, parliamentary inquiry.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, if this point of order is upheld, does that

mean that the House would be placing a higher value on the ideological accounting contained in the budget resolution than they would be on meeting the critical military needs of the country?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman has not stated a parliamentary inquiry.

Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order? If not, the Chair will rule.

The Chair finds that the paragraph includes special budgetary designations pursuant to the concurrent resolution on the budget. The paragraph therefore constitutes legislation in violation of clause 2 of rule XXI. The point of order is sustained and the paragraph is stricken from the bill.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I am rising to speak to this point of order and a series of points of order that may be coming to us, and in an effort to do that, I would like to have an exchange with the chairman of the committee, if I might, Mr. WALSH.

Mr. Chairman, first let me compliment you for the very fine job that you have done on this bill and compliment Members on both sides of the aisle who have worked with us on this very, very important item.

The point of order before us involves some \$375 million of funding that affects our military expenditures and the availability of resources, especially in our effort on the war on terror in the Middle East.

There will be additional points of order, apparently raised that will increase that amount significantly if I am correct. Is that correct?

Mr. WALSH. If I understand, there will be other points of order that would further affect the appropriation, generally appropriations for this war on terror.

Mr. LEWIS of California. And so really what we would appear to have before us are Members unilaterally identifying paragraphs that they are not particularly pleased with that involve moneys, maybe at a level, say, of \$375 million, that specifically affect our military effort in the Middle East.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I am deeply concerned about the impact of these.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, let me say to you, you have done a fabulous job with this bill. It is a very difficult bill. People oftentimes do not understand the difficulties of putting together a bill like this. To exercise themselves in a way that undermines our efforts on the war on terror is not just an affront to the work you are about; I believe it is an affront to the work that we are all about, on a bipartisan effort are attempting to make sure that we have some strength in this effort on the war on terror.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for his support on this, and for the allocation we received. This is a tremendous blow to our effort to

pass this bill that provides for the military quality of life of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines who are in harm's way.

Clearly, this builds the bases and the training facilities that they need to fight this incredibly difficult and dangerous war.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I do want the gentleman to know that I have great respect for the work that you and your staff have been about, but also the work that Mr. EDWARDS and others on the other side of the aisle have been about regarding this very important responsibility that we have here, and I appreciate very much your work.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I think it is important that we not personalize this issue. I do not like the fact that these gentlemen are evidently going to be knocking out funding for these important military projects. But I do think it is important to recognize that under the budget resolution which was imposed by the House Republican majority, and under the rule that was voted for by virtually every Republican today, they have that right. That is a parliamentary fact.

So I disagree with the judgment being made by the gentleman. But in all fairness, I think that the responsibility for this debacle lies squarely at the feet of the Speaker and the majority leader and the majority party leadership, because they broke arms for 3 weeks to impose a budget resolution on this House which required the allocation to the subcommittee which wound up being \$824 million below the amount proposed by the President.

□ 1245

Because the majority party leadership decided that it was more important to provide \$40 billion in tax cuts to people who make \$1 million a year, because the majority party leadership decided that it was more important to provide over \$60 billion in tax cuts to people in the top 1 percent of our population who make more than \$400,000 a year, because the majority party leadership decided that those priorities were preferable to meeting our education needs, our health care needs, our military construction needs, and our science needs, then the Appropriations Committee is stuck with the dirty job of carrying out those mandates. And under the rule that was imposed by the Rules Committee, which is appointed on the majority side by the Speaker of this House, every last one of them, because that rule was voted on by that leadership ordered and dominated committee, that is the reason that these emotions are in order. And to avoid that, that is why I tried to offer the previous amendment which said: Look it, this is a phony accounting gimmick. Let us be honest about it and pay for it by scaling back those tax cuts for the most well off in this society by just a smidgeon.

So I think, if we are going to start passing out responsibility, this is not the responsibility of Mr. LEWIS, it is not the responsibility of the gentlemen who are going to be offering the points of order, although I think their judgment is defective, but it is, in fact, the responsibility of the majority party leadership of this House. And it illustrates that Mr. DELAY was absolutely right when he said a few months ago: "This is what you get when you elect a Republican president, a Republican Senate, and a Republican House of Representatives," because it means there are no checks and balances in the system. It means that we have no way on stopping the majority party from putting tax cuts for the very wealthy ahead of the needs of our military, ahead of the needs of our kids, ahead of the needs of our workers and our sick in this society. This day illustrates how screwed up the priorities are on that side of the aisle.

Mr. EDWARDS. I move to strike the last word, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I had worked with Chairman WALSH on our subcommittee and our Appropriations Committee on a bipartisan basis to pass this bill today.

I am outraged at what has happened. A lot more important than that, every service man and woman and every veteran in America and every American that loves them and respects them ought to be just as outraged. And it is not just what has just been done by a handful of Republican House Members. I think the American people need to understand what has happened this week. Forty eight hours ago, this House on a totally partisan basis passed a budget resolution that, in my personal opinion, put a higher priority on tax breaks for people making over \$1 million a year than it put on adequately funding national defense programs and supporting our military troops. We pleaded with our colleagues to vote against that budget resolution, but the vote was partisan and it passed.

Let me tell you what that resolution did. It gave Lee Raymond, who just retired as CEO of ExxonMobil, who, by the way got a \$398 million retirement benefit from ExxonMobil, that budget resolution gave him a \$2 million dividend tax cut. We said when that budget resolution passed giving Lee Raymond tax cuts is going to hurt education, health care, job training, and, yes, our national defense programs and our service men and women and our veterans. But others said, no, that is not going to happen. So let me tell you what has happened as a result of that budget resolution.

Our subcommittee, Mr. WALSH's and mine, and other subcommittee funding military quality of life, military construction, VA programs and defense health care, had to accept an \$824 million cut below what President Bush said was needed to adequately fund these key national defense programs during a time of war. \$824 million cut.

What happened? First, we had to accept that \$316 million cut in military construction projects that were requested by the administration to implement the base closing process. That means barracks not built, training ranges not built, military facilities not built.

Well, then what was the second result in our subcommittee based on the budget resolution that Mr. Raymond is still smiling about, but our military people ought to be crying about at this moment? We had to fund military defense programs by \$735 million below what President Bush said we needed.

What does that mean? That is not just a budget number. That means we potentially put at risk health care for our troops fighting in Iraq today while we are debating budget points of order here, it puts at risk military health care for our retirees, men and women who have already served in Iraq, already served in Afghanistan, already served in Korea, Vietnam, and World War II. It puts that health care system at risk. So that is a \$735 million cut below what the administration said we needed.

Now, to add outrage to outrage, this technical point of order caused by the budget gimmicks that were a direct result of the budget resolution passed 2 days ago will cut \$507 million out of vital military construction projects. That may not mean anything to some Members on this floor, but it means a lot to the troops at Fort Drum, New York, who have sacrificed immensely on behalf of the American people in our war on terrorism. It will mean a lot to the people at Camp Pendleton, the Marine camp, Camp Pendleton, when their bachelor enlisted quarters are cut and the light armored reconnaissance battalion facility will be cut.

It will mean a lot, even while Mr. Raymond is smiling, to harm the interests of our troops, our Army troops at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, Fort Devens, Massachusetts, at Sunny Point, North Carolina, and Indian Springs, Nevada. And, in Korea. This even cuts \$2 million in vital construction projects for servicemen and women stationed in Korea today.

So what does that all mean? Because the budget resolution pushed through by the House leadership, not by the Appropriations Committee or this subcommittee, the House resolution, the budget resolution passed 2 days ago is forcing us to cut \$1.5 billion out of vital defense programs even while our troops are risking their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan today. Training facilities, housing facilities, quality of life facilities. It is wrong, and this should not be done. Our military men and women deserve better than this.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

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

Mr. PENCE. I am still trying to recover, Mr. Chairman, from the remarks

just made by the distinguished gentleman from Texas, raising objections to the good-faith efforts of the Members of this majority to live within the budget that we just adopted 2 days ago. Let me say, by way of compliment, that the chairman of the Appropriations Committee and the chairman of this subcommittee are not only my good friends, but my friends, men that I admire and respect, who are using the tools in the box they have been given to meet the needs that they believe represents the Nation's priorities. And I respect that. But, along with my colleague, Mr. HENSARLING, I respectfully disagree.

I rise, though, particularly animated at this moment, Mr. Chairman, because I am reading the minority views of the gentleman who just spoke, minority views listed in this legislation as additional views of Representative CHET EDWARDS, as well as other colleagues, including the distinguished ranking member of this committee. And I will quote it for the record. Speaking to the point of order issue that has been raised and will continue to be raised, the gentleman who just spoke wrote this: "The second Democratic amendment," speaking of their bill, "would have eliminated the budget gimmick that designated \$507 million for 20 routine military construction projects as an emergency so this funding would not count against the bill's allocation."

Mr. EDWARDS continues: "None of these projects were unforeseen. The administration budget requested 310 military construction projects, including these 20 projects. They are all conventional military construction projects, things like hangars, barracks, and unit headquarters. These are projects selected through long-term planning exercises."

He went on to say, "Democrats recognize these projects as valid and continue to support them. However, the minority has a more fiscally disciplined and balanced approach to addressing these needs." And there I close the quote.

In the minority views, precisely that to which we are objecting was objected to, described as a budget gimmick that had no place in this legislation so conceived. And so I just say, I agree with what Mr. EDWARDS wrote.

It is time that we leveled with the American people. It is time that we stood for the principle that we mean what we say. And when we adopt a budget, we made the hard choices to live with within the budget. And those of us in the Congress who are committed to doing just that rise today and take this tough stand among friends to say, let's level with the American people, and let us not use what Mr. EDWARDS rightly wrote to be a budget gimmick to find our way around the budget discipline that we just embraced.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I appreciate the opportunity to tell you that back in Texas, we have a saying, bad day at Black Rock. This is one of the blackest days that we could possibly imagine in Texas and anywhere else. The gentleman that just spoke talked about good faith, talked about we have to live within our budget, the budget that we set, talked about the Nation's priorities, talked about hard choices, and finally talked about leveling with the American people.

Well, good faith, Mr. Chairman, is about coming here and doing what is right, making sure that at a time of war we take care of our men and women in uniform and the facilities that they need, the equipment that they depend on, and everything that depends so much on this war on terror.

Live within our budget. I voted against that budget a couple of days ago because I didn't think it was realistic. I knew there were going to be some cutbacks someplace, and now we find out it is cutbacks in our military's budget.

Nation's priorities? Well, I would submit we set the Nation's priorities. The Nation's priorities have been set way too long by the Republican leadership in this House, in the Senate, and in the White House.

Hard choices. Well, our hard choices, people have to live with. Our military people have to live with.

And finally, Mr. Chairman, leveling with the American people means telling the truth about tax cuts versus what is best for our military.

With that, I would like to yield the balance of my time to my good friend from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS).

Mr. EDWARDS. I thank the gentleman for his comments.

I respect my colleague, Mr. PENCE, from Indiana. He is a straight shooter. I will have to say in this particular case, in all due respect, you said you are still trying to recover. I hope you will forgive me in saying, Mr. Chairman and Mr. PENCE, that today I am more worried about our military troops whose lives are at risk all over the world to defend our country, I am more worried about them recovering from this half a billion dollar cut in vital defense programs than I am about any Member of this House, the gentleman or me or anyone else, recovering from this debate.

□ 1300

The gentleman quoted me, and I am glad he did. I think this is a budget gimmick. I think these military construction projects should have been funded in the normal course of the budget process, and that is exactly what my colleague Mr. OBEY tried to do, and I voted for the Obey amendment.

But my friend and his colleagues on the Republican side of the aisle chose to vote against the Obey amendment, and so then where I am left is to say that I would rather accept a budget gimmick forced by a Republican bud-

et resolution that I adamantly opposed 2 days ago, than to ask men and women at Fort Drum, New York, an installation whose troops have made tremendous sacrifices in the war on terrorism, I would rather not ask them to make an additional sacrifice, even if that requires us to pass a budget gimmick.

So is this a budget gimmick? Yes, it is; but do we desperately need these \$507 million, including \$379 million going to Army facilities to support our troops in the war on terrorism? Absolutely, we do.

I would repeat what I said earlier: having represented 40,000 troops who have served in Iraq, having co-chaired the bipartisan House Army Caucus, having worked on a bipartisan effort in good faith with Chairman WALSH and the Appropriations Committee to pass this bill today, I think every serviceman and -woman in America ought to be outraged that the result of, in my opinion, a dishonest budget resolution that promised tax cuts to the retired chairman of ExxonMobil, without suggesting the pain that would be caused, I think every serviceman and -woman in America ought to be outraged by that because they were told it was a no-pain process, you have a tax cut, that will increase revenues and nobody has to suffer. Mr. Raymond can get his \$2 million tax dividend and nobody has to suffer.

Now we are leveling with the American people. Forty-eight hours later we find out it is not American people that are suffering. It is our troops in Korea and here at home and Iraq and Afghanistan who will suffer because of a budget resolution that did not shoot straight with the American people.

This is a sad day for this country, and it is a particularly sad day for all those men and women who are serving in uniform.

Mr. FLAKE, Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I rise in support of the gentleman from Texas' (Mr. HENSARLING) point of order. If you look at the description of the bill here, you have a couple of pages. The first page has to do with what is being termed "emergency spending." Let me simply note that these are items that the President has requested.

Now, I have often and all of us have been critical of the White House at times for designating emergency spending when it really is not an emergency. They did not designate one of these items. There are 20 spending items here, mostly facilities and barracks. Not one of them was listed by the White House as emergency. Yet they have been listed here as an emergency and I would submit simply to make room for other projects.

If you look at some other projects that are being funded that are not emergency, tell me if you can see a difference. Number one, there is an item that is an emergency, \$18.1 million for bachelor-enlisted quarters at Camp Pendleton. All right. That is one that is an emergency.

Here is one that is not an emergency, \$6.7 million for a special weapons assessment facility in Crane, Illinois. How can you designate one as an emergency and not another?

Here is another example: \$3.5 million for a block and brace facility at Blue Grass Depot, Kentucky. That is an emergency apparently.

Second, \$8.7 million for replacing a troop facility training facility in Savannah, Georgia, that is not an emergency. Tell me where the difference is.

Let me go on: \$102 million for a brigade complex in Fort Lewis, Washington. That is an emergency.

There is another \$18 million for a maintenance hangar in Fort Hood, Texas. That is not an emergency.

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

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

Mr. WALSH, Mr. Chairman, I will be quick. The gentleman refers to this as emergency funding. It is not. That is incorrect. The funds are designated pursuant to section 402 of the budget resolution which is for "contingency operations related to the global war on terrorism," not emergency spending.

Mr. FLAKE. Let me just go on. That is \$508 million we set aside as a down payment on the supplemental, the war supplement coming up. We are simply taking from that, and that will be money that will not be spent in the supplemental later on or should be designated for the supplemental later on, but we have designated it saying it is emergency when there is really no difference between the categories here.

I would submit that if you really want to fund, as we are adding here \$16.5 million for a rotary wing hangar in Qatar, then perhaps you ought to cut out \$2 million for a child care center which is funded here in the bill that is not being challenged here in Redstone Arsenal, Alabama, or you could take out \$9.8 million for an educational center complex in Little Rock, Arkansas, if you truly need to spend money, as we say we do, for Predator various facilities at Indian Springs, Nevada.

Now let me just give one more example: \$9.7 million for an indoor wash rack in Washington. Perhaps you could take money from that and spend it, if we really do need it, on \$3.1 million for shoot houses in Korea.

What I am saying is there ought to be integrity in the budget process. We did pass a budget. The ink is not even dry and here we are using a means to evade it, to actually get some head room up here so we can spend money on other priorities and earmarks.

I do not think it is lost on anyone that the earmark total in the bill is nearly \$500 million, almost the same total here that was added as head room, so that we can spend these other dollars.

So I hope that the point of order on all of these is sustained. Let us bring some integrity back to the budget process.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Let us assume there is an infantry company first sergeant sitting here in our midst today and our friends on the other side would be trying to explain to him about the particulars of emergency spending, of points of order and parliamentary procedure. But the infantry company first sergeant would say, but what about my being able to train the troops better? What about being able to train them in emergency urban warfare, or in sharpshooting better or having better barracks conditions so that they will stay in the Army and not consider getting out? How would one explain to that infantry company first sergeant the complexities of what we are facing on this floor and the needs of those wonderful soldiers?

Mr. Chairman, I speak for those soldiers. We need them. We need them to be highly trained, well taken care of, and to try to explain things away on points of order and whether something fits within the "emergency spending" category would be foreign to him because all he knows, he wants to train his troops so they can fight in Afghanistan, Iraq and the war against terror.

That is what is important to this country. That is what is important to the soldiers. I am proud of them. I would like to say all of us in this room speak for them, but unfortunately, we are faced with a parliamentary situation that I could not explain to that first sergeant.

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

Mr. SKELTON. I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin, my friend.

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

Mr. Chairman, I did not vote to go to war in Iraq. Most of our friends on the other side of the aisle did, but after the Congress voted to send our troops to war, the troops did not ask, is this an emergency or is it regular order of business? They just went. They did their duty. Some of them have done it two and three and four times in Iraq.

I do not know why they should be stuck in the middle of a family squabble within the Republican Party in the Congress, a squabble between people who put tax cuts for the most well-off people first versus the people who put budget accounting nicety first versus people who think that there are some economic and social needs faced by the families of those soldiers.

What the committee tried to do is to cut it down the middle, hedge a little bit here, a little bit there. We do not like that on this side of the aisle. So we tried to substitute honest accounting, and the majority party insisted on knocking that amendment out on a point of order.

So at this point, we have to choose between a faulty accounting system or meeting the needs of the families of people who are in Iraq defending the national interests of this country; and

while I have great misgivings about the advisability of having gone to war in the first place, I will be doggoned if I am going to stand here and allow somebody else's squabble about whether a budget item is an emergency or not get in the way of providing the school needs, the barracks needs and the other needs of the families in the military, who are not asking questions of their government; they are just doing their duty.

So I congratulate the gentleman for his comments, and I think that this day, I was going to say it is a sad day in the history of the Congress, but it is not because this finally illustrates what we have been trying to demonstrate for 3 years, that what you do on the tax side of the budget, what you give to Mr. Raymond and his friends, is directly related to what you have left on the table that you can give our military families, our school kids and people in this country who need a little help on the health care front. It is about time that people on the majority side of the aisle recognized that connection.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, coming from a district like mine, where I represent four military bases, and then looking at what is transpiring this afternoon really worries me. All we have to do is go visit the medical facilities at Bethesda and Walter Reed to be able to understand that these troops need our help now, and we talk about giving them more body armor.

The only emergency here is the completely inadequate allocation that my good friend Chairman WALSH received. This is nothing more than a budget gimmick that adds \$500 million to the deficit, the deficit carried by all Americans, young and old, middle-aged, while at the same time millionaires are continuing to enjoy reduced taxes. This is not fair.

Just 2 days ago, we voted to give a tax break in the amount of \$70 billion, but we cannot fund it. In fact, we are cutting.

I have military bases. We repair helicopters, and many times they have asked for help. We were forced to leave the air base in Uzbekistan. We have to build up our capabilities. At Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan; that is an emergency.

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

Mr. ORTIZ. I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman, but I think I have said enough. I just would hope that this House would reconsider what they have done this week and use this incident to recognize that that budget resolution is simply insufficient to meet the needs of our military, the needs of our school children and a number of other seriously competing needs.

I would hope, and in fact I fully expect, that the Senate will not pass the

budget resolution that has caused this problem.

The irony is that the Republican majority in this House had to pass a let-us-pretend resolution yesterday, which said we are going to move ahead with appropriation bills on the assumption that the full Congress had passed the budget resolution, which it has not done, because Republican moderates in the Senate recognize that the budget resolution that is being enforced on the majority side in this House is too extreme for their taste in the Senate.

□ 1315

Senators such as Senator SPECTER have already made that quite clear.

So it is ironic that a budget that hasn't even passed the Congress is being used to enforce these kinds of trade-offs. I don't think the American people are going to be very pleased.

I thank the gentleman.

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word. I rise to try to clarify this debate and bring a little clarity here. It is true that we are really arguing over roughly \$5 billion and points are flying back and forth about what that means and whether or not this is a technical point.

But there has also been some focus here on the issue of whether or not our war effort is going to be harmed and whether or not our soldiers are going to be harmed. I want to be clear that there is no effort, in any way, to harm the efforts of our military, or to, in any way, inhibit our ability to fight the war on terror in the point of order that was raised by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING).

Indeed, there has never once been brought to this House by the President of the United States a single request for a war supplemental that this House has not funded. We have funded it, we are currently working on one that will be funded, and there will be another one funded very, very soon, as soon as we get a few more months down the line. There is no issue here about not funding the war on terror. And there is no issue here, ladies and gentlemen, about not funding the quality of life of our soldiers.

So what is the issue? What are we talking about? What we are talking about is sleight of hand. What we are talking about is, well, let us take the really defensible funds and call them a part of the war on terror and let us leave the money that we put in the bill, by the way, there is \$5 billion in this bill not requested by the Pentagon, \$5 billion that the Pentagon said it didn't need, \$5 billion that the Pentagon itself didn't say was necessary either for its ongoing operations, for quality of life for military personnel, or for the war on terror.

Interesting number, \$5 billion. Now, there is an additional \$5 billion listed here as, well, it is not emergency, but we are going to take it out of this fund to fund the war on terror. Now, that is

kind of interesting. We take the stuff that we wanted, we take the stuff that was not requested by the Pentagon, \$5 billion, and we put them over here in the bill. But then we say, well, we need another \$5 billion and we will call that critical for the war on terror.

This is not about whether or not we fund the war on terror, it is not about the military quality of life, it is about how we hide spending in this budget process and how we deal with it. And it just so happens that the President himself said none of these were emergencies. He doesn't even agree that these were essential for the war on terror at this point. But if we call them essential for the war on terror, and if we take them out of the fund that we have set up to deal with the war on terror, that enables us down the road to impose that additional \$5 billion burden on the American people.

That is what this discussion is about. It is not about military quality of life. It is not about fighting the war on terror. It is about being able to increase the overall spending and, quite frankly, being able to increase that overall spending for things the Pentagon did not even request.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word, and I yield to the distinguished gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

Mr. OBEY. I thank the gentleman.

I am sorry the gentleman wouldn't yield to me, but if he had, I would have asked them this question: He said "we" are engaging in sleight of hand. I just wanted to ask him who that "we" was. Because this report was put together by his own party. It was brought to the House floor by his own party. We on this side of the aisle tried to correct that faulty accounting and we were not allowed to do that by the majority party either.

So I just want to make certain that people understand that in this case the "we" is "thee."

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I would be happy as well to yield to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS), the ranking member of the subcommittee.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I believe Mr. SHADEGG, my colleague from Arizona, just said a few seconds ago that these projects were not requested by the administration. If I heard him correctly, that is a patently false statement.

These projects, these \$379 million worth of army projects, I believe, were either all requested by the administration and the Pentagon or the vast, vast majority were requested by the administration and the Pentagon as being important projects that needed to be funded this year as part of our Nation's defense effort included in the war against terrorism.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I thank the gentleman, and reclaiming my time, I would just say that this is a frustration for many of us. There is no doubt that there are some of us here

that did not support the actions initially as our troops were, if you will, directed to go into Iraq, but at the same time, we recognize the responsibility that this Congress and this Nation has.

What frustrates many of us is that my good friends on the other side of the aisle are attempting to make a point. That is all I have heard in their debate, to make a point about the budget and about the appropriations, rather than acknowledging the fact that this is a request by their President of the United States; that it, in fact, strips soldiers who are either on the front lines or distributed around the Nation from the actual needs, job training, barriers, concrete fixtures that they need, physical facilities that they need to carry on the Nation's business of defense.

Why we would utilize this particular section to make a point and strip our soldiers of the necessities of their business one week before Memorial Day baffles me, as does the question of if there is a need to fix this, why could this not have been an internal fix, either with the House and the subcommittee or the President of the United States of America. Because what my friends are doing is, frankly, making scapegoats out of innocent military personnel who are in need of this kind of equipment.

Any of us who have traveled to facilities anywhere in the Nation or around the world know that we have, in some instances, facilities that are in dire need of repair or in dire need of replacement. Striking this point of order, this challenge, goes right to the heart of this equipment.

And I think it is important for the American people to understand. This is stripping away bricks and mortar that soldiers, husbands, wives, sons and daughters of the American people are in need of. And I would simply suggest that while we certainly agree on the war on terror, whether we agree or disagree on any war going on at this point, we cannot disagree on the resources necessary for these soldiers. So I would ask my colleagues to remind themselves of why we are here today.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, NAVY AND MARINE CORPS

For an additional amount for "Military Construction, Navy and Marine Corps", \$26,037,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That the amount under this heading is designated as making appropriations for contingency operations related to the global war on terrorism pursuant to section 402 of H. Con. Res. 376 (109th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2007.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I make a point of order under clause 2 of Rule XXI against the proviso beginning with "Provided" on page 59, line 13, through page 59, line 18.

This language carries a designation of special budgetary treatment for con-

tingency operations. This language constitutes legislation on an appropriations bill in violation of clause 2 of rule XXI, and I ask for a ruling of the Chair.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I insist the point of order be extended to lie against the entire paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is made against the entire paragraph. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I want to be sure I understand this point of order. Having just cut out \$379 million for army military facilities needed by our troops, it is my understanding this point of order would cut \$26 million out of Marine Corps facilities at Camp Pendleton in California.

So having gutted army military construction projects, we are now going to hurt those serving in the Marines at Camp Pendleton who are an important part of our war on terrorism. Am I correct, Mr. Chairman, in understanding that this point of order, if sustained, would cut marine projects at Camp Pendleton, California?

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order would excise the entire paragraph, if sustained.

Mr. EDWARDS. So in lay terms, I think that answer was yes.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair will rule on the point of order.

For the reasons previously stated, the point of order is sustained and the paragraph is stricken from the bill.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, AIR FORCE

For an additional amount for "Military Construction, Air Force", \$49,923,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That the amount under this heading is designated as making appropriations for contingency operations related to the global war on terrorism pursuant to section 402 of H. Con. Res. 376 (109th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2007.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I raise a point of order under clause 2 of rule XXI against the proviso beginning with "Provided," on page 59 line 13 through page 59, line 18.

This language carries a designation for special budgetary treatment for contingency operations and constitutes legislation on an appropriations bill in violation of clause 2, Rule XXI, and I ask for a ruling of the Chair.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I insist that the point of order be extended to lie against the entire paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is made against the entire paragraph. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I would like Members to be clear, and I would like to be clear about what this point of order does. Having now cut vital, according to the administration, vital Army and Marine Corps military installations out of the budget, this point of order, as I understand it, would cut approximately \$50 million

out of Air Force facilities that the Bush administration and the Pentagon said we needed for the Predator program, which the public might not understand is a vital unmanned aerial vehicle used in our war on terrorism.

Am I correct, Mr. Chairman, that the \$50 million cut would affect the Predator Air Force program?

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order would excise the entire paragraph, if sustained.

Mr. EDWARDS. I believe the answer is yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Does any other Member wish to be heard? If not, the Chair will rule.

For the reasons previously stated, the point of order is sustained and the paragraph is stricken from the bill.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, DEFENSE-WIDE

For an additional amount for "Military Construction, Defense-Wide", \$44,500,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That the amount under this heading is designated as making appropriations for contingency operations related to the global war on terrorism pursuant to section 402 of H. Con. Res. 376 (109th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2007.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I raise a point of Order under clause 2 of Rule XXI against the proviso beginning with "Provided" on page 59, line 22, through page 60, line 2.

This language carries a designation for special budgetary treatment for contingency operations. This language constitutes legislation on an appropriations bill in violation of clause 2 of Rule XXI, and I ask for a ruling of the Chair.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I insist that the point of order be extended to lie against the entire paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is made against the entire paragraph. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, again, so Members can follow this, my question is: Does this point of order, if sustained, cut our U.S. military operations in Qatar, operations under the Special Operations Command that are directly related to our war on terrorism and the war in Iraq?

Mr. Chairman, is that what this point of order will accomplish?

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair continues to state that the point of order would excise the entire paragraph, if sustained.

Mr. EDWARDS. So the answer is yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there other Members that wish to be heard? If not, the Chair will rule.

For the reasons previously stated, the point of order is sustained and the paragraph is stricken from the bill.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I am somewhat amused by the fact that the last two times Mr. EDWARDS has tried to fully explain to the House

what the impact of the point of order was that those who are responsible for the points of order tried to urge the Chair to cut off Mr. EDWARDS so that he could not, in fact, explain it. Let me simply say if I were offering these points of order, I would want to have as little discussion about them as possible also. I would not want to have them fully aired either.

Let me just make the point. I find it interesting that we have Members of this House objecting on bookkeeping fine points to what the committee has been trying to do to provide these facilities and services to our military, and they stand in high dudgeon about the fact that the budget resolution is being exceeded.

□ 1330

Yet I do not recall them objecting when the President has submitted to the Congress almost \$400 billion in expenditures for Iraq, none of which has been submitted in the regular appropriations order. All of those requests have come in the form of supplemental appropriations, off budget, if you will.

So I find it interesting that we can fight an entire war, spend \$400 billion in an off budget, hide-the-cost-from-the-public fashion, and yet when it comes to meeting these small construction needs, and as the gentleman points out, this is not in the United States, this is in the Middle East itself. My understanding is that one of the items affects the special ops unit, and yet the gentlemen feel that their ideological commitment to their precious budget resolution, which they cannot even sell to their compatriots in the United States Senate, ought to be the be all and end all above every other economic or social or moral consideration. I find that, indeed, very interesting and very revealing.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Chairman, parliamentary inquiry.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Chairman, it is my understanding that the Chair ruled earlier that once a point of order has been raised, it is not in order to discuss the merits of the underlying issue. It is only in order to discuss whether or not the point of order is appropriate. Is that not what the Chair ruled?

The CHAIRMAN. Arguments should be confined to the question of order.

Mr. SHADEGG. And so if it is the question of the order, that means not the substance underneath, but rather the question of the procedural issue of whether or not the point of order should be sustained?

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair would state arguments should be confined to the question of the order. The underlying substantive issues may be debated by pro forma amendment.

Mr. SHADEGG. By separate amendment not in that debate, is that correct?

The CHAIRMAN. Substantive issues may be addressed by pro forma amendment.

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Chairman, does that mean by moving to strike the last word following the ruling of the Chair?

The CHAIRMAN. A pro forma amendment may be offered following the Chair's ruling on the point of order.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, parliamentary inquiry.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. OBEY. Doesn't this whole thing illustrate that there are some people here who are much more concerned about the technical niceties of the procedures of this House than they are on the human implications of what it is we do here?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman has not stated a parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, parliamentary inquiry.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. EDWARDS. If I move at this point to strike the last word, am I allowed 5 minutes to discuss the specific impact of the cuts in our military operations and Qatar and the Middle East which have just been put into effect by the Chair's ruling?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may debate substantive issues on a pro forma amendment.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I am somewhat bothered by my colleagues' effort not only to gut vital military construction projects at this important time in our country's history, but would even go the extra step to try to cut off the right of Members of this House to tell our military men and women who are fighting that war what has just been done to them.

So now that the Chair has given me that opportunity, despite Members' efforts to cut it off, let me explain exactly what has just happened based on this point of order.

The Special Operations Command and Qatar in the Middle East, again, a vital part of our war in Iraq, will lose \$28 million requested by President Bush and the Pentagon for a special operations aircraft operations and maintenance hanger, a hanger needed to basically protect vital Special Operations Command components.

It will also cut \$16.5 million out of another Special Operations Command facility and Qatar that was going to provide a hanger for Special Operations rotary wing equipment and facilities and operations. So \$54 million has just been cut by this action in the House out of Special Operations facilities that the administration says are needed to carry out our Nation's defense and our war in Iraq.

Mr. Chairman, I try not to take things personally in this process, and I respect the rights of every other Member of the House, but I think the servicemen and women in Qatar and the servicemen and women at Fort Drum, New York, and our Marines at Camp Pendleton in California, and men and women who served our country in uniform in wars past are going to be deeply offended by what has happened

today. And I would like to reemphasize what has happened today was not just the action of two or three Members who are putting procedural budget points above the interests of our Nation's military, it was done also by the House leadership, which 2 days ago forced through a budget resolution that promised no pain, promised \$70 billion in tax cuts, many of those going to people making over a million dollars a year.

Today we are feeling the pain. It is pain that will hurt those who have already sacrificed the most for our country, those men and women serving in the war on terrorism. It is a shameful process.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read. The Clerk read as follows:

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

For an additional amount for "Military Construction, Army National Guard", \$5,530,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That the amount under this heading is designated as making appropriations for contingency operations related to the global war on terrorism pursuant to section 402 of H. Con. Res. 376 (109th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2007.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I make a point of order under clause 2 of rule XXI against the proviso beginning with "Provided," on page 60, line 6, through page 60, line 11. This language carries a designation for special budgetary treatment for contingency operations. This language constitutes legislation on an appropriation bill in violation of clause 2 of rule XXI, and I ask for a ruling from the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I insist that the point of order be extended to lie against the entire paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is made against the entire paragraph.

Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order? If not, the Chair will rule.

For the reasons previously stated, the point of order is sustained, and the paragraph is stricken from the bill.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I think the Members of this House, I think Members of our Armed Forces, I think our Nation's veterans and the American people have a right to know that what this House just did, having already cut over \$300 million out of Army programs, having cut Marine Corps programs and Air Force programs, having cut programs requested by the administration for Special Operations Command facilities and Qatar in the Middle East, the House has just now cut the Army National Guard, and not just the Guard, the training facilities for the Army National Guard, the very Guard that our military leaders say is a vital part of the total Army effort to defend our Nation and fight the war on terrorism.

In this particular case \$2 million was just cut out of Camp Roberts in Cali-

fornia, an Army National Guard facility. Based on this action, they will not have the infantry squad battle course funded. In addition to that, in Indiana, Camp Atterbury, the Army National Guard will no longer have funded the Live Fire Shoot House. So now, having already cut quality-of-life facilities and barracks and housing for our military and other vital facilities, and training ranges out of our active duty military, now we are gutting Army National Guard training facilities to help prepare our Guards men and women to be able to carry out their military duty and come back home safely to their families.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read. The Clerk read as follows:

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY RESERVE

For an additional amount for "Military Construction, Army Reserve", \$1,713,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That the amount under this heading is designated as making appropriations for contingency operations related to the global war on terrorism pursuant to section 402 of H. Con. Res. 376 (109th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2007.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I raise a point of order under clause 2 of rule XXI against the proviso beginning with "provided" on page 60, line 15, through page 60, line 20. This language carries a designation for special budgetary treatment for contingency operations. This language constitutes legislation on an appropriation bill in violation of clause 2 of rule XXI. I ask for a ruling of the chair.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I insist that the point of order be extended to lie against the entire paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is extended against the entire paragraph.

Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order? If not, the Chair will rule.

For the reasons previously stated, the point of order is sustained and paragraph is stricken from the bill.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, again I think the Members and the American people have a right to know that what this House just did was to cut \$1.7 million out of the Urban Assault Course Facility at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, for the Army Reserve. So now we can add it up, we have cut the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Marine Corps, the Army National Guard, and that was not enough, now we have to cut the Army Reserve Urban Assault Course, the very kind of training needed when we send our Army reservists over to Iraq to police the streets of Baghdad.

Mr. Chairman, with every minute of this process, I think I better understand why the American people at this point have such lowest esteem for the United States Congress. In one week, we have given the retired CEO of

ExxonMobil, Mr. Lee Raymond, a \$2 million dividend tax cut. And now we have said we cannot afford \$507 million in vital military installations. I don't think that reflects the American people's values. Our military men and women deserve better than this.

Mr. BACA. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I am disappointed with the recommendations that have just been made. We have just heard the President over the week talk about the need for 60,000 National Guard troops. Well, basically what we are doing now, it is going to impact the State of California and the family members in that area.

How can we comply then with the President of the United States saying that we need an additional 6,000 troops on the border when we are cutting back additional guards. Mr. President and the Nation should know what we are doing here today and the impact it is going to have on the National Guard and the State of California and the Federal Government to meet the needs of what the President has recommended. I am disappointed in what has been submitted right now.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, we have heard a lot about what this debate is about. That is not what it is about. This is not about whether or not this House is going to support our brave men and women in uniform as they fight this war on terror. Every time the Commander in Chief has come to us and asked us to pass a supplemental appropriation to put guns on the front lines, ammunition on the front lines, gasoline on the front lines, equipment on the front lines, we have done it. We have done it. That is not the question.

But as was brought up earlier in the debate, Mr. Chairman, if you look at this bill, we see that roughly half a billion dollars of projects are coming from what might be viewed as a contingency fund to fight the war on terror. It is not literally called an emergency fund, but functionally that is what it is.

Although I have great admiration and respect for the gentleman from New York when he opines about the purpose of that fund, as a member of the Budget Committee and one who has spoken with the chairman of the Budget Committee and the gentleman who wrote the budget and the gentleman who put that into the budget, this is not the purpose for which it was put there. That is not it.

Mr. Chairman, again, there are at least half a billion dollars of Member projects in this legislation. Now had those projects not been there, we would not have been here today. Half a billion dollars of spending that the Commander in Chief did not request, the Pentagon did not request, and I certainly hear my friends from the other side of the aisle be very vocal about wanting to take away tax relief because we have to support the brave

men and women on the front. I wonder if they would be as interested in reducing spending on their particular earmarks in order to achieve that particular purpose.

Again, Mr. Chairman, the question is not whether or not we are going to support our troops, the question is how are we going to do it and is our budget a farce. Is our budget meaningless, or does it actually stand for something?

Those on the other side of the aisle will never lose an opportunity to raise taxes, but maybe there is another option here. Maybe we ought to look at other spending. We know there will be a number of appropriation bills to come to this floor. I do not know what will be in all of them. I certainly know looking in my rear view mirror what some of the spending has been in the past.

In appropriation bills for 2006, we added \$273,000 for garden mosaics in New York. Maybe that is money we could have spend today on this military construction. We added \$179,000 for hydroponic tomato production. Maybe that money could have been spent on military construction. There was a million dollars for the Water-Free Urinal Conservation Initiative; maybe that money could have been spent. Again, we are debating where this money is going to come from.

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

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

Mr. WALSH. I would just like to ask the gentleman, those projects that he just mentioned, are those projects in this bill?

□ 1345

Mr. HENSARLING. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Chairman, this represents appropriations that took place in last year's appropriations bills, and I am using them as an example of pools of money that have been available.

Again, there are earmarks in this bill that did not have to be there. They did not have to be there, Mr. Chairman. So what we have is a budget sleight of hand. The ink is not even dry on the budget, and we are already attempting to violate it. And that is simply not right.

Clearly, the greatest threat, the greatest threat to our country is the war on terror. But we also have another threat, and that is out-of-control Federal spending. If we are going to buy the guns, we had better get a little lean on the butter, and we had better quit wrapping the butter in the American flag in this sleight of hand. It is wrong, Mr. Chairman. It is wrong to do it. We will support our troops, but to sit here and pay for all of these earmarks and all the pork projects wrapped in the American flag is the wrong thing to do.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, as I was sitting here, it struck me that the gentleman from

Texas resembles a poor imitation of Vice President CHENEY because, like Vice President CHENEY, he is shooting at the wrong target. The first rule of thumb is that if you are going to shoot somebody or something, you make sure you are shooting the right person.

What the gentleman just said to us is almost unbelievable. I mean, it sounded to me like I was in a sophomore high school class rather than in the House of Representatives, which is supposed to be the greatest deliberative body in the world. We are told that because he was peaked about a hydroponic tomato project in a bill last year that somehow he was determined to take it out on the military by yanking out military construction projects that were asked for not by me, not by Mr. WALSH or anyone else, but by the President of the United States.

I do not have any projects in this bill. I have a district that has very little to do with military except with respect to the Guard, and almost all of them are stuck in Iraq. So I can speak objectively with respect to projects. But it does seem quaint to me that if the gentleman did not like something that happened in another bill in another year in the deep, dark, distant past that instead he is going to shoot the future by yanking out money that the President of the United States thought it was important enough to ask for. I think that says something about the judgment of the persons making these motions today.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I want to stipulate, Mr. Chairman, I do not have any projects in this bill. I also want to stipulate that the gentlemen that have been out here on the floor for the last 2 hours, talking about the fact that they support our troops, they support the idea that we should be funding our troops and funding the war, almost all of them voted against the rule that would have funded all of the money for the last supplemental for the war.

You all voted against the rule. So please do not come out here and lecture us on the idea that you are for supporting the troops when you voted against the rule. Every project that you had stricken today was authorized by the last Armed Services bill that was on the floor about 10 days ago. When I last checked the vote on that, only three people voted against that bill. None of you. So please do not come out here and lecture us.

You picked the wrong bill to have your earmark fight. Please do not tell us you support the troops. Please do not tell us you support the war. When you came out here and X'd out all of these important projects that help our troops, help us win the war, help the administration fight the war on terror.

Pick another bill, not this one, and then try to lecture all of us on the idea that you support all of this. You voted for it in the authorization bill; however, you did vote against it in the rule

in the last supplemental, which would have funded the supplemental. So you cannot have it both ways. I know you would love to, but you cannot.

And I just want the record to show what happened here.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I want to thank my colleagues for their indulgence for just a moment.

On Wednesday we passed a budget. We did it, I think, in the right way. Members had ample time for debate. We had a 15-minute vote and the budget was passed. And I am proud of my colleagues on our side for coming together to make that happen.

Once that decision was made, we have got to allocate those funds, and we have got to make decisions. And we are beginning that process, yesterday with the Interior approps bill, today with the military quality of life.

I come here today because there is a process fight under way. Not a fight over policy. Not a fight over the quality of the spending that was in here. It was over how it was done. And the leadership could have intervened and could have protected this and irritated one group of Members in favor of another. We did not do that. But I rise to say that all of us in this House want to do everything we can for our troops. As my friend from Wisconsin, Mr. OBEY, would say, we can all pose for the holy pictures. But the points of order that have been raised on this go to a question of how this \$50 billion that was set aside for the use of fighting the war on terror and Iraq is set aside to do that. Last year when we had the military quality of life bill, none of those funds were included in this. We worked with the appropriators today, and I have a better understanding of why it is in there. But we obviously have some Members that disagree about the fact that that money was used in this fashion.

But the reason I rise is to ask all of my colleagues to be patient. It is easy around here to get into a fight over issues of process that sound like some big policy fight when, in fact, it is not about the policy. It is not about the fact that we are not supporting our troops. There is a disagreement over about how this was done today. And I am going to pledge to work with the appropriators and all of my colleagues to make sure that we all have a clearer understanding of how this money is to be spent and the process by which it is spent.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

TITLE V

GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 501. No part of any appropriation contained in this Act shall remain available for obligation beyond the current fiscal year unless expressly so provided herein.

Mr. WALSH (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the remainder of the bill through page 62, line 19, be considered as read, printed in the RECORD, and open to amendment at any point.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill through page 62, line 19, is as follows:

SEC. 502. Such sums as may be necessary for fiscal year 2007 pay raises for programs funded by this Act shall be absorbed within the levels appropriated in this Act.

SEC. 503. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used for any program, project, or activity, when it is made known to the Federal entity or official to which the funds are made available that the program, project, or activity is not in compliance with any Federal law relating to risk assessment, the protection of private property rights, or unfunded mandates.

SEC. 504. No part of any funds appropriated in this Act shall be used by an agency of the executive branch, other than for normal and recognized executive-legislative relationships, for publicity or propaganda purposes, and for the preparation, distribution or use of any kit, pamphlet, booklet, publication, radio, television or film presentation designed to support or defeat legislation pending before Congress, except in presentation to Congress itself.

SEC. 505. All departments and agencies funded under this Act are encouraged, within the limits of the existing statutory authorities and funding, to expand their use of "E-Commerce" technologies and procedures in the conduct of their business practices and public service activities.

SEC. 506. None of the funds made available in this Act may be transferred to any department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States Government except pursuant to a transfer made by, or transfer authority provided in, this Act or any other appropriations Act.

SEC. 507. Unless stated otherwise, all reports and notifications required by this Act shall be submitted to the Subcommittee on Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

SEC. 508. The amounts appropriated in Division B, title I, chapter 7 of Public Law 109-148 under the headings "Military Construction, Defense-Wide" and "Construction, Major Projects" may be used only for construction, or modification of joint-use and/or co-located facilities.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. TIAHRT

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. TIAHRT:

At the end of the bill (before the short title) insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to promulgate regulations without consideration of the effect of such regulations on the competitiveness of American businesses.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order against the gentleman's amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. A point of order is reserved.

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Chairman, the elected Representatives of this great institution, the House of Representatives, should be very concerned about the direction of our current and future economy.

Over the last generation, past Congresses and this Congress have created and expanded barriers to keeping and creating jobs in America. And those congressionally constructed barriers are affecting us today.

Our trade deficit this year will be somewhere in the area of \$700 billion. China will graduate more English-speaking electrical engineers this year than we do if current trends hold true. India will graduate more software engineers than all the universities and colleges in the United States of America added together. Chile is currently pursuing more trade agreements than the United States. And Ireland has taken their economy in the European Union from third-rate status to the hottest and most vibrant economy in the entire European Union.

There is no doubt that we have the number one economy in the world today, but we are jeopardizing that status by the barriers created by this Congress. Those barriers include health care policy, the fastest growing cost in the American economy. It is nearly 15 percent of our total gross domestic product today. Those higher costs mean some jobs will not be created. Those higher costs mean some jobs will be driven overseas.

Our tax policy punishes success and makes it more appealing to move workers overseas to countries like Ireland. Our regulatory burdens are huge roadblocks to new jobs.

Yesterday, this Congress rejected a commonsense proposal for reform with EPA regulations that would have reduced the costs and still retained 99 percent of the reporting data of the Toxic Properties Inventory Report. Small manufacturing firms of 20 employees or less right now spend more than \$22,000 a year on regulatory compliance. If we could just put some commonsense reform and cut those jobs in half, we could increase jobs at those small firms by up to 50 percent by just reforming regulations. This Congress chose not to do that last night.

Our litigation expenses raise the cost through court costs, lawyer fees, and liability insurance costs. Lawsuits drive jobs overseas. Other barriers include engineering policy, energy policy, education policy, trade policy, and unfocused research and development investments.

A regulatory problem that directly affects this bill is related to a company called Agriboard. Agriboard is a panel made of wheat chaff. It is stronger than most manmade materials. It is fire resistant, blast resistant, even tested by the military, energy efficient, mold resistant, termite and insect resistant, environmentally safe, and sound resistant.

Agriboard Industries makes panels for construction for residential, commercial, or military buildings. But they are falling victim to the regulatory bureaucratic red tape fiasco at the Department of Defense.

These panels have been used in Sri Lanka for the tsunami victims and

have passed or exceeded DOD structural blast tests. They are stronger, environmentally sound, cheaper, and more durable than most construction material. Yet they have had a hard time getting through the onerous procurement system to be considered by the Department of Defense for base construction. Agriboard products deserve consideration; yet our system is preventing them from that consideration.

Base commanders have limited flexibility on how those projects are constructed based on the value of the project. Instead, the process is handed from top down and is cumbersome and ineffective. A company has to get new materials approved by the Pentagon prior to being used in any significant projects. I am told that process for approval is laborious and complex. This makes our government inefficient. It also prevents American companies, such as Agriboard, from competing and expanding their businesses which would mean more high-paying jobs for America.

Mr. Chairman, it is time Congress removed economic barriers, streamlined the procurement process, because in doing so, we will reduce costs and create more opportunity in America to create and keep American jobs.

Mr. Chairman, I realize our rules would recognize that this is an authorization on the appropriations bill and therefore not in order. But I believe it is always in order to fight for American jobs.

Mr. Chairman, respectfully I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kansas?

There was no objection.

□ 1400

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON-LEE OF TEXAS

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

TITLE VI—ADDITIONAL GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 601. None of the funds appropriated in this Act may be used to implement Paragraph 4.F of "Public Affairs Guidance On Casualty and Mortuary Affairs in Military Operations," (R 311900Z) March 2003.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, first I would like to express my appreciation to Chairman WALSH and Ranking Member EDWARDS for their hard work on this hard task on behalf of the Nation's soldiers.

My task today is one of the saddest aspects of being part of the United States military, and that is when our soldiers fall, when they lose their lives in the service of this country on the battlefields around the world.

I remind my colleagues of a very stoic but very brave situation that occurred when President Reagan left the

White House in Washington, D.C. and went to Dover Air Force Base to welcome home the fallen soldiers who had died in Lebanon. All the Nation was able to mourn and all the Nation poured their heart out on behalf of those families and those fallen soldiers. I was then quite shocked to realize that there is now an advisory that directs this government not to honor our soldiers when they come, having fallen in battle, back to the soil of the United States of America.

Might I share with you the language. "There will be no arrival ceremonies for or media coverage of deceased military personnel returning to or departing from Ramstein AB or Dover Air Force Base, to include interim stops." What a shocking statement to make to the Nation, that when our soldiers fall in battle or when they lose their lives as members of the United States military, there is a blanket order, an executive order, an order of this administration, not to pay honor and tribute to them.

Mr. Chairman, I am not speaking of disrespecting family members who desire no such formal ceremonies. What I am suggesting is it should be an option and that there should be no blanket barrier that would, in fact, stop the honoring of these soldiers.

I remind you of the words of Abe Lincoln, who said "Family has made the costly sacrifice on the alter of freedom." We owe them the respect of this honor, and a grateful Nation should be permitted to show its gratitude. But with this blanket order that suggests that there can be no public ceremony, I believe we denigrate, we deny the opportunity for honor.

My colleagues will say that there are individual ceremonies and funerals and memorials. And they may be right. But I ask you as Americans and colleagues, how many times have we been able to mourn as a nation the soldiers who are in the war on terror, fighting in places around the world? In these recent years, we have seen none. We have not honored any publicly.

Yes, one week from now will be Memorial Day, but yet we are denied the right to be able to show our gratitude. My amendment is to comfort the widow and the orphans. My amendment is on behalf of Americans.

Mr. Chairman, let me simply say that in reading this language, I struggled with the reason and the premise. I know that my good friend, Chairman WALSH, is going to suggest that there is a point of order and it is not germane. What I would say to him is that because of its importance, I ask you to waive the point of order, because our families and our Nation is crying out to be able to honor these fallen soldiers.

Why can't we join together as patriots, respecting and recognizing the young lives that have been sacrificed, by the Reservists, the National Guard and all the service branches on behalf of this Nation? Why would you have

this kind of prohibition with no basis, no premise, particularly when we saw flag-draped coffins being utilized after the tragedy of 9/11? Why would you not allow us as Americans to embrace the widows and orphans and be able to say to them, thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I ask that the point of order be waived and I ask that my colleagues support this amendment.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I rise to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I do not intend to oppose this nor do I intend to raise a point of order, but I want to make it absolutely 100 percent clear that this amendment will have absolutely no impact on this policy. The funds that the gentlelady proposes to limit are not in this bill. The paragraph 4(f) that she cites is not in this bill. This amendment has no impact whatsoever on this bill. For that reason, I have no objection to the gentlelady's amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE). The amendment was rejected.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I will only take 1 minute. I just want to respond to something the distinguished majority leader said. He indicated that what had occurred on the House floor today was a process fight.

That is not what it was at all. It was a priorities fight. We saw this unraveling today because the majority party insisted on sticking by a budget resolution which puts super-sized tax cuts for the most comfortable in this society ahead of every other consideration.

We may not see arguments quite as dramatic and as chaotic as we did today on this bill, but as appropriation bills move through this House, we will see similar conflicting priorities, because the budget which has caused the problem is a budget which does not put the needs of military families first, it does not put the needs of education first, it does not put the need to invest in critical programs that strengthen the economy of the country in the future first. Instead, it continues to insist that we provide over \$40 billion in tax cuts to persons who make over \$1 million a year. That is a priorities fight. It is not a technical process fight. I think we need to keep that in mind.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I rise to strike the last word. I don't know whether this will be the last word, but I hope it is, because enough has been said.

Mr. Chairman, I have made every effort throughout the process of constructing this bill to reach across the aisle and to do this in a bipartisan way, not only because I believe that is the way we should operate here, but because on a bill of this importance that involves our national security and the health and well-being of our soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines, we need to be bipartisan, and I am afraid because

of the tenor of this debate that the vote, in the end, will not be. I don't know. I can't predict the outcome.

I do have to say, I very much regret the process fight that we had on our side of the aisle. I strongly disagree with my colleagues who chose this bill to make their fight over earmark reform. Every earmark in this bill is authorized. That is the process that we follow.

I also deeply regret that Members on the other side of the aisle chose to make this their political fight, to make their political points about tax cuts and revenues and to make it a partisan bill. This is not a partisan bill. It should not be a partisan bill.

So I feel badly that the tenor of the debate was not about the strength of our military and the importance of their mission, but it was about process and politics. In my mind, on this bill, there is no place for either. Our commitment is to our troops, to their lives, to their families and to our veterans, and I hope that both sides, now that the debate is over, will close ranks, stand shoulder to shoulder and send our troops a very, very clear signal that we support them, we support their mission, and that we support this bill.

Mr. Chairman, I would urge a unanimous vote on this very important subcommittee appropriations bill.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word. Out of respect for the chairman, I will yield to him, because I think he should have the last word. I won't take all 5 minutes.

Mr. Chairman, I intend to vote for this bill for several reasons: One, because the chairman of this subcommittee worked on a professional and thoroughly bipartisan basis to take what I think was an inadequate budget allocation due to the budget resolution and do the very best with it that he could and we could, and we did that. I think we did a good job of it.

Secondly, despite the fact that I am offended that a half a billion dollars of vital Pentagon requested military construction projects were just taken out of this bill, I think our troops deserve the other projects that are still left in this bill, especially as so many of them are facing wartime. That is why I am going to vote for this bill, and I urge my Democratic colleagues to join with me if they share my views.

I do want to say that to the American people perhaps this has been confusing and seemed like a process, I want to summarize what has happened today.

Because of an inadequate budget resolution which many of us opposed 2 days ago, this House has cut \$507 million out of military construction projects the Bush administration said were needed to be funded.

The second thing that has happened today is that because of the budget resolution, and, in my opinion, its over-emphasis on tax cuts and its under-emphasis on putting the defense needs of

our country above those tax cuts, we have a bill that will cut \$735 million out of what the administration requested for defense health care programs for active duty military men and women, including those in combat, and for our retirees.

The one place where I would respectfully disagree with my chairman, Mr. WALSH, is that for many of us, this debate wasn't about politics. For many of us, we pleaded genuinely for this House not to vote for a budget resolution that we felt would result in what has just happened today. We predicted it would happen, that we would end up underfunding key vital priorities for our country. We pleaded at the Appropriations Committee in good faith to not adopt a 302(b) appropriation allocation that for our subcommittee for this bill cut \$824 million out of the President's request.

I think to talk about the price being paid because of the budget resolution passed earlier this week, it isn't about politics, it is about an honest difference of where our country should go and where we should place our priorities.

Having said that, where I have agreed with the chairman at every step of the way is in his effort to put together a budget for a subcommittee that didn't have enough money in a way that funded the highest possible priorities given those budget constraints. That was a good process, and that was a bipartisan process, and had the technical amendments and debate not been brought up by several colleagues on the chairman's side of the aisle, we wouldn't have had this fight today. We were going to vote for this on a bipartisan basis.

□ 1415

Having said that, I still hope we support this bill. But I think it is time for us to level with the American people. We cannot have our cake and eat it too. And if we are going to vote for budget resolutions, we cannot run from the impact those budget resolutions have on our military men and women, on education, health care, job training, and other programs as well.

Finally, I want to salute the staff, on both the Republican and Democratic side of this subcommittee, an outstanding professional staff, that did an excellent job of taking a tough budget allocation, doing the best with it that I think anybody could have done.

Mr. Chairman, I yield any remaining time to the chairman out of my respect for him so that he can have the last word.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I very much appreciate the acknowledgement that he gave to our staff who have worked very, very hard, both sides of the aisle, to make the best bill that we could. I assure my colleague and the Members of the House that as we go forward we will find the resources that we need to

make sure that our troops have all of the resources at their hand to be successful in their mission.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BLUMENAUER

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, the pending business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIRMAN. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 151, noes 247, not voting 34, as follows:

[Roll No. 175]

AYES—151

Ackerman	Green, Gene	Moran (VA)
Baird	Grijalva	Nadler
Baldwin	Gutierrez	Napolitano
Barrow	Harman	Neal (MA)
Bean	Harris	Oberstar
Becerra	Hastings (FL)	Obey
Berkley	Herseth	Olver
Berman	Higgins	Owens
Bishop (NY)	Hinchey	Pallone
Blumenauer	Holt	Pascrell
Boswell	Honda	Paul
Brady (PA)	Hooley	Payne
Brown, Corrine	Hyde	Pomeroy
Brown-Waite,	Insee	Price (NC)
Ginny	Israel	Rangel
Capps	Jackson (IL)	Rothman
Capuano	Jackson-Lee	Roybal-Allard
Cardoza	(TX)	Rush
Carnahan	Jefferson	Sánchez, Linda
Case	Johnson (IL)	T.
Chandler	Johnson, E. B.	Sanchez, Loretta
Clay	Jones (NC)	Schakowsky
Cleaver	Kaptur	Schiff
Clyburn	Kelly	Scott (VA)
Coble	Kildee	Serrano
Conyers	Kilpatrick (MI)	Sherman
Cooper	Kucinich	Simmons
Costello	Langevin	Skelton
Crowley	Lantos	Slaughter
Davis (IL)	Larsen (WA)	Smith (NJ)
Davis (TN)	Lee	Solis
Davis, Jo Ann	Lipinski	Stearns
DeFazio	Loftgren, Zoe	Sweeney
DeGette	Lowey	Thompson (CA)
Delahunt	Lynch	Thompson (MS)
DeLauro	Maloney	Tierney
Dicks	Markey	Towns
Dingell	Matsui	Udall (CO)
Doggett	McCarthy	Udall (NM)
Ehlers	McCollum (MN)	Velázquez
Emanuel	McGovern	Visclosky
Eshoo	McKinney	Walden (OR)
Farr	McNulty	Wasserman
Filner	Meehan	Schultz
Fitzpatrick (PA)	Meek (FL)	Waters
Ford	Meeks (NY)	Watson
Fortenberry	Millender-	Watt
Frank (MA)	McDonald	Waxman
Gerlach	Miller (MI)	Weiner
Gilchrist	Miller (NC)	Wexler
Gordon	Miller, Gary	Woolsey
Green, Al	Moore (WI)	Wu

NOES—247

Abercrombie	Biggart	Boyd
Aderholt	Bilirakis	Bradley (NH)
Akin	Bishop (UT)	Brady (TX)
Alexander	Blackburn	Brown (OH)
Allen	Blunt	Brown (SC)
Baca	Boehert	Burgess
Bachus	Boehner	Burton (IN)
Barrett (SC)	Bonilla	Butterfield
Bartlett (MD)	Bono	Buyer
Barton (TX)	Boozman	Calvert
Bass	Boren	Camp (MI)
Berry	Boustany	Campbell (CA)

Cannon	Issa	Pombo
Cantor	Istook	Porter
Capito	Jenkins	Price (GA)
Cardin	Jindal	Pryce (OH)
Carson	Johnson (CT)	Putnam
Carter	Johnson, Sam	Radanovich
Castle	Jones (OH)	Rahall
Chabot	Keller	Ramstad
Chocola	Kennedy (MN)	Regula
Cole (OK)	Kind	Rehberg
Conaway	King (IA)	Reichert
Costa	King (NY)	Renzi
Cramer	Kingston	Reyes
Crenshaw	Kirk	Rogers (AL)
Cubin	Klaine	Rogers (KY)
Cuellar	Knollenberg	Rogers (MI)
Culberson	Kolbe	Rohrabacher
Cummings	Kuhl (NY)	Ros-Lehtinen
Davis (CA)	LaHood	Ross
Davis, Tom	Latham	Royce
Deal (GA)	LaTourette	Ruppersberger
DeLay	Leach	Ryan (OH)
Dent	Levin	Ryan (WI)
Diaz-Balart, L.	Lewis (CA)	Ryun (KS)
Diaz-Balart, M.	Lewis (KY)	Sabo
Doolittle	Linder	Saxton
Drake	LoBiondo	Schmidt
Dreier	Lucas	Schwartz (PA)
Duncan	Lungren, Daniel	Schwarz (MI)
Edwards	E.	Scott (GA)
Emerson	Mack	Sensenbrenner
Engel	Marchant	Sessions
Etheridge	Marshall	Shadegg
Everett	Matheson	Shaw
Feeney	McCaul (TX)	Shays
Ferguson	McCotter	Sherwood
Flake	McCrery	Shimkus
Foley	McHenry	Shuster
Forbes	McHugh	Simpson
Fossella	McIntyre	Smith (TX)
Fox	McKeon	Snyder
Franks (AZ)	McMorris	Sodrel
Frelinghuysen	Melancon	Souder
Galleghy	Mica	Spratt
Garrett (NJ)	Michaud	Sullivan
Gibbons	Miller (FL)	Tanner
Gillmor	Miller, George	Tauscher
Gingrey	Mollohan	Taylor (MS)
Gonzalez	Moore (KS)	Taylor (NC)
Goode	Moran (KS)	Terry
Goodlatte	Murphy	Thornberry
Granger	Murtha	Tiahrt
Graves	Myrick	Tiberi
Green (WI)	Neugebauer	Turner
Gutknecht	Ney	Upton
Hall	Northup	Van Hollen
Hart	Norwood	Walsh
Hastings (WA)	Nunes	Wamp
Hayes	Ortiz	Weldon (FL)
Hayworth	Osborne	Weldon (PA)
Hefley	Otter	Weller
Hensarling	Pastor	Westmoreland
Hergert	Pearce	Whitfield
Hinojosa	Pence	Wicker
Hobson	Peterson (MN)	Wilson (NC)
Hoekstra	Peterson (PA)	Wilson (SC)
Holden	Petri	Wilson (SM)
Hostettler	Pickering	Wolf
Hoyer	Pitts	Wynn
Hunter	Platts	Young (AK)
Inglis (SC)	Poe	Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—34

Andrews	Fattah	Pelosi
Baker	Gohmert	Reynolds
Beauprez	Hulshof	Salazar
Bishop (GA)	Kanjorski	Sanders
Bonner	Kennedy (RI)	Smith (WA)
Boucher	Larson (CT)	Stark
Davis (AL)	Lewis (GA)	Strickland
Davis (FL)	Manzullo	Stupak
Davis (KY)	McDermott	Tancredo
Doyle	Musgrave	Thomas
English (PA)	Nussle	
Evans	Oxley	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN (during the vote). Members are advised there are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1437

Messrs. SMITH of Texas, BARTLETT of Maryland, WYNN, Ms. HART and Miss MCMORRIS changed their vote from "aye" to "no."

Mr. WEXLER, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Ms. HARRIS, and Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida changed their vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read the last three lines.

The Clerk read as follows:

This Act may be cited as the “Military Construction, Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, 2007”.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise and report the bill back to the House with the recommendation that the bill do pass.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WALDEN of Oregon) having assumed the chair, Mr. SHIMKUS, Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5385) making appropriations for military quality of life functions of the Department of Defense, military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes, had directed him to report the bill back to the House with the recommendation that the bill do pass.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 821, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

Pursuant to clause 10 of rule XX, the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 395, nays 0, not voting 37, as follows:

[Roll No. 176]

YEAS—395

Abercrombie	Boren	Chabot
Ackerman	Boswell	Chandler
Aderholt	Boustany	Chocola
Akin	Boyd	Clay
Alexander	Bradley (NH)	Cleaver
Allen	Brady (PA)	Clyburn
Baca	Brady (TX)	Coble
Bachus	Brown (OH)	Cole (OK)
Baird	Brown (SC)	Conaway
Baldwin	Brown, Corrine	Conyers
Barrett (SC)	Brown-Waite,	Cooper
Barrow	Ginny	Costa
Bartlett (MD)	Burgess	Costello
Barton (TX)	Burton (IN)	Cramer
Bass	Butterfield	Crenshaw
Bean	Buyer	Crowley
Becerra	Calvert	Cubin
Berkley	Camp (MI)	Cuellar
Berman	Campbell (CA)	Culberson
Berry	Cannon	Cummings
Biggert	Cantor	Davis (CA)
Bilirakis	Capito	Davis (IL)
Bishop (NY)	Capps	Davis (TN)
Bishop (UT)	Capuano	Davis, Jo Ann
Blackburn	Cardin	Davis, Tom
Blumenauer	Cardoza	Deal (GA)
Blunt	Carmahan	DeFazio
Boehner	Carson	DeGette
Bonilla	Carter	DeLahunt
Bono	Case	DeLauro
Boozman	Castle	DeLay

Dent	King (IA)	Pombo
Diaz-Balart, L.	King (NY)	Pomeroy
Diaz-Balart, M.	Kingston	Porter
Dicks	Kirk	Price (GA)
Dingell	Kline	Price (NC)
Doggett	Knollenberg	Pryce (OH)
Doolittle	Kolbe	Putnam
Drake	Kucinich	Radanovich
Dreier	Kuhl (NY)	Rahall
Duncan	Ramstad	Rahall
Edwards	LaHood	Rangel
Ehlers	Langevin	Regula
Emanuel	Lantos	Rehberg
Emerson	Larsen (WA)	Reichert
Engel	Latham	Renzi
Eshoo	LaTourrette	Reyes
Etheridge	Leach	Rogers (AL)
Everett	Lee	Rogers (KY)
Farr	Levin	Rogers (MI)
Feeoney	Lewis (CA)	Rohrabacher
Ferguson	Lewis (KY)	Ros-Lehtinen
Filner	Linder	Ross
Fitzpatrick (PA)	Lipinski	Rothman
Flake	LoBiondo	Roybal-Allard
Foley	Lofgren, Zoe	Royce
Forbes	Lowey	Ruppersberger
Ford	Lucas	Rush
Fortenberry	Lungren, Daniel	Ryan (OH)
Fossella	E.	Ryan (WI)
Fox	Lynch	Ryun (KS)
Frank (MA)	Mack	Sabo
Franks (AZ)	Maloney	Sanchez, Linda
Frelinghuysen	Marchant	T.
Gallegly	Markey	Sanchez, Loretta
Gerlach	Marshall	Saxton
Gibbons	Matheson	Schakowsky
Gilchrest	Matsui	Schiff
Gillmor	McCarthy	Schmidt
Gingrey	McCaul (TX)	Schwartz (PA)
Gonzalez	McCollum (MN)	Schwartz (MI)
Goode	McCotter	Scott (GA)
Goodlatte	McCrery	Scott (VA)
Gordon	McGovern	Sensenbrenner
Graves	McHenry	Serrano
Green (WI)	McHugh	Sessions
Green, Al	McIntyre	Shadegg
Green, Gene	McKeon	Shaw
Grijalva	McKinney	Shays
Gutierrez	McMorris	Sherman
Gutknecht	McNulty	Sherwood
Hall	Meehan	Shimkus
Harman	Meek (FL)	Shuster
Harris	Meeks (NY)	Simmons
Hart	Melancon	Simpson
Hastings (FL)	Mica	Skelton
Hastings (WA)	Michaud	Slaughter
Hayes	Millender-	Smith (NJ)
Hayworth	McDonald	Smith (TX)
Hefley	Miller (FL)	Smith (TX)
Hensarling	Miller (MI)	Snyder
Herger	Miller (NC)	Sodrel
Herseth	Miller, Gary	Solis
Higgins	Miller, George	Souder
Hinchey	Mollohan	Spratt
Hinojosa	Moore (KS)	Stearns
Hobson	Moore (WI)	Sullivan
Hoekstra	Moran (KS)	Sweeney
Holden	Moran (VA)	Tanner
Holt	Murphy	Tauscher
Honda	Murtha	Taylor (MS)
Hooley	Myrick	Taylor (NC)
Hostettler	Nadler	Terry
Hoyer	Napolitano	Thompson (CA)
Hunter	Neal (MA)	Thompson (MS)
Hyde	Neugebauer	Thornberry
Inglis (SC)	Ney	Tiahrt
Inslee	Northup	Tiberi
Israel	Norwood	Tierney
Issa	Nunes	Towns
Istook	Oberstar	Turner
Jackson (IL)	Obey	Udall (CO)
Jackson-Lee	Oliver	Udall (NM)
(TX)	Ortiz	Upton
Jefferson	Osborne	Van Hollen
Jenkins	Otter	Velázquez
Jindal	Owens	Visclosky
Johnson (CT)	Pallone	Walden (OR)
Johnson (IL)	Pascrell	Walsh
Johnson, E. B.	Pastor	Wamp
Johnson, Sam	Paul	Wasserman
Jones (NC)	Payne	Schultz
Jones (OH)	Pearce	Waters
Kaptur	Pence	Watson
Keller	Peterson (MN)	Watt
Kelly	Peterson (PA)	Waxman
Kennedy (MN)	Petri	Weiner
Kildee	Pickering	Weldon (FL)
Kilpatrick (MI)	Pitts	Weldon (PA)
Kind	Platts	Weller
	Poe	Westmoreland

Wexler	Wilson (SC)	Wynn
Whitfield	Wolf	Young (AK)
Wicker	Woolsey	Young (FL)
Wilson (NM)	Wu	

NOT VOTING—37

Andrews	Fattah	Oxley
Baker	Garrett (NJ)	Pelosi
Beauprez	Gohmert	Reynolds
Bishop (GA)	Granger	Salazar
Boehler	Hulshof	Sanders
Bonner	Kanjorski	Smith (WA)
Boucher	Kennedy (RI)	Stark
Davis (AL)	Larson (CT)	Strickland
Davis (FL)	Lewis (GA)	Stupak
Davis (KY)	Manzullo	Tancredo
Doyle	McDermott	Thomas
English (PA)	Musgrave	
Evans	Nussle	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE
The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1454

So the bill was passed.
The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.
A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, due to a commitment of my time in Colorado this evening, I must leave before the end of voting on H.R. 5385, The Military Construction, Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act of 2007. Had I been able to finish voting on this bill I would have made the following votes: “aye” on the Blumenauer amendment and “yea” on final passage.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, May 19, 2006, I was absent from the House due to a prescheduled event with the President on his American Competitiveness Initiative at Northern Kentucky University. Had I been present I would have voted: Rollcall No. 173 (previous question)—“yea”; Rollcall No. 174 (rule)—“yea”; Rollcall No. 175 (Blumenauer amendment)—“no”; Rollcall No. 176 (final passage)—“yea.”

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit this statement for the RECORD and regret that I could not be present today, Friday, May 19, 2006 to vote on rollcall vote Nos. 173, 174, 175, and 176 due to a family medical emergency.

Had I been present, I would have voted: “Nay” on rollcall vote no. 173 on calling the previous question on H. Res. 821—the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 5385, the FY07 Military Quality of Life, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill; “nay” on rollcall vote no. 173 on passage of H. Res. 821—the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 5385, the FY07 Military Quality of Life, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill. “aye” on rollcall vote no. 175 on an amendment to H.R. 5385 that increases the 1990 BRAC accounts by \$27.5 million and increases environmental restoration on formerly used bases account by \$50 million, and; “yea” on rollcall vote no. 176 on final passage of H.R. 5385, the FY07 Military

Quality of Life, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I had an unavoidable conflict on the afternoon of May 19, 2006, and was not able to vote. Had I been able, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall votes Nos. 175 and 176.

AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN ENGROSSMENT OF H.R. 5385, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that in the engrossment of the bill, H.R. 5385, the Clerk be authorized to make technical corrections and conforming changes to the bill.

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

There was no objection.

REPORT ON H.R. 5427, ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

Mr. HOBSON, from the Committee on Appropriations, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109-474) on the bill (H.R. 5427) making appropriations for energy and water development for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes, which was referred to the Union Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1, rule XXI, all points of order are reserved on the bill.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise for the purpose of inquiring of the majority leader the schedule for the week to come, and I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER), my friend, the majority leader.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, the House will convene on Monday at 12:30 for morning hour and at 2 p.m. for legislative business. We have items that will be considered under suspension of the rules. A final list of those bills will be in Members' offices by the end of the day. Any votes called on these will be taken after 6:30 on Monday evening.

On Tuesday and the balance of the week, the House will consider the Ag appropriations bill, which I anticipate will be scheduled on Tuesday; the Energy and Water appropriations bill, which I would anticipate to be Wednesday or Thursday; and the Homeland Security appropriations bill, which will be Wednesday or Thursday as well.

On Wednesday morning at 11 a.m. there will be a joint meeting of the

Congress to receive the Prime Minister of Israel, Ehud Olmert.

We also anticipate action next week on H.R. 4939, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror and Hurricane Recovery, if it is finished.

Finally, I anticipate that we will likely consider energy legislation next week. Specifically, the issue of ANWR is likely to come to the floor.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for that information, and I, again, would simply emphasize that the majority leader said, as he did last week and accurately so, our Members need to make sure that they are available for a Friday session; am I correct on that?

Mr. BOEHNER. That is correct. As we all know, next Friday is the beginning of the holiday weekend. We do have an awful lot of work to do, and Members should anticipate that we will be here until 2 p.m. next Friday.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman. I was going to ask him about the days for the appropriation bills, but I believe the gentleman has already indicated which days you anticipate that: Tuesday, the Ag bill; Wednesday, the Energy and Water, or Wednesday and Thursday; and then Homeland Security on Thursday.

Would you anticipate that one of those bills might go over till Friday, or is there other legislation that might be on the calendar for Friday?

Mr. BOEHNER. I think the issue would center around the availability of the supplemental, if it is finished.

Mr. HOYER. Reclaiming my time, if the supplemental has not been completed by the conference committee, would you still anticipate that we would be in on Friday? I yield to my friend.

Mr. BOEHNER. It really depends on how quickly we get through the appropriations process. The House was in late on Wednesday night. The House was rather late last night. As the gentleman knows, I like to go to bed at 10 o'clock, and to the extent that we can finish our work during normal business hours would be my approach.

□ 1500

And considering Friday is a getaway day for the holiday weekend, we are going to work together to try to see how quickly these bills move.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the leader, and I want to comment that the leader has been very inclined to try to work together to make his schedule as accommodating for Members as possible. And I want you to know I personally appreciate it, and I believe we appreciate that on this side of the aisle.

Mr. Leader, on energy bills, you mentioned briefly, but do you anticipate, in addition to the ANWR bill that you mentioned as a possibility, any legislation on the refinery siting that might also be here?

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield.

Mr. HOYER. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. BOEHNER. There was anticipation that we would have the refinery bill up next week, the bill that did not receive the required two-thirds when it was brought up under suspension, but there have been some conversations under way, bipartisan conversations under way on that bill, and we have decided to let those conversations continue to see if there is some way for both sides to resolve their differences, which would mean that the bill would be brought up under some kind of structured rule as opposed to bringing up the same bill under a closed rule.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman. I am shuffling papers back and forth here, but, again, ANWR, can you anticipate what you might expect with respect to an ANWR bill?

Mr. BOEHNER. Just that we are very likely to have one next week.

Mr. HOYER. Next week?

Mr. BOEHNER. I wish I could be clearer in terms of what it would look like and how it would be considered; but as soon as those decisions are made, we will pass them on.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that information.

Lastly, I want to ask about two conference committees, the supplemental appropriation conference and the pension conference, which we have discussed on a couple of occasions. Can you tell us what your expectations are with reference to those two situations?

Mr. BOEHNER. If the gentleman will yield.

Mr. HOYER. I yield to my friend.

Mr. BOEHNER. I will do the easy one first.

With the pension conference, there are conversations going on. There has been a lot of shuttle diplomacy, if you will, between offices, both Democrat and Republican, trying to bring this bill together. I do believe that we are making progress. We are relatively close. But considering the complexity of this issue and the necessity that it be correct, I am hopeful we will have an agreement next week, but I have got my doubts whether it can be put together in time to be brought to the floor. But my overall point is that I think we are getting close.

On the supplemental, I have made it very clear that the House will not consider a conference report on the supplemental spending bill that spends any more money than what the President called for for Katrina and the war in Iraq. And, secondly, I have made it clear that we ought to remember that the word "emergency" ought to be put back into the emergency spending bill.

And so I think that the appropriators on both sides of the Capitol have their marching orders. I know they have had conversations. It is hard for me to gauge at this point the chances of whether this bill will be up next week. I hope that it is, but I think they have a big job ahead of them.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for the information.

AUTHORIZING THE SPEAKER TO DECLARE A RECESS ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 24, 2006, FOR THE PURPOSE OF RECEIVING IN JOINT MEETING HIS EXCELLENCY EHUD OLMERT, PRIME MINISTER OF ISRAEL

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it may be in order at any time on Wednesday, May 24, 2006, for the Speaker to declare a recess, subject to the call of the Chair, for the purpose of receiving in joint meeting his Excellency Ehud Olmert, Prime Minister of Israel.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCHENRY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, MAY 22, 2006

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning hour debate.

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

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBER TO ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION BOARD OF ADVISORS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 214(a) of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (42 U.S.C. 15344), and the order of the House of December 18, 2005, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following member on the part of the House to the Election Assistance Commission Board of Advisors to fill the existing vacancy thereon:

Mr. Thomas A. Fuentes, Lake Forest, California

HONORING B-COMPANY FIRST BATTALION, 108TH ARMOR REGIMENT OF THE 48TH MECHANIZED INFANTRY BRIGADE

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor a group of true American patriots from Georgia. This past Monday, I had the

ultimate privilege to welcome home from Iraq members of the B-Company First Battalion, 108th Armor Regiment of the 48th Mechanized Infantry Brigade.

These brave men and women, known as the Rough Riders, have just returned home after a year-long tour of duty in south Baghdad. The B-Company First Battalion patrolled the streets gathering intelligence, looking for weapon caches, and keeping the peace in a hostile area.

Each of these patriots made remarkably selfless sacrifices for us, for their country, leaving behind family, friends, and careers to protect the liberty and freedoms we cherish in this Nation. It is only because of the brave men and women like the 108th that we are able to enjoy these freedoms. Our level of respect and appreciation for these soldiers should truly know no bounds. We all, as Americans, owe thanks to them and to all our armed services who risk their lives to protect all of us.

Mr. Speaker, the B-Company First Battalion are real-life heroes. We owe them our unwavering gratitude and support. God bless each and every one of them.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MCHENRY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DREIER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. EMANUEL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SCHIFF of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR ON THE PART OF INSURANCE COMPANIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, as the Representative of the people of south Mississippi, I want to rise once again to thank my fellow citizens, both collectively and individually, for what they have done for the

people of south Mississippi in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. We have been the beneficiaries of tremendous generosity, and I don't want at any time for people to think that what they have done as individuals, through groups, through churches, through charities, and as taxpayers that we are in any way ungrateful for that.

Mr. Speaker, one of the continuing problems that persists in south Mississippi is the whole debate over insurance. When people lost their homes, when on the day after the storm there was nothing there and they tried to settle with their insurance company, in almost every instance the insurance companies refused to pay on homeowners' policies, citing those homes had been destroyed by water and not wind. And, of course, when your house isn't there, you don't have much of an arguing position.

That has affected the lives of tens of thousands of south Mississippians, and they suffer individually as a result of that. But, Mr. Speaker, what I am asking my colleagues to look into, and I will offer an amendment to the National Flood Insurance Program when it comes before this body next week or the following week, is to ask for the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security to look into whether or not a crime has been committed against the citizens of this country collectively.

Because when the Allstates, the Nationwides, the Farm Bureaus, the State Farms of the world refused to pay the claim on a homeowner's policy and shifted that cost to the National Flood Insurance Program, I suspect that they took costs that they should have paid out of their pockets and their stockholders' pockets and shifted those costs unfairly and, in my opinion, criminally to the taxpayer.

When an adjustment agent walked to any of the 10,000 slabs and said there is nothing there, your house was washed away, and there was no wind damage, that was completely contrary to what the Navy Meteorological Command tells us, that in communities like Bay St. Louis and Waveland there was 6 to 8 hours of 120-to-180-mile-an-hour winds before the water ever arrived. Even farther away from the eye, in towns like Biloxi and Ocean Springs, there were at least, according to the United States Navy, at least 3 hours of maximum wind before the high water arrived.

So when these agents looked the people in south Mississippi in the eye and denied their claims, they not only hurt them but they are hurting us all. Because, again, when that cost is shifted to the National Flood Insurance Program, billions of taxpayer dollars had to be shifted from other accounts and, more honestly, borrowed to help make up the difference. So it is not fair to them, and it is not fair to the American taxpayer.

I think, at the very least, this Congress ought to ask the Inspector General's office to look into it. I am going

to offer that amendment, and at this time I am asking for my colleagues' help on that. We will be going before the Rules Committee next week. I do want to thank Chairman OXLEY for his generosity in hearing me out on this. He has offered a Government Accountability Office investigation. But in total honesty, that is already going on.

I think that when you believe a crime has been committed, then I think it calls for a criminal investigation. And everything I see in south Mississippi tells me a crime has been perpetrated on the people of south Mississippi and the taxpayers of this Nation, and I am asking my colleagues to look into what I think is a crime.

BORDER IMMIGRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the privilege to be recognized to address you here on the floor of the United States Congress. Our work here today, like it is every day, is exceptionally important. There are a number of subjects that are on the minds and the hearts of the American people, and one of those subjects is what I intend to focus on, Mr. Speaker.

That subject is going to be the subject that brought the President to Arizona yesterday, along with Air Force One that had a pretty substantial congressional delegation from Arizona on board it.

□ 1515

They visited down there around the Yuma area. I would hope there were some local people that had objections to the position that has been taken by the White House with regard to the guest worker, temporary worker, and I hope they had an opportunity to speak to White House personnel as well as our Commander in Chief.

I find myself occasionally addressing that White House from this microphone or other microphones, not as often directly as I think it should be. I am wondering sometimes if the message is actually heard.

But I have made several trips down to the border myself. I have made at least one trip which was essentially a red carpet trip, maybe similar to the one that took place yesterday with Air Force One. It is impossible as a President of the United States Commander in Chief to go into a location like that and be able to actually observe and experience the full, unvarnished events that are driving the issues at the border. It is not something that any President would be able to do unless he wore a disguise and went on his own because the security has to be so tight. Events have to be planned, strategized. There has to be security that has to be built in. It cannot be spontaneous.

For those reasons, Mr. Speaker, and more, the trip for the President yester-

day could not have been a trip that was rooted in fact-finding, but a trip that was rooted in sending a message to the American people that the President is committed to border security and border patrol. We know without doubt that he is committed to guest worker, temporary worker and a path to citizenship as we listened to his speech last Monday night.

As we address this subject matter, I have the privilege of exchanging some words with my good friend and colleague who I have known—grown to know and respect for his input to this process and the character that he brings to the floor, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. AKIN).

Mr. AKIN. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman taking the time to take a look at this subject that obviously is so important to us, the whole area of border security and immigration. There are so many different facets to this. I just wanted to ask a question or two.

Aside from the technology of how do you enforce the border, how do you build at least from a physical point of view or a deterrent point of view, some of the different aspects of this question because the more that people look at it, it seems like there are more and more questions.

One is you have a couple of parents that are illegal immigrants. They have children. My understanding is that some of our judges have decided those children become automatically American citizens. But I also understand that could be very easily challenged, whether the Constitution should be understood in that way. I think that is one of the issues that we are dealing with.

Another one is the question of English as a language. Do we enforce the things that have made us unique as a Nation? Do we make English the official language of the United States? We assume it is, but we have never passed a law to do that very thing.

There are other questions. There are questions about the employees, whether employers should check Social Security numbers, names and birthdays before they hire somebody. Are we going to enforce that law or are we going to ignore it and go in the other direction?

All of these are significant questions. If it is all right, I would just inquire if you would like to talk about those questions in a little more detail with the time we have.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Missouri. As I listen to the subject matter, I am interested in all of them. I point out first the subject matter that you brought up, what we call birthright citizenship. It says in the Constitution that any person born in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof shall be a United States citizen.

I have not done a thorough, scholarly analysis of that, but rudimentary analysis boils down to this: The language was written into the Constitution with

the idea in mind that Native Americans would not necessarily be citizens because they are not necessarily subject to the jurisdiction of the United States—being a separate nation. That is an issue that Native Americans can answer more succinctly than I can answer. But I understood that was the root of that exception clause in there, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof.

Yet today we have a practice of granting birthright citizenship, anyone born on U.S. soil is a United States citizen by practice, not necessarily by Constitution. Some would argue we would need to amend the Constitution to end birthright citizenship. I would argue that our most efficient path to that would be to pass a statutory change that would make it clear that it is not the intent of Congress and our interpretation of the Constitution would be to end birthright citizenship and confer that upon someone who was born in the United States if one of their parents is a citizen. That is the position I would take.

Mr. AKIN. My understanding is the same thing. The understanding of that section in the Constitution dated back about to the time of the Civil War and it was dealing with a different situation and it does not necessarily apply to two people who are here illegally, or just the automatic granting of citizenship just because of where are you born.

From my understanding, we could pass a law, and it might be challenged and the courts would have to take a look at that, but there is a good case that could be made to support what you are saying, which is if we are going to talk about birthright, there needs to be at least one parent that is a citizen of the United States.

Also, it troubles me that America, and one of the things I love about this country is the fact that America has always been a place where there is just one class of people. We call them Americans. From our Declaration of Independence it says "all men are created equal." That means equal before the law. Nobody is better than anybody else. We have one class of Americans.

Yet by us ignoring our own laws on immigration, de facto we are starting to move into or create sort of a second class of citizen that does not really have any rights. They are not subject to the minimum wage or any of those things. They do not have a chance to be part of organized labor or anything like that. They simply come here and if they say anything, they are threatened that they can be sent back over the border. We are almost creating a second class of citizenship, and that concerns me a lot.

I think it is absolutely time that we start to enforce the laws that apply to immigration in this country. There are some people who want to argue that we do not have a right to make any laws that control immigration. That is an interesting question, but we really have two choices. We either say we are

going to open the borders wide open and no law is legitimate whatsoever, or we are going to enforce the laws we have. If we cannot enforce them, we can take them off the books.

The thing that concerns me is this whole idea of shifting what America really is, which is one people, Americans, instead of us being so weak in terms of enforcing law that we are starting to create a different America and one where people are not all equal.

I do not know if you have thought about that concept of two classes of Americans. It is very distasteful to me.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I have given considerable thought to this and have done some research and a fair amount of writing on this subject matter. We have an upper class in America that has gotten richer and richer, and I am for that. I am for success. Some of those people pulled themselves up by their bootstraps, and they are at the economic pinnacle in this country and in the world. A person like Bill Gates, for example, is a fine and shining example of somebody who had an idea, some creativity and some business skills to put that all together, and he put some good people together. He and Steven Jobs both have done an amazing thing in this era, and they have gotten very wealthy, but they have also created a lot of jobs. And the trickle-down of that wealth has been wonderful for America, as well as how the technology that they have produced has made us all more efficient and improved the quality of our lives as well as our production.

Mr. AKIN. The American dream, live and well.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Entrepreneurship is growing. There are many more people at the upper echelons of our economic society than there was a generation or two ago. As I watch that happen, I think that is a good thing for America. But I would point out that the strength for America has been in the breadth for a prosperous middle class that began to grow in a dramatic way during World War II when Rosie the Riveter went off to work. The middle class grew. We had 1.2 percent unemployment rate back during those years.

As the paycheck came back into the household, and I should also credit Henry Ford because when he put his automobile into production, he wanted to make sure that the people he hired had enough money to buy one of his cars, so he paid them a good wage. That was competitive and that spread across this Nation. So the prosperity of the middle class grew, and it grew from the early part of the 20th century and it grew dramatically in the second half of the 20th century. As it did, the greatness of America grew with it.

You could maybe be a high school dropout but if you were a good worker, you could punch a clock at the local factory and take home a paycheck that was adequate enough that you could

buy a modest home and raise your family with dignity and pride and values. That middle class got broader and broader up until perhaps 10 years ago when we began to see it shrink. There was pressure on the middle class from the upper class. That is really not a bad thing, to have people moving from the middle class to the upper class. I applaud that.

But the other pressure comes from the lower side of this when many of the elitists in America figured out that with the click of a mouse, they could transfer capital around the world.

The impediments to business transactions diminished with the computer technology that was developed by Steven Jobs and Bill Gates and many, many others. As that happened, they began to feel the frustration that they couldn't transfer cheap labor as efficiently as they could transfer capital. So with that frustration, and business will always work on the most important issue, they began to transfer cheap labor. They wanted cheap labor in the United States because that is where the factories were. As they brought that cheap labor in, the wealthy got wealthier off that margin of profit they were making, and they had a competitive advantage against those who did not hire illegal labor. The Federal Government did not enforce that and so the wealth that came began to also put into people's minds that they had an entitlement to hiring cheap labor to work in their factories doing, quote, "the work that Americans won't do."

And I reject that concept. And at the same time, they wanted cheap servants to take care of their mansions and trim their lawns and nails. As this happened, this servant class which has been created by the elitists, the new ruling class, the servant class has grown and the elitist class has grown, and this has been at the price of the middle class. It has been at the price of the middle class so that an undereducated, American-born citizen that does not go off to college does not have nearly the opportunities that they had 10 or 20 years ago. Cheap labor has taken that away.

Mr. AKIN. Mr. Speaker, some of the studies that I have seen, the people that get hurt the most by having illegal immigrants working are the people at the lower end of the wage scale, because those are the people taking the jobs that would have been taken by people who are legal citizens of this country, people who waited in line, people who took the classes on citizenship. Now all of a sudden they want to be able to take a job and there is somebody who is taking the job for a couple of dollars less. Those are the ones that are hurt the most by this process of what is going on.

I guess the bottom line is that one of the things that people say is if you want less of something, you tax it. If you want more of it, you subsidize it. My concern is that some of the discussion I am hearing from the other body

and not so much from the House here is the idea that we are going to make it easy for the illegals just to basically give them citizenship or amnesty. My concern is whatever you reward, get more of.

In 1986, we granted amnesty to a number of people, and then we had a huge wave of other illegals coming here saying pretty soon they will do that again.

We need to avoid making that mistake, make the tough decision and say no amnesty and say we are going to enforce our laws. We have to say we are going to let the people waiting in line trying to follow our laws, we are going to reward those people and not reward law breakers.

My concern is that any proposal we deal with would not be rewarding law breakers because if we do, we will encourage more of them. I think those reasons, economic reasons and many others, we need to take a very good look at our policy on border security and immigration.

I know that you have done some innovative work in terms of what can be done on the border.

□ 1530

In some ways to have certain crossings where everybody knows that is where you go through and we stop just these hordes of thousands of people coming across every day. I really appreciate your imagination and your good work and also your scheduling this time to talk about what I believe is one of the questions that is really foremost on the minds and hearts of many Americans.

We all have a great deal of respect for the American Dream and for the fact that we are really all Americans. I do not even like to use the word "class." I do not think it applies in America. But I know that you have that love and respect for this country, and I appreciate your taking a tough issue this afternoon and dealing with it, and I appreciate the fact that your views on this subject are ones which are going to strengthen our country overall. So thank you very much for taking a little time on that subject.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. AKIN, I thank you for your contributing to this debate in the fashion that you have and your willingness to be flexible in the manner that you delivered it. I really do appreciate that.

I would like to just take a couple of minutes and address the issue of English as the official language, which was part of the subject matter that you raised, and it is something that I have worked on for what is my 10th legislative year that I have promoted establishing English as the official language of the United States. And I spent 6 years actually working to establish that in Iowa to help paint our piece of the American map the color of English, so to speak. And that was a 6-year endeavor. It was far more difficult to accomplish than you would realize from

talking to the American people, who out there are almost universal in their support of establishing English as the official language of the United States.

And those numbers are something like, which I saw some today, Democrats, about 82 percent support English as the official language; and Republicans, about 92 percent support English as the official language of the United States. I did not see what the Independents think, but one would think being a little more independent minded they might want it even more than Democrats or Republicans, but I am confident they are in that similar zone between 82 and 92 percent. There are not many issues in America that we can find that kind of an agreement on, but official English is one of them.

And as I brought legislation here to the House and I ended up with 150 different cosponsors on the legislation that would establish English as the official language, I have been trying to find an avenue to bring it through committee and bring it out here.

But what happened in the United States Senate yesterday was Senator INHOFE's bringing an amendment to the immigration bill that was before the Senate yesterday and remains before the Senate today and presumably for several more days before such time that it might be ready for final passage; and he was able to successfully introduce his amendment that would establish English as the official language of the United States and bring it to a vote on the floor of the United States Senate.

Now, we all think in this House that we are the quick reaction group, that we are the ones that are the most in touch with the feel and the mood of the American people. That is how our Founding Fathers envisioned it. They wanted us to be responsive, and that is why they required that we go back for reelection every 2 years. And generally we are substantially more responsive. We feel the mood of the American people. We hear from them. We have to go back and look them in the eye and explain to them what we have done on their behalf and how we have conducted ourselves in office, and they explain to us what they want us to do. And I continually hear from them, they want English as the official language of the United States.

So, happily, yesterday the Senate heard them and they moved and with, I believe the number was, 63 votes, passed English as the official language of the United States.

Now, it is interesting that the President has called for immigrants to learn English and, in fact, to demonstrate a proficiency in English in both reading and writing, essentially the same standard, as I interpret him, that is provided in the citizenship requirements, which are statutory and something that we require of everyone who is naturalized. So with the President advocating for the learning of English for newly arriving immigrants, both

legal and illegal, and the Senate's passing legislation that establishes English as the official language of the United States, we sit here now in this House playing catch-up rather than being the leaders.

And I always want us to be the leaders in this Congress, Mr. Speaker. I want us to be the ones that are out there on the vanguard, out on the front, the tip of the spear, so to speak. We need to be the ones that initiate spending by the Constitution. It is our job to initiate the appropriations bills, and we need to be initiating the policy. But we have an opportunity now to link onto the initiation of good policy that was introduced by Senator INHOFE yesterday and introduced several days before, actually, debated to conclusion and voted upon yesterday with 63 votes. It is common sense.

And not only is it common sense; I did some research once to determine why does this make such simple sense to me and why does it make such simple sense to the American people. And I thought, well, I wonder how many countries have an official language. So I got out an almanac and I looked up the location where they have the flags of all the countries in the world. So there I found the names of the countries in the world, and I got out the only research that I had. This was several years ago, before the Internet, and I had the World Book Encyclopedia.

So I thumbed through there and I started with the first country, and I looked up every single country in the World Book Encyclopedia because there they have a list that shows the official language of each country as you look it up. I looked up every country that you could find in the almanac, looked up their official language, and I found that every single country according to that study, in the world, except the United States of America, had at least one official language. And for many of the countries, and it would be surprising, English is their official language. So I thought, well, there is one other sovereignty out there that I had not really checked on, and because of some issues that I had heard that were raised, I thought I should check out the official language of the Vatican. So I looked up the Vatican.

They are a sovereign state, yes. They have their independence within that part of Rome and that part of Italy. But the Vatican actually has two official languages. One is Latin and some of us grew up around Latin. And the other one is Italian. So if it is good enough for the Vatican to have an official language or two, it is good enough for the United States to have one. And throughout all of history, God recognized this, and I do not need to repeat the story of the Tower of Babel, but God recognized this when he scattered people to the four winds by confusing their tongues.

But a common language, a language that would be the same language for all

of us to speak, is the single most powerful unifying force known to all humanity. If you want to be unified as a nation, you need to speak all one language. And if we do that, we can work together, we can cooperate together, we can identify ourselves as Americans. There is a camaraderie involved there. There is a bonding agent involved in that language. And to be able to go anywhere in America and pick up a newspaper or go to a public meeting or walk into a business place and communicate in a single language is a very, very good thing for the future of this Nation.

And it is important for us to establish an official language. And I would tell you that if we had another language here that had the kind of penetration and usage that English has, I would be for that. If it were Swahili and 90-some percent of us spoke Swahili, I would be saying Swahili needs to be our official language. It is not the point of what the language is. It is the point of having one language that is official that binds you all together.

Now, the bill that I have and the bill that is in the Senate, as I understand it, does not preclude at any point utilization of other languages. It does not disparage any other languages. In fact, my bill, I believe, has language in it that says one shall not disparage any other language.

We think it is a good thing, and I think it is a good thing, for people to have multiple language skills. Those that are proficient in a number of different languages have an ability then to do business in other countries. And with the communications that we have today with the Internet and with the telephone prices being what they are with voice-over Internet, those who have more language skills have more business opportunities. That is a very good thing. Knowing that we need diplomats and diplomats that can go to foreign countries and be able to step in and understand the cultures of these foreign countries, it is important to encourage and promote the teaching and learning of languages in such a global country as the United States is, where we have people in every country of the world.

There is no country that has a more effective and more diversified diplomatic mission than the United States of America, and we need to draw for those missions from people that are trained in languages, and we need to exchange with other countries so that we can train our young people in languages.

But all of those things notwithstanding, Mr. Speaker, we must establish an official language for a number of good, logical, rational reasons. And among those reasons are, for example, if we do not have an official language, if we have two people that come together and they write up a contract on a business deal and one of those contracts is in German and the other one is in Japanese, and they say, Here, I

have my German version and you have your Japanese version, let us sign these. You can keep the one that is your language and I will keep the one that is in my language. And those two people get into a disagreement and they go to court.

Now we bring those documents before the court, and the court has to rule on which one is the one we are going to go by, the Japanese version or the German version. And if so, is it an appropriate interpretation of one or the other. And often we come up with disagreements on interpretations, and that is why we need to have one official language. That would be the English language, one that everything is anchored back to, one that everything that is interpreted is interpreted from.

So as we watch what is happening here, we will see the Voting Rights Act come up on this floor sometime relatively soon, Mr. Speaker. And in that is the reauthorization of the bilingual ballots. And I have taken a stand, and I will continue to take the stand, that there is no reason in the United States of America to produce a bilingual ballot for anybody. This is not something that was part of the Voting Rights Act. There are not people that were being disenfranchised because they did not have ballots in different languages. In fact, because we print them in different languages, people are being disenfranchised. The bilingual ballot provision should be stricken from this bill.

There are only two reasons by which you could even ask for a ballot in a language other than English. And one of them is if you are a naturalized citizen to the United States and you did not speak, read, or write English. You could say, I came over from France and I only speak French, so I want a French ballot, and I am a naturalized citizen. You have to be a citizen to vote in America. And I would say to those people, whatever they might be from, naturalized in the United States of America, welcome. Welcome here. We are glad we have you as a fellow American. But I am sorry, we are not going to give you a ballot in French or any other language because you have to demonstrate proficiency in English in order to gain citizenship in the United States. And if you have somehow duped the system, I do not want to reward you by giving you a ballot and making us jump through hoops and come up with an interpretation that may or not be an accurate one. That is one example.

So a naturalized citizen already had to demonstrate proficiency in English. Therefore, there is no reason for them to ask for a ballot in a language other than English.

So the only other scenario would be if there is a birthright citizenship that Mr. AKIN raised a little bit ago. Someone is born in the United States. That makes them automatically an American citizen, at least by practice today. Not by Constitution, but by practice.

And if that individual, by the time they are 18 years old, has not learned enough English to read a ballot that essentially has titles and names on it, for the Fifth Congressional District, STEVE KING, and my name is going to be the same whether it is in Spanish or French or English; so it is simply the title that you have to learn, if that situation where someone who is born in this country can get to be the age of 18 or more and not understand enough English to read a ballot, which I think I could learn to do, in at least anything but the Asian ballots, in a matter of a few hours, then I do not believe they understand the culture well enough in America to give them the authority to begin to contribute to establishing who will be the next leader of the free world, Mr. Speaker.

It would have only taken 527 different votes, half of them changing their minds in Florida, to give us Al Gore for President instead of George W. Bush. And how many of those instances does it take for people who are requiring a ballot in different languages, who have not learned the culture of the United States, and who were born here? So under no circumstances would I grant a pass, but I would encourage people to learn English, and that is the way we can do that. We do not need to be enablers. We do not need to be handing people ballots in languages when they did not request them, and we do that under today's bilingual ballot system.

We need to tie that all together, Mr. Speaker, and we need to have this single most unifying characteristic known to all humanity: a common language, an official language. The American people want it. The American people demand it. The Senate has reacted. The President has spoken favorably about learning English, although he has not endorsed the bill, to my knowledge. We need to bring it here to the floor of the United States Congress.

That would help bond us together as a people. And, Mr. Speaker, we are sorely in need of being bonded together as a people. We are so sorely in need that I am watching Republicans that are running scared, afraid that somehow they are going to alienate an ever-growing segment of the population of the United States. I think there is a lot more that qualifies people and a lot more to celebrate in people than necessarily their national origin.

I will argue this, Mr. Speaker, that we are all created in God's image. He draws no distinction between his creation. He blesses us all equally. We are born in different places in the world, citizens of different countries, but created in His image regardless of our ethnicity, our national origin, our skin color, whatever the case may be.

□ 1545

For us to draw distinctions between perceived differences in people based upon those things is an insult to God, because he draws no distinctions between his creation. He has created us

all equally. We are all created in his image. He doesn't draw distinctions, and neither do I, Mr. Speaker. In fact, I applaud everyone who can pull them up by their bootstraps. The spirit of humanity, the competitive nature, the need to take care of your family and the desire to do so.

But I also applaud patriotism. I applaud the things that made this Nation great. We very seldom talk about the things that have made this Nation great, but I submit in a short order this Nation derives its strength from a number of things, and that is the United States of America, of which Iowa is a vital constituent part, is the unchallenged greatest Nation in the world, and we derive our strength from Judeo-Christian values, free enterprise capitalism and western civilization.

When you anchor those things together, when our ancestors and the predecessors to us in this country came over across mostly the Atlantic Ocean and settled on the East Coast, where we stand today, they gave their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor to building a nation that believed in manifest destiny, and that was a nation that had low, and in many cases no taxes; in many cases low, and in many cases no regulation.

One could invest their capital and sweat equity in work and watch it grow. You had to work hard at it and be smart, and surely there were fetters along the way, there always are. That is part of the system. Some will succeed and some will fail. If we were guaranteed success in everything we do, then it wouldn't be any fun and we really wouldn't try. We would sit back and let it come to us.

But because there is failure, there is also something to measure on the other side for success. And that success allowed for the manifest destiny, for the settlement of this North American continent, for the Transcontinental Railroad to be built and the golden spike driven, tied the two continents together, and this continent was settled in the blink of an historical eye because of free enterprise capitalism, low and almost no taxation, low and almost no regulation.

Free enterprise capitalism and manifest destiny, on the back of western civilization, which gave us the understanding of science and technology, it was a foundation for this dynamic economy that came and this robust American experience that was the characterization of this great American experiment, which still is a robust Nation, still the unchallenged greatest Nation in the world, with the unchallenged dynamic economy that is rooted in free enterprise capitalism, that has grown from western civilization and the science and technology that goes clear back to ancient Greece. We learned from that, we built upon that, the Age of Reason to the Age of Enlightenment, to the North American continent to the United States of America.

But what has been so good about us is that we would have become, I believe, the most imperialistic, power hungry conquering Nation in the world if we hadn't been limiting our appetites for imperialism and conquest because of our religious values and our religious beliefs, our sense of humility, our sense of duty, a sense of being blessed by God with this Nation, and the governing aspects of holding back and giving to the rest of the world rather than taking from the rest of the world. That is what is different about the United States of America, and that short background that I have given is the biggest reason why people want to come here.

We sometimes have people leave the United States to go live somewhere else in the world, but they are few and small in numbers compared to the people that will do about anything to come to the United States to live here. In fact, we have seen plenty of that.

We have the most generous legal immigration policy in the world, both in terms of sheer numbers and as a percentage of our population. We have been extraordinarily liberal with our immigration policies, and yet every Nation must establish their immigration policies.

There has been a backlash to that in Europe. You will see in countries like Denmark, where they have started to shut down their immigration. The Netherlands, they have shut down to some degree, they started again to shut down their immigration. We saw what happened in France with thousands of cars that were burned. That is the results of essentially having more of an open borders policy, and you will see them tightening that down.

We did that in this country too in 1924 when we saw that the massive legal immigration that was coming into the United States that started in the last quarter of the 19th century and ended in the first quarter of the 20th century, the wisdom of the Members of this Congress in this very Chamber, Mr. Speaker, took the position that we needed to allow a rest time, a time out, so-to-speak, a break, so that there could be assimilation take place and that newly arrived immigrants could be assimilated into the American civilization, to the American economy, to the American culture and the American way of life.

Had we not done that, we wouldn't have this distinct character and quality that we have. We wouldn't have had this robust Nation, this sense of togetherness and patriotism that allowed us to fight and win World War II and essentially emerge from that conflict as the world's only surviving industry. The world's only surviving superpower was the United States of America, up on the world stage because we got assimilation right, we got free enterprise capitalism right, we got our values right, our faith in God and the qualities of that foundation that grew from old English common law and their

faith that came with that, tied into our Declaration and Constitution and fused into the culture of America, and we have that dynamic, the Protestant work ethic some say.

But we emerged from World War II this dynamic Nation. And we held down the immigration throughout World War II and throughout the fifties, all the way up until 1965, and we did that because we wanted to allow for assimilation. We had a high birth rate. I am a product of the baby-boomer generation, as most of us in this Congress are, Mr. Speaker.

Then as the laws were changed in 1965, they put in place a thing that allows for the thing we now call chain migration. The chain migration, once you come into the United States, presumably legally, with the exception of the '86 amnesty and the six subsequent amnesties to that which we passed, you come into this country during chain migration, then if you become a citizen, even as a green card holder, you can bring in your spouse and your dependent children. When you become a citizen, then you can bring in your parents, your spouse, your dependent children and I believe your siblings.

But this allows for an uncontrolled immigration that is no longer controlled by statute, no longer controlled by Congress, it is controlled by the people who want to come to the United States, not by the people in the United States and not by the people in this Congress. At least we haven't intervened.

Yet we find ourselves today watching 11,000 people every single day pour across our southern border. I have gone down less than 2 weeks ago and sat in the dark on the border and listened as I heard the cars come up, and this is the Arizona-Mexico border, and sat and listened as I heard the cars come up across the desert with their lights out, about an a three-quarter, and I could hear the cars. I could hear one of them dragging a muffler, driving around the brush. They came to the same location each time, a larger mesquite tree, stop. You could hear the doors open, you could hear people get out, you could hear a little chatter. The doors would close, they would talk a little bit more and then hush. And then they would infiltrate through the trees and across the fence and into the United States.

I sat there and listened to load after load after load after load in one spot that I had, I will call him a guide pick, to take me down there to get a feel for what it is like.

Now, I don't know that they were bringing illegal drugs across the border, but I am very confident they were coming down there for the purposes of crossing the border. And all they had to do was take a five strand barbed wire fence and just cross through the spots that had already been stretched in the same places where the tracks already were and walk into the United States.

So some places we actually have a human barrier, a steel wall that is

maybe 20 feet high and actually in some cases, mostly, it is not that high. We installed it in a way that there are horizontal ribs, so they are like little steps to climb up. But those are short little sections.

Then we have some longer sections where we have vehicle barriers, and the vehicle barriers were a negotiation between the environmentalists, who wanted to make sure that you could get, well, let me see, I know for sure one of the species would be a desert pronghorn, so it could get down and walk underneath the barrier that is there. They did not want to upset the ecology.

Never mind all the damage that is being done to our natural resources. If the Members of this Congress, Mr. Speaker, could see the litter that is scattered over our national parks and the parts of our parks that are off limits to American citizens because they have been taken over by drug smugglers and illegals.

Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument is one of those places where they simply said we can't do this anymore, we are going to mark this off so that we will keep the Americans out of here. It is too dangerous, essentially owned by smugglers and coyotes, and I don't mean the fury kind, I people mean the people smugglers that are there.

I have been to those places when I had some security, and it is a tragedy that we can set aside American property, set it aside for illegals who have invaded that part of our world and not let American citizens go there because it is occupied.

In fact the regions down there, many of them, are occupied. The peaks that are good vantage points along the drug smuggling routes are occupied. There are lookouts there. I could take you to any number of them, several dozen lookout locations where there are two men on top of a mountain, 24/7, with AK-47s, with infrared technology, with fine optical equipment, with solar panels to keep the batteries recharged, and they are being resupplied on a regular basis.

They sit up there with their radios that have encrypted messages in them so we can't hear them talk, and they are listening with their scanners to everything that our Border Patrol says. They know where our people are all the time. We don't apparently know that they are there, or for some reason we don't go pick them up off of these peaks.

I would not let the sun rise on a single pair of them if I were in command of this operation. I would have them off of there every single time. If I had to mount a raid every morning, we would go up there and lift them off or we would do it in the night with our infrared technology.

But we cannot allow the Mexican drug dealers to occupy the military positions in the United States, as much as 25 miles into the United States of America, for the purposes of smug-

gling, according to our Federal Government statistics, \$60 billion worth of illegal drugs into the United States every year.

Ninety percent of the illegal drugs in America come across the southern border. Ninety percent, Mr. Speaker. That is \$60 billion. There is \$20 billion worth of wages, most of those wages earned by people that are in the United States illegally, that get sent back to Mexico. There is another \$10 billion that goes to other Central American countries.

But the economic force on that border is \$60 billion worth of drugs being sold, pushed into the United States. Now, the demand here is another subject entirely and it is something I am more than happy to address with my colleagues.

But I will address specifically the narrow part of this, which is drugs coming into the United States, \$60 billion going to the other side of the border, \$20 billion in wages matching that, \$80 billion for Mexico alone, add another \$10 billion to the Central American countries, there is \$90 billion worth of pressure on our southern border, \$90 billion.

And the cost in American lives is staggering. The loss of American lives to the people who came across the border illegally is in multiples of the deaths of September 11. That easily documentable. Twenty-eight percent of the inmates in our prisons in America, city, county, State and Federal, are criminal aliens; 28 percent. And they don't comprise anywhere near that percentage of the population. Perhaps 5 percent of the population are alien in one form or another.

But 28 percent of our prisons are occupied by criminal aliens. They aren't in the jail because they broke an immigration law. That hardly exists at all. They are there because they have committed murder, rape, assault, dealing in drugs, theft, grand larceny. That is costing us \$6 billion a year in order to incarcerate the criminal aliens in America; \$6 billion with a B, and that is a low number, Mr. Speaker.

We are spending another \$6 billion to guard our southern border, the 2,000 miles down there; \$6 billion. That comes out to be \$3 million a mile.

So I had this thought. Me being a capitalist, and I have spoken favorably of capitalism here, what would it be like if you would give me \$3 million and say pick your mile, STEVE KING, and go down and guard that. And you have got \$3 million to work with for that mile.

I believe that I could set that mile up real easily so that there wouldn't be one soul get across my mile. I would bond it and I would guarantee it and I would make a ton of money doing it, and I would end up the first year a millionaire. Easy enough. \$3 million a mile.

Why don't we open up a contract and allow entrepreneurs in America to bid these contracts and say pick out your section of the border that you want to

defend and we want to take the best deal we can.

We are spending \$3 million a mile. If you can come in here and protect a border for \$1 million a mile, that saves \$2 million a mile. That is a lot of capital to have left over.

If the Minutemen want to come in and bid that thing and sit in lawn chairs next to each other for a mile, let them bid that mile that way. Then we could count the footsteps, the tracks in the dust of those that get by. We will make them bonded, and for every one that gets by, we will dock their paycheck for that, because they did not do their job on that, and we will pay a unit price. Free enterprise capitalism. And whatever we dock out of the contract for those that get past that mile, we will give that money to the Border Patrol to chase them down.

□ 1600

We can set this structure up easily. And I can tell you what I would do. I would want to bid a lot of these miles. I would want at least 1,000 of them if they would let me do it. Maybe I could only get a mile. Maybe I could only get a demo, Mr. Speaker. But I happen to have, by happenstance, a demo next to me on what I think we can do with this border.

Mr. Speaker, this represents the desert. Pick your place. New Mexico. That is not the Rio Grande, so I do not presume it is Texas. I have to be a little gentle in this chamber when I talk about Texas. I do love Texas, and maybe one day maybe they will adopt me, not as a favored son, but just as a fellow colleague.

However, New Mexico, Arizona, parts of California, it is a desert. And it has got sand there. And now it has got a few rocks. But this would represent just the old flat desert. Now imagine a little brush growing back and forth here. So we go in there and we decide we are going to build a wall.

I do not want people going across my section, because I do not want my contract docked. I want all the money that I have contracted to earn.

So I go in here and I set a trencher in there on that end and I trench this on out. I cut myself a groove, at least 4 feet deep, a toe wall down through the middle. That is the hole we would have. I know there are rocks there. And we can kick some of those out, and some of them we are going to have to stop and go down and maybe drill and put some foundation rods in.

But we have this trench across the desert. Now, we have got a company up there that is a neighbor to me. And they can go in, and I talked to them the other day. I said, could you make me a machine that would slip-form a footing with a 4-foot deep trench and with the capabilities of going 6 foot deep, but also have it so I can have a 4-foot wide trench, 4-foot deep, 6 inches wide down below, but 4 foot wide up on top for 8 inches so that we can have a foundation to put in a 12-foot high concrete precast wall.

Now, here is what we have. This is the footing for the wall that I have designed, Mr. Speaker. And it is pretty simple. This is a 4-foot deep trench, 6 inches wide. Fits right in this trench. That is the trench. You go down, trench that out and pour that full of concrete with a slip-form. And that slip-form also lays the width of this footing, this side here is going to be another 2 feet on this side, and on that side, with a notch in the middle so we can put our precast concrete in there.

Now, as we run along with this trencher in this trench, and go right with the trencher integral with it, we come with a slip-form machine, and we pour this concrete footing. And it fits in the ground just like this, Mr. Speaker.

Now we have got a foundation for our wall. And that foundation will hold up to precast concrete. And it is at least 4-foot deep. And we can make it 6 foot or deeper if we choose to do that. That is actually a pretty cheap piece. That is a matter of the cost of the digging and the machine and laying the concrete. And you put some steel in here so it ties together. We let that cure for a couple a days, then we come along with these precast concrete panels.

They look like this. They are 12 feet high, they are 10 feet wide. And we simply set these precast concrete panels in this foundation with a crane or an excavator. And they go in just like this. And my little old construction company could do this. Now I am really out of the business, it is my son's construction company. I do not have any doubt they can throw these precast concrete panels together and drop them into this footing, they can pour the footing too, along with a lot of other skills that they have developed over the years.

But this is how you build this wall. Pick them up with a crane or the excavator, swing them in place, drop them down like this, sits right in there, put a little expansion in here so it does not buckle on you in that hot Texas sun, and keep throwing this wall together.

Now, we can build a mile of this a day, Mr. Speaker, with the operation that I have spent my life working with. And that is just a little old company. Think what you could do if you were somebody that was a little bigger, maybe like Haliburton or Bechtel or something like that.

But here we have now, in this little bit of time while I stood here, built this nice wall. It is 12 feet high, these are 10-foot wide panels. It is 6 inches thick. It has got steel in it. It has got reinforcement in it. We have got little eyes tied on top here. And that is not really a coincidence, Mr. Speaker, and the reason that it is not is because, you know, there are some folks that actually could find a way to get over the top of this wall.

And our military has determined that a safe and efficient way to keep people from going across those kind of places is if you just go in here and you

put a little concertina wire right there. Okay. Concertina wire right on top. And you string that along. Now this is not going to be too fancy, because I am not going to take your time up with a lot of artwork here. But you are going to get the idea when I get done, that this is not all that complicated. Then I am going to tell you what it costs.

All right. I am going to leave that just lay. You get the idea. We have a little wire here on top. We can do that three rolls on top, if you like, it does not have to be one. And it will be easily affixed so that it stays.

We can also put infrared sensors up here, vibration sensors, and motion sensors, inside or outside of the wall. We can monitor this thing. We can put lights on the inside of it. One thing they cannot do is shoot through a concrete wall so good. And so the optical equipment that we put on the inside would be protected from the kind of rifle shots that generally come from the Mexican side of the border shooting out the cameras we have down there now.

Now, build this wall, Mr. Speaker. And the reason is because there is no amount of Border Patrol people that you can put down there, and no amount of National Guard people you can put down there that are going to keep the hoards of people from infiltrating across 2,000 miles of border.

If you think you are going to do that, you might as well go to the barn with a fly swatter and swat flies and think you are going to finish your job. You are not. You have got to do something that will actually stop the flow of human traffic.

And I will say this wall itself will be 90 percent effective. And then you have got to support it. You have got to support it with border patrol people and you have got to drag the wall and track people, and cut that sign and chase them down and catch them.

And over time they will decide it is not worth trying. And they will do something else with their time, Mr. Speaker. So now I have built a wall here pretty fast for you. And you are wondering, this probably costs a lot of money. Well, the reason that I brought this to the attention of the Congress is because it does not cost very much money.

We are spending \$6 billion over the 2,000 miles of our southern border, \$3 million a mile. The President has asked for another \$1.9 billion to be able to start hiring more border patrol and fund 6,000 National Guard troops additionally.

That takes him up actually over \$8 billion for our southern border, over \$4 million a mile. This wall to these dimensions that I have drawn here can be put up, and I would bid it and I would bond it today, for \$500,000 a mile. 500,000, \$1 out of the \$6 we are spending today, or \$1 out of the \$8 they will spend tomorrow under the President's proposal.

Mr. Speaker, it will do far more than 6,000 National Guard troops. Far, far

more. It will be effective. It will be efficient. And it will send the right message.

Now, I am okay with putting a little website on the other side here in Spanish that tells how to come to the United States legally. I think we ought to do that on every single panel. Here is where you go to see the consulate to sign up for citizenship. I would cast it right in the concrete, just like it says, here is the boundary of the United States on those concrete pylons down there on the border from horizon to horizon.

I would put it right in there. Here is where you go. Hit this website. And then we have established now something that is due, the symbolism of a wall that says, you cannot come here. We are a sovereign Nation. We will establish our own immigration laws.

We are not going to allow people from other countries who have shown disrespect for our laws to establish immigration laws in the United States of America. That is our job here in this Congress, Mr. Speaker.

It seems as though as bright as they have been in the Senate in a few times in the last few days, it is not necessarily the way that they see that over there. And I am concerned. But we can build this cheaply, \$500,000 a mile, instead of wasting all of that money that we are spending swatting flies in the barn, as I said, Mr. Speaker.

So this sends a message. It sends a message to Mexico. And it says, clean up your act. Clean up the corruption in your country. Give your people an opportunity. Look around the world and see where it is successful. Emulate those people that are successful. Adopt the policies that you covet. If you want to come to the United States and you want to live with the prosperity that we have here, you also have to learn the reasons for the prosperity of the United States, it is not just because we are a few hundred miles north.

It is not because we are any different as human beings than anyone else. We are created in God's image, as I said. The difference is, we have far less corruption in the United States. We do not have in existence a patronage system like you have in Mexico.

You can learn from us. You can adopt us. But the people of Mexico have got to rise up and change their country. And the very people that will be the change and the salvation in Mexico, are the ones that are coming here.

So one of the good things that can happen is, this free education that is being provided to the children that are in this country illegally gives them the background and the skills to one day go back to their home country and help grow that economy. And when that day comes, when that day comes, then we can say, we can say then to the leadership in Mexico and points on south, Mr. Fox, Vincente Fox, General Fox, because I think he commands a lot of troops that he is sending up this way, you need to clean up your act, you

need to get prosperity in your country. And when you do so, Mr. Fox, then and only then can we tear down this wall.

Clean up your country, Mr. Fox, so we can then tear down this wall and we can live together in peace and harmony. And I would happily go down there and pull these panels off and stack them in piles and wait for the next corrupt government to show up in Mexico, Mr. Speaker, and put the wall back up when that time came.

We are fighting a corrupt government in Mexico that is sending us \$60 billion worth of illegal drugs, wiring at least \$20 billion down south of real earned wages, which I do not really begrudge that so much, and another \$10 billion to other parts.

But this policy that is over in the United States Senate today, this Hagel-Martinez policy, you can ask them how many people do they authorize into the United States? Is it 11 million? Is it 12 million? What is your number?

And they might concede 11 or 12 million. But I guarantee you they will not give you the real numbers. Robert Rector's study at the Heritage Foundation rolled out a number based upon language that was very conservatively founded. And that number was 103 to 193 million people legalized into the United States, not at the choice of Americans, but at the choice of the people from the other countries that want to come here.

And then they passed the Bingaman amendment, a Bingaman-Feingold amendment that capped the guest workers, took them from 325 and opened growth each year down to a 200,000 per year cap.

Then that number, when you only calculate that each of them would bring in 1.2 members of their family, then that number is only, only, only, Mr. Speaker, 66.1 million. Not 11 million, 12, million, 66.1 million people.

Ironically, when we go back to the beginning of the records of legal immigration in the United States of America, we only have records back to 1820. And we take those up to the year 2000. What is the number of people who have come into the United States legally in all of history?

66.1 million people. The very number that is authorized by Hagel-Martinez, if you low-ball it and each of them only brings in 1.2 people as their chain migration number for spouse, families, children. If you take it up to four, which is the number that is used by the United States Citizenship Immigration Services, four per every authorized guest worker, I will say illegal given amnesty, then that 66 million goes to 88 million.

And Lord knows when it stops. So I have to submit this question. And that is to the people that are advocating for open borders, is there such a thing as too much immigration? And, you know, you cannot get them to say yes to that question. They will not say yes, because they know the next question is, then how much is too much?

They will not put a number on that, because they do not want to discuss the numbers that they are legalizing and authorizing now. I will submit that there is such a thing as too much immigration. And 11 or 12 million is too much. We have our doors open to more than 1 million a year, the most generous of any place in the world. We have 66 also, well, this is actually a number that is not quite correlative, 60.1 million nonworking Americans between the ages of 16 and 65.

Now what country in their right mind, when they looked around and said we need the labor, and in fact if we do need the labor, would they go to a foreign country and bring in people that were illiterate and unskilled to do the work for people that have 60.1 million people that were sitting around not working?

And we would pay a good chunk of them not to work as American citizens and bring in other people to do our work for us. How rational is that? And they argue that there is work that Americans will not do? What is the most difficult, hot, dirty and dangerous job in all the world? I would say it is rooting terrorists out of Fallujah.

And what do we pay a young marine in 130-degree heat with a flack jacket on, his life on the line for you and me? \$8.09 an hour if he gets in a 40-hour week. But it is more like a 70-hour week, so he is down to about \$2.75.

There is no job Americans will not do, Mr. Speaker. And Americans will do the hot, dirty and dangerous work. We can seal this border. We can end birthright citizenship. And we can shut off the jobs magnet. We need to do all of that. Then and only then can we have a legitimate debate on whether or not we ought to have guest workers.

□ 1615

EFFECTS OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 60 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, the United States is under attack. And like December 7, 1941, we are asleep on a Sunday morning. The reason, Mr. Speaker, is because this Nation is under attack by another nation. We are being invaded, we are being colonized, and there are insurgents from the nation of Mexico and their allies further south.

Mr. Speaker, in 1836, the State of Texas from which I hail from was invaded by Santa Ana and his Mexican Army, and they found those Texans who were seeking independence from Mexico in a beat-up old Spanish mission that was 100 years old at the time called the Alamo. They were led by a 27-year-old lawyer from South Carolina by the name of William Barret Travis. William Barret Travis knew the odds were against him, he knew that free-

dom was important, and he drew a line in the sand and he said, "All of those who wish to die for liberty, cross this line." And they all did, save one individual who unfortunately hailed from the nation of France.

Texas lost the battle of the Alamo, and Mexico continued its conquering of Texas. General Sam Houston, who hailed from Tennessee, Governor of Tennessee, came to Texas, led the Texas Army at the Battle of San Jacinto. Texas was liberated from the nation of Mexico and gained independence on April 21, 1836.

I bring that history to the floor of the House because history is important for us to understand what is now taking place in the year 2006 in our country. Texas remained an independent nation for 10 years, and then in 1845 became a State in the United States. This body, along with the body down the hallway, admitted Texas to the Union by only one vote. Some wish even now the vote had gone the other way. But be that as it may, Texas became a part of the United States. And in history, the Southwest was first and foremost claimed by the nation of Spain, and I have on this map over here this beige color on the southwestern portion. And Spain claimed what was Texas west and went as far as California, and of course claimed Mexico. And Spain claimed that area and was Spanish for 100 years or more.

In 1810, Mexico decided to gain independence from the nation of Spain. They wanted their own country, and they fought from 1810 to 1821 to gain their independence. Spain lost Mexico because they were at war with Napoleon over in Europe, and Napoleon was hammering Spain at the same time the Mexicans were hammering Spain here in the Americas.

So Mexico became an independent nation, and Mexico claimed much of this area that was formally Spain's. Of course, in this same area lived those people that we call American Indians, mainly the Apaches and the Comanches. Now, they didn't really have towns; they just roamed that entire area that is in beige. So you have the American Indians and you have Mexico claiming this territory. And, of course, Texas was a part of Mexico at the time because it was settled under Spanish rule.

Texas decided to gain independence from Mexico, because Mexico went from a democracy to a dictatorship. Sounds familiar, does it not? That dictator was by the name of Santa Ana. And when Santa Ana became the dictator of Mexico, he abolished what we enjoy as human rights, civil liberties. And that is why Texas gained independence and fought for independence, to have those basic rights that now all Americans have.

Anyway, after Texas spent 10 glorious years being the Republic of Texas and joined the Union, Mexico was upset with that conduct, and in 1846, invaded the United States of America in three

places. One was in Matamoras, that is down here in the lower Rio Grande Valley as we call it, and came across the river. Also at that time they came in Palo Alto, Texas, in a place called Palma that no longer exists.

Of course, the United States, seeing that we were invaded and Mexico was trying to reconquer the Southwest, actually declared war on Mexico. Thus, the Mexican-American war.

And just so we understand, Mr. Speaker, what the intentions of Mexico were in 1846, the President of Mexico, President Paradas, spoke of occupying not only Texas, but taking Louisiana, New Orleans, and even going as far as Mobile, Alabama. Well, his desire to conquer the Southwest and part of the South never materialized, because American troops along with Texas Rangers went into Mexico and defeated the Mexican Army at Vera Cruz, occupied Mexico City; civil war broke out in Mexico, the government was replaced.

California is declared an independent republic for a period of time, and the American forces conquered this entire area of the Southwest, California, New Mexico, and Texas, once again. And the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed, and Mexico ceded California and New Mexico to the United States. It also recognized the boundary line of Texas and Mexico as the Rio Grande River. That was already done in the previous treaty that Mexico signed when Texas became an independent nation.

So the second time Mexico reaffirmed the border of the Southwest being the Rio Grande River. Mexico got 15 million for this acquisition along with forgiveness of all of the debts that were owed to American citizens in Mexico. And then in 1853, the United States bought more land from Mexico called the Gadsden Purchase, and in that document reaffirmed for the third time that the border between the United States and Mexico was the Rio Grande River.

Now, the reason I mention all of that, Mr. Speaker, is because now today, the year 2006, there are some who still want Mexico to occupy this entire land. And it is obvious from the actions from Generalissimo Fox in Mexico that this is his intention. In fact, let me give you some examples.

The nation of Mexico has furnished school books to the school districts in Los Angeles. Of course, they are in Spanish. And in those books they teach that this land, Los Angeles, still belongs to Mexico. We even have people who live in the United States of Hispanic descent that teach the same thing, that California really belongs to Mexico and they wish to reconquer it.

You know, Vicente Fox, Generalissimo Fox, is really a fox in fox clothing. Unlike his ancestor, Santa Ana who invaded the United States, he won't bring troops into this country. He stays behind the border and sends his people here and expects them to

colonize and invade the United States. I will give you an example of that, Mr. Speaker.

We have here on this chart part of a document, a coloring book that is published by the Mexican Government, Vicente Fox's government, and this is handed out to Mexican nationals before they come into the United States telling them how to get into the United States illegally. And this is a portion of the book that I have put for you on this chart, Mr. Speaker; and it is a guide for the Mexican migrante. Here it shows illegally crossing the border. This other panel shows what happens when you come in contact with those mean old border security agents in the United States, what to do about a human smuggler or a coyote and how to pay those individuals, and then this last panel shows another place of where to cross or not to cross.

This whole booklet is given to Mexican nationals so they know where to cross so they can avoid places where the border security is, avoid places where maybe the wall will be built like Mr. KING is proposing to do.

But in any event, it is an insurgency in the United States that seems to me to be sponsored by Generalissimo Fox. You know, it appears to me that Mexico is at war with the United States and we don't even know it. We have 5,000 people a day illegally crossing into the State of Texas. As Mr. KING pointed out earlier, we have 11,000 coming across the entire southwestern portion of the United States every day, and they are not all coming here to work. There are three types of people.

We know that the drug cartels are bringing drugs in this country like never before. We also know that those people that want to do us harm, we still call those people terrorists, they are coming across the southern border of the United States. And there are other people coming here illegally. And what are we doing about it? Well, we have a place called Maywood, California where the public officials have decided that this town in the United States is going to be a sanctuary for illegals. In other words, if you are an illegal from another country, you can go to Maywood, California, and they will make sure that the local police don't arrest you for being in the country illegally. They even want to name a new elementary school there in Maywood, California, U.S.A. by the name of President Benito Juarez. Of course, he happened to be President of Mexico at one time. Colonization of the United States, Mr. Speaker, is taking place.

And to carry it further, last week when it was reported that the National Guard may go down on our borders, the Mexico City newspaper was outraged about this and quoted a lot of locals about what they thought about it. One Mexican national said in the Mexico City newspaper, "No wall, no fence will keep us out. For Mexico, there are no obstacles." It sounds to me like folks are coming over here uninvited and appears to be an invasion.

You know, certain groups in the United States want Mexico to retake California and the Southwest, and they advocate such. Two of those groups, Aztlan and MEChA, both are groups that you can see are in favor of colonization of this country and turning it back over to Mexico.

To give you an example of that, we have one elected official in Baja, California, a reported Gloria Vargas, that says, "Many Mexicans are nourishing the ground in the United States. This was once our land. Those same lands we are reconquering for our country, Mexico."

It seems a bit odd we have American elected officials preaching and advocating that this country, part of it, ought to go back to Mexico.

So apparently there is a movement to conquer the United States. And I wonder, Mr. Speaker, are we going to cross the line and fight for our Nation, or are we going to remain asleep on a Sunday morning while the invasion takes place? The line obviously is drawn in the sand.

I want to mention those three types of groups that are coming into this country. Now, I hail from Texas, southeast Texas. Where I come from is right on the Gulf of Mexico and it borders Louisiana, and so I have been very familiar with the outbreak of folks coming in the United States illegally from all nations. I have spent some time down on the Texas border with our local sheriffs all the way from Roma, Texas, up to Langtry, Texas. Probably no one in this House has ever heard of either one of those places. There was a favorite judge of mine by the name of Judge Roy Bean who used to hold court in Langtry, Texas.

But be that as it may, I was down on the border with some of our Texas sheriffs, and at one time I was there with Rick Flores from Webb County and Ziggi Gonzales from Zapata County, and I wanted to see how the drug dealers were bringing dope into the United States. Now, Webb County is where Laredo, Texas is; across the river is Nuevo Laredo. And so the sheriff said, Okay, I will take you to portions of the Texas-Mexico border, but I am not taking you down to certain portions of the border unless you go with my SWAT team and you are wearing a bullet-proof vest. And I said, Why do I got to wear a bullet-proof vest for? And he says, You go down to the river in certain parts, those drug dealers are going to shoot at you, not from the American side, but from the Mexican side.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have got a problem with that. I have got a problem with being on sovereign U.S. soil standing on the border getting shot at from the other side. Now, I wonder if that offends anybody besides myself.

Anyway, we went down to the border. We saw what takes place on the Texas-Mexico border, because the drug cartels are fighting every inch to bring that dope into the United States. It is a

very well-organized movement. Nuevo Laredo, as I mentioned to you, used to be a town which shared common interests with Texas and Mexico, frequent border crossings, legal border crossings, and tourists would go to Nuevo Laredo. Nuevo Laredo now is a war zone. It is run by the corrupt officials and the drug cartels. Over the past 2 years, the murder rate in Nuevo Laredo is the highest in the world because the drug dealers are killing off the police and they are killing off the citizens and they are fighting with each other. There have been 44 kidnappings in Nuevo Laredo and Laredo of American citizens; and yet of those 44 kidnappings, not one, Mr. Speaker, not one has been solved.

□ 1630

All of those murders in Nuevo Laredo of the police and of the citizens and of the good people in Mexico, not one have been solved. That is what is going on because of the drug cartels using Nuevo Laredo as the staging area to bring that dope into the United States and sell it among Americans.

It is an epidemic, it is organized, and these folks not only have the narcotics, they have the money and they have the fire power.

I was talking to Sheriff Flores of Webb County. Webb County is about the size of Rhode Island, and he has about 27–30 deputies. At any given time, he has seven deputies on patrol in a county the size of Rhode Island. He was telling me, you know, the drug dealers, they have got more money than we do. And let me give you an example: he said, I make \$44,000 a year. My deputies, they make about \$27,000 a year. A drug dealer, he makes \$30,000 a week bringing drugs into the United States. So there is more money in lawlessness than there is in following the law.

Anyway, he said they had better equipment and they have better fire power and better communications. He said that, you know, when we are out on patrol and we use our cell phones, those drug dealers in Mexico track us with GPS; they know exactly where we are, and they have better vehicles than we do as well.

So that is the armed invasion that we are fighting on the border, and not just in Texas, but it occurs in Arizona and New Mexico and California as well. So it is important that we take care of business and protect the dignity of the United States, to keep the drug dealers from bringing those drugs into the United States for money.

You see, it is all about money, and we will get to more about that in a minute, but you follow the money trail and you will see why people do what they do when they invade the United States.

On the second trip down to the border, I was with other Texas sheriffs, and we saw the same thing where the drug dealers sneak into the United States, and they have paths into our

country and they know what we know. Let me explain to you that.

The Border Patrol of the United States patrols the first 25 miles from the border inland. So the drug dealers make sure that they get that dope 30 miles inland because once it is 30 miles into the United States, they can take it anywhere else they want to in the United States. This is all they have to do is avoid the Border Patrol for the first 25 miles because that is all the Border Patrol is allowed to patrol by law. That is why we need not only the Border Patrol but the sheriffs, the Texas sheriffs, the Arizona sheriffs and the California and New Mexico sheriffs, all involved in border security.

So that is the first group that we have to protect ourselves against. That is the duty of government, Mr. Speaker, is to protect the public, protect the people. In this House, we pontificate every day about what government ought to be involved in. Let me tell you something, the first duty of government is national security, protect the people of these United States. Oh, programs and building bridges and that kind of stuff may be important, but it is not as important as the number one duty of government which is to protect us, and our government has the duty to protect us from those criminals who are vicious that are bringing dope into this country.

The second people that we need to be concerned about are terrorists; and, Mr. Speaker, I serve on the International Relations Committee and the Subcommittee on International Terrorism and Nonproliferation, and we understand that terrorists want to do us harm. We forget our history too quickly. September 11 was not that long ago, but the next terrorist attack that occurs against us is probably not going to be because somebody gets on some airplane and flies into Reagan National over here and gets off the airplane and says I wonder what damage I can do to Washington D.C. It is not going to happen that way, even though we are doing the best we can in the airline industry.

It is going to happen that somebody crosses the border into the United States because this country still has porous, open borders. It is easier to cross the border, and we know that has already occurred, Mr. Speaker. How many of those people that are here are going to do us harm? We do not know, but we do know that there are people who wish to do us harm that are forming cells in Mexico, assimilating into the Mexican population, learning Spanish and then sneaking into the United States as migrant workers and setting up cells in this country and some day hoping to do us harm.

We have an obligation to fight the war on terror at our borders. We are protecting the borders of other nations. Why are we not protecting our own border against terrorists? That is the second group of people that we have to demand that we keep out of this country, and those are the terrorists.

Then the third group of the people are those human traffickers. We call those people coyotes because that is what they are is a bunch of coyotes who bring people into the United States for money, and the human smugglers work with the drug dealers. That is what we have got to understand; and that little group of terrorists, we know they are kind of involved in all of that, too. You see, these three groups all work together because they know the routes into the United States to bring drugs, damage or weapons and bring human beings, and for those reasons, we have to protect the dignity of our country.

We know, of course, that the Mexican Government, Generalissimo Vicente Fox is not doing anything to stop this, contrary to what he says, contrary to the comments he makes, that apparently he is not doing anything to stop this nonsense.

We recently understand that in Hudspeth County, Texas, an armed group of military from Mexico, in other words, Mexican soldiers, were on American soil helping drug dealers. The Hudspeth County sheriff so relates this event; and we know that in the last several years, since 1996, there have been 200 recorded incidences of Federal military from Mexico on the American side of the border. Why are they here? Well, they are not over here looking for work, Mr. Speaker.

So now we use our military to go down to the border, the proposal to use the National Guard to enforce the border, enforce the rule of law, to help our border sheriffs, to help our Border Patrol. So what is Mexico's response? They are going to sue us. Well, we are going to take you to court in your own court and try to prevent those military, those American soldiers, from being on our side of the border, protecting us from them. How outrageous is that, going to sue to prevent that from occurring.

Not only that, you know, over in Maricopa County in Arizona, the sheriff there is trying to enforce the rule of law and arrest folks that are illegally in the United States. They threatened to sue him, too, because you do not have the authority to do that says the Mexican Government, and so they are going to take him to court, trying to prevent local law enforcement from enforcing American law.

So how have we allowed ourselves to get in a situation where we have a foreign nation taking us to court in our own courts, preventing us from protecting our borders? Just like in 1836, when William Barret Travis and those volunteers at the Alamo, volunteers from every State in the United States and 13 foreign countries, including Mexico, fighting for dignity were under siege of Santa Ana, it appears that the United States, at least on our southern border, is under siege by Generalissimo Santa Ana Vicente Fox.

The invasion, of course, benefits Mexico and its allies—\$20 billion a year in

remittance go to Mexico since Mexican nationals working in the United States send that money south of the border. The number happens to be \$20 billion. That is just a number. You know, here in Washington, \$1 billion here, \$1 billion there, does not mean anything; but to Mexico, that \$20 billion of money going south of the border into the coffers of Mexico is the second largest amount of foreign income into Mexico, save only the crude oil that they sell on the world market.

We also now understand the population of the northern states of Mexico has declined 35 percent. Well, where are those people? They are all in the United States. When I was down on the Texas-Mexico border, the sheriffs were explaining to me, the border towns across the river, many of which you could see, are almost totally empty of the male population. The only people there are kids and women and older citizens. Well, where is the male population? They are all in the United States, sending money back to Mexico. Mexico, the border towns in Mexico have become ghost towns because those people have come to the United States.

President Fox is making his problem our problem. His failure to get rid of corruption in Mexico, his failure to have a stable economy, his failure to take advantage of the workers in Mexico and the natural resources in Mexico to make that nation a prosperous country, he is making his problems our problems.

Let me at this time, Mr. Speaker, recite to you an immigration policy: number one, if you migrate to this country, you must speak the language. Two, you have to be a professional or investor; no unskilled workers are allowed. Number three, there will be no special bilingual programs in the school, no special ballots or elections, and all government business will be conducted in just one language. Four, foreigners will not have the right to vote. Five, foreigners will never be able to hold public office. Six, foreigners will not be a burden to taxpayers; there will be no welfare, no health care, no government assistance. Seven, if foreigners come and want to buy land, this is highly restricted. Eight, foreigners may not protest; no demonstration, no foreign flag, no political organizing and no criticizing the President or the policies. Nine, if you come into the country illegally, you will be arrested by our Federal police, sent to jail and then deported.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the U.S. immigration policy, but this is the alleged policy of President Vicente Fox in Mexico. It appears to me that the immigration policy of Mexico is quite hypocritical because they have a policy that they do not want us to have in this country, and it is ironic that Mexico defends its southern border from illegals coming in from the South American countries and from Central American countries, has an immigration policy like this, and the United

States is harassed, intimidated and criticized for trying to have a simple and fair immigration policy.

Let me continue to show you how absurd this problem has become.

There is this little document called the matricula consular card. Now, what that is, is a card that is issued to people illegally in the United States. That is an identification card, and that matricula consular card is not just used for identification, but it allows people—illegally in the United States—to go and open a bank account. Then the bank, working with the illegal that is in the United States, can ship that money that they are earning here back home to whatever country they come from. Some say there are 11 million people here illegally. Others argue that there are 15 million, maybe 20 million people illegally in the United States.

Let us talk about immigration. Let us talk a little bit about the guest worker program. Oh, how the United States has been criticized by certain countries because we do not let people come here. The United States is a Nation of immigrants, we all know that. It still has the most liberal immigration policy in the world. We let more people in legally in the United States every year than all of Europe does, and let me give you an example of how many people.

This chart shows since 2000 how many people we legally let in the United States each year: 2000, it was about 1 million; 2001, 1.1 million; 2002, 1.1 million; 2003, 1.2 million; 2004, 1.1 million. These are people legally allowed into the United States; and you notice, most of these people stay in the United States. They have a legal permit to be here. Under whatever system they come here legally allows them to stay 3 to 5 years. So we have several million people already in the United States legally. We also know that 40 percent of them that come here legally, when they are supposed to go home, they do not do it. That is another issue.

So this business about we do not have a guest worker program is nonsense. What has this done? Has allowing 1.1 million people legally in the country every year stopped illegal entry into this country? Absolutely not. In fact, all it has done is encourage more people to come here illegally because people are going to come here whether we let them in or not, and that is just the way it seems to be. So the guest worker program does not stop illegal entry into this country.

This body down the hallway from us who want to increase the number of people legally coming here under a guest worker program must understand that that will do nothing to stop the illegal entry into this United States.

We hear that they are taking jobs away from Americans. I think that is nonsense. That is just an excuse to let people who come here illegally and come here legally as an excuse to pay them subpar wages. It appears to me

that the United States is sort of staring down the barrel of this big battle and embracing the enemy.

□ 1645

And if we were at the Alamo, it would be similar to asking Santa Anna to come on into the Alamo for whiskey before he takes us over, because we do not seem to understand this problem and the affects on our Nation. If affects our country.

Let us talk about education. Many States are looking for money to educate their youth. Education is one of the bedrocks of this Nation, educating the young to be all they can be. But most States, and I do not know any State that has more money than they need in the area of education, but part of their education problem is they have to educate people that are here illegally because that is the way it is. They have to educate those people. In some States, my State for example, up to 20 percent of the cost of the education system in the State is based upon the fact they are educating people illegally in the United States.

Why don't we talk about that? Why don't we deal with that issue? Is there any other country in the world that one of us in this room could illegally go into and demand an education in our own language and get it? I think not. But in the United States we do it, and we pay the consequences for the illegal entry into our country.

The second one is health care. Every American is concerned about health care and the cost of health care. There are so many Americans in the middle class that are opting out of insurance because they can't afford insurance and they are concerned about health care for themselves and their families and what is going to happen to them down the road. It is one of the biggest concerns all of us in this House hear about every day, the cost of health care. Well, about 23 percent of the cost of health care is being paid by us because people who are in the system aren't paying for it.

And I am not talking about the uninsured. I am talking about the people here illegally in the United States. Just a couple of weeks ago, a hospital down in my district just spent \$250,000 on one patient, and he happened to be in the United States illegally. Because of an injury that he had, we paid for it because he certainly didn't have any means to take care of himself.

We know illegals go to the emergency rooms. The highest most expensive costs in our health care system are the trauma rooms, the emergency rooms, and they go there to get taken care of because we don't turn anybody down. That is our system in this country. Does that make any sense at all?

So what are the hospitals doing? They are closing their emergency rooms. Some hospitals are closing down because they can't afford to stay in business because they are treating people that don't pay their own way.

And Americans are not getting health care because we are having to pay for the health care of those people who are here illegally in the United States.

The third category, besides education and health care, is the criminal justice system. Before I came to this House, I spent all my time in the criminal justice system, first as a prosecutor, and then 22 years as a judge down in Texas trying felony cases. And about 20 percent of the people that come through our criminal justice system are illegally in the United States. So they are not only committing crimes, they are getting caught, then going through the justice system that taxpayers pay for, and then they go to our penitentiaries, if convicted, and we have to pay for that system too.

So we get hit twice by criminals from other countries all over the world. First, it is the crime, and second, we pay for the crime because we furnish them the system and then we pay for their incarceration as well.

The fourth category, of course, is social services, such as Social Security benefits. Our Social Security System was never designed to be a system that took care of people illegally in the United States and allowed them to send their Social Security benefits back home to the country they came from, and yet that is occurring. The Social Security System was never designed to be an identifying system that employers have got to check Social Security numbers.

Social Security was never designed to be an identification for who you are. It is a retirement system. So we have abused the Social Security System, or allowed it to be abused by those people who don't even belong in the United States.

Another category that I just cannot comprehend is how we allow folks that are illegally in the United States, and I am not talking about legal aliens or immigrants that are here legally, we will get to them in a minute, I am talking about folks who are here illegally in the United States, who graduate from one of our high schools and then want to go to college. Now, if one of these folks from some foreign country, any foreign country, illegally in the United States, gets admitted to one of our State universities in Texas, they pay in-State tuition. They pay the same tuition anybody else in the State of Texas would pay.

Remember, we wonder, do we not, why are they going to school anyway if they are illegally in the country? But let's say you are from Oklahoma. We can talk about Oklahoma or Iowa, where Mr. KING is from, and let's say one of those students, American citizen, legal immigrant, wishes to go to school in the State of Texas to a State school. They pay out of State tuition because they are not from around here. They are from some other place. So we make them pay out of state tuition.

So I ask this question, Mr. Speaker: Why do we discriminate against Amer-

ican citizens in other States, legal immigrants in other States, make them pay out of State tuition and furnish an in-State tuition fee to a person illegally in our own State? That is an absurd policy. I don't understand why we do that. That is certainly not fair to people that are legally in the country or to American citizens.

One thing that has been mentioned and continues to be mentioned is the concept of the fraud that is perpetrated on the United States based upon the 14th amendment. Let me give an example.

Down in south Texas, frequently pregnant ladies come across the Texas River, illegally coming to the United States from all over the world, and then they have a child born then in the United States. We assume that child is an American citizen. And because it is our policy to assume that person is an American citizen, the mother gets to stay. If the husband is here, he gets to stay. And before you know it, the whole family is allowed to stay because of the fraud perpetrated on the American people by that pregnant individual coming into the United States illegally and having a child.

It is based upon a phrase in the 14th amendment that says that "All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof" are citizens. Now, notice, Mr. Speaker, what the phrase says. It says "all persons born or naturalized and subject to the jurisdiction thereof" are citizens.

Well, I think the argument should be made that that individual that perpetrated a fraud on the United States, illegally coming into the country, is not subject to the jurisdiction of the United States. She is subject to the jurisdiction of whatever country she came from. And, hopefully, this matter will be resolved by either legislation from this body or by our Supreme Court across the street to determine whether or not those people really are subject to the jurisdiction of the United States and whether they should be granted automatic citizenship or not. That will be left for another time.

But just to show you how we are our own worst enemy and how we are inviting the insurgents into our country, we have cities in this Nation, it is usually the large cities, the big cities, and, unfortunately, it happens to be my city of Houston, Texas, that have sanctuary policies. What a sanctuary policy is that local police officers are instructed that they are not to stop people and inquire as to their legal status in the country. If they do so, then they will be disciplined. This gives an open invitation to people, because they know they will not be stopped by the police, arrested and deported.

What used to happen, Mr. Speaker, was local police would stop somebody on a traffic or some other minor offense, find out they were here illegally in the United States, and they would turn them over to the immigration of-

officials and immigration officials would then deport that individual. That doesn't happen any more. Now they may stop them and realize they are from some other country, but they let them go because cities have sanctuary policies. Don't arrest people here illegally in the United States.

This means you can get arrested for jaywalking but you can't be arrested for being here illegally in this country. Makes me wonder whether or not we have lost our common sense.

Let me read some letters and correspondence I have gotten and received from individuals about this whole issue of unlawful entry into the country. As many Members of the House have done, we have received numerous comments, e-mails, letters and phone calls of what people think about this whole issue of the border and border security, which is the issue.

One of the towns I represent is a small town called Humble, Texas, and Zine from Humble has written me this comment: She says, "I am an immigrant myself, who was blessed to have the privilege of becoming an American citizen. I came to this country legally many years ago with my two daughters. As soon as we arrived, my daughters were enrolled in school so they could learn English and we spoke only English at home. My sister, who sponsored us, took us to McDonald's and told my daughters that they couldn't really be Americans unless they ate hamburgers and drank Coca-Cola. Five years later, we became U.S. citizens. We are Brazilian by birth and Americans by choice, and we did it legally. We never demanded any rights because we had none until we became citizens. We pay taxes, we obey the law, we love this country with its tradition and all it stands for, and we do not wish to see it destroyed or changed. In 2004, I had to go to the emergency room of a local hospital. I was there for 7½ hours because the waiting room was full of illegals who, according to the law, had to be taken care of. I pay taxes, they don't. Where are my rights?"

Another letter I received from Jack, in Houston, Texas, tells me this. He says, "My wife, who I love dearly, is an immigrant, a legal immigrant who took the time and effort and wanted to do the right thing that would allow her to come and stay in this country legally. For illegal immigrants to demand their citizenship and rights I think pretty much violates all this country stands for, which is fair and equal treatment under the law of the land, which they seem fit to break. To me, this is akin to convicts in prison demanding to be released because they want to be released regardless of crimes that they have committed."

Another U.S. citizen of Hispanic descent, Marinell, from Houston, proudly writes, "Speaking for the Hispanic community who are U.S. citizens, I'm asking you for your support to secure the borders. There are some issues that are very important and are simple that

should be followed. One, close the border. Two, make illegal entry into the United States a felony. Three, no amnesty programs by any name. Four, guest workers should be fingerprinted and background checked. Five, any detained illegals should be immediately deported.

Six, English only. The cost to us for accommodating so many languages is overwhelming. Seven, no more automatic citizenship for people born in America of parents who are not U.S. citizens. Eight, exact a tax on money wired out of the United States by illegals. Nine, stop listening to illegals and start listening to Hispanics who are U.S. citizens.

Ten, don't believe that our economy will collapse if we don't have illegals. We would all rather pay a little more for goods and services and less for our health care premiums."

Wise common sense by a person who did it the right way, proud to be in the United States and proud to be here legally.

Philip from Montgomery, Texas, says, "I've heard it argued that illegals are only coming to improve their economic standing. Can not the same be said of anyone who commits larceny? They want to improve their economic standing as well. Illegals are systematically robbing our public coffers, denying our citizens adequate education, medical care and other essential services. Enough is enough."

Carl from Beaumont, Texas, writes, "The argument used to justify illegal aliens is that they will do the work that Americans won't do. Well, that is not correct. Americans will do the work if paid the going wage, not less than the minimum wage. I am disheartened that we reward employers who rob Americans of honest work by cheap labor. This has to stop. This country has grown into a powerhouse without resorting to economic slavery of immigrants."

Just this week I received a letter from a member of a local union down in Beaumont, Texas. He sent me a newspaper article. This newspaper article headlines "Fabricator requests 300 Mexican workers. Company claims there's not enough Americans to work." And the article goes ahead and points out that there are three businesses down in Beaumont, Texas, that want pipefitters and welders to come on board from other nations because there is not workers. Well, that is preposterous. This local pipefitters union member wrote me a letter saying he hadn't even heard about this, and his whole responsibility is finding jobs for local citizens as pipefitters and as welders.

And you notice we are talking about pipefitters and we are talking about welders. We are not talking about someone doing unskilled labor. These are good wages. And some of the businesses would rather hire people from other nations, claiming there are no Americans that will take these jobs,

and then pay subpar wages. Mr. Speaker, this is just not right, and these individuals certainly, who are American citizens and are legally here, ought to be receiving the jobs over people from other nations.

So what are the solutions? The first one, the government has to fight for America. Some have said that our government's at war but it is at war with the American public, at war with the American will. We ought to make sure our government has the moral will to protect the dignity of our country, the borders, both the northern border and the southern border.

Our government has to quit working for other nations. There are reports even this week that the Minutemen, nonviolent individuals who go and sit on the border and watch for illegals coming in and then notify the Border Patrol, there are reports that the Border Patrol is telling the Mexican government where these Minutemen are so that the illegals crossing into the United States go around them.

I do not know if this is true or not, but we are going to find out if that is true and it is going to stop. The American Government has to work for America not for foreign governments.

We have to protect our borders. I mentioned earlier that we protect the borders of other nations, so maybe we ought to protect the borders of our own Nation. Third world countries protect their borders better than the United States does.

□ 1700

The reason is we do not have the moral will to protect the dignity of the border. We talk about how we are going to protect the border, but we have not done it. There was talk about it in 1996 when this House talked about border security and a guest worker program. Nothing happened. We got the guest worker program, we just didn't get border security."

My grandfather used to say when all is said and done, more is said than done. That is what is going on. We are talking about it and there is a lot of publicity about it, but it does not seem that we are demanding and securing the border.

We have to help the Border Patrol do their job. We need to give them the best equipment. Just like we give our military the best equipment, we need to give our border patrol the best equipment.

The National Guard, they are part of the military. Their responsibility is to protect us. It is a good idea to use them immediately because no wall can be built overnight, yet the National Guard can be deployed overnight. Even if Generalissimo Vicente Fox does not like it, we ought to do it.

We should consider using a fence in appropriate areas. I know other Members of Congress have received all types of correspondence and mail. We get all kinds of things sent to us. But recently, I had an individual from Texas

send me four cases of bricks. Here is one of those bricks. He sent a letter along with it. In the letter he said, why don't you use this brick and these other bricks to build a wall to protect us from people illegally coming into the United States. Other Members of Congress have received these bricks as well.

The American public wants something done. Whatever it takes to secure the dignity of the United States, we certainly ought to do it. Maybe we ought to have Extreme Makeover go down to the Texas border and have an "Extreme Makeover Border" edition. As fast as they build something, they would not take long to build a wall. The reason we are building the wall is because of those people illegally coming into the United States. No American should ever feel guilty about that.

Mr. Speaker, we need to use the best law enforcement groups in the United States and that is the sheriffs, the Texas sheriff, the border sheriffs in California, Arizona and New Mexico. Those are some right-thinking folks. They know the area. They know the people. They have dedicated their lives to enforcing the law. But the way the law is written now, we cannot use the border sheriffs in detaining illegals that come into our country, and we ought to use them. We ought to give them the law enforcement power to turn illegals over to Federal authorities and have Federal authorities deport those individuals.

Rick Flores of Webb County made the comment, he said this is not a partisan issue. It is not a Republican issue or a Democratic issue, and he is a Democrat. He said this is a red, white and blue issue. He is right. Our border sheriffs ought to be used because they all grew up in these particular areas. They know the people and know who shouldn't be in those particular areas. So we should give them the money to do this.

The second thing we need to do after we secure the border, and we secure the borders before we start talking about people who are here illegally or any other immigration policy because you must stop the bleeding before you can solve the problem.

Once we secure the dignity of the border, we have to go back and look at our immigration policy. It is chaos in my opinion. It takes too long for people to come here legally. I have had individuals from Mexico who have tried to get into the United States, and it has taken years. People in my district, it took them a long time to come in legally. We seem to discriminate against people. We do not treat them all alike. We have to look at our immigration policy, maybe start over and make it fair and put the world on notice here is how you enter the United States legally.

Whether you want to work here, or whether you want to be a resident alien or become an American citizen. We have to stop the chaos in the immigration department.

One thing that we ought to do, it seems real obvious to me, when people cross from the nation of Mexico or Canada or the Caribbean, they can show one of several hundred documents to prove that they are from some other nation. They can even use a baptismal certificate. Our border agents have to shuffle through all of these different papers to figure out whether these people in this car are legally coming into the United States.

Why do we make it so difficult on ourselves? Why don't we do what every other nation does, and that is if you come to the United States legally, you have to have a passport, just like they do in every other nation in the world. When we let people into this country legally, we do not even know who they are. When they leave, we do not record that they left. With the bar code in a passport, we can check people's criminal record. We can record and keep a database if they are legally coming into this country and when they have to go home.

Then the employer can have a photograph on a visa and the employer can use a government document rather than some Social Security number to see if the person he is hiring is legally in the United States and quit making police officers out of our businesses.

Why people are opposed to a passport, I do not know. We talk about all kinds of identification cards that we want people to carry; simple, universal, worldwide, because we are in the world community, a worldwide document, a passport to enter the United States.

Then we ought to deport felons that are convicted automatically. Let me tell you what happens. Someone would be in this country, they are caught committing a crime. They are tried. They are sent to the Texas penitentiary. You would think that our government would automatically deport those people. But we do not do that. What we do is let them go back in the county in which they were convicted. Then the immigration service has to recapture them and have a deportation hearing and may or may not deport them.

I tried people back in Texas who were illegally in the United States and never deported. They were released, went back and committed another crime, and went back to the penitentiary. We ought to deport people who are convicted of a felony if they are from another country.

Probably the best example of an individual who abused our system was an individual by the name of Angel Resendiz. He came to the United States. He was captured several times, deported a few times. After being released, he committed nine murders in the United States. He was released by Federal authorities after being captured several other times. Resendiz is sitting now on death row in Texas waiting to be executed.

I haven't even talked about those people from all over the world who

come here just to commit crime. So deport people who are convicted of felonies in our Nation as soon as they serve their sentence. We have to abolish this catch-and-release policy. Catch and release is a phrase that fishermen use. Catch and release is you catch them, take them off the hook and you let them go.

That is what they do with fish, catch and release. Because we claim we do not have enough facilities to detain individuals. People from Mexico, if you are captured illegally, we deport you. We send you back home. But if you are from some other nation other than Mexico, OTMs, if you are from China or Peru or France, instead of deporting you automatically, you are released. Thus, the catch and release. What they do, they stand before a magistrate and swear that they will come back for their deportation hearing in 6 months.

Mr. Speaker, does it surprise anybody that more than 90 percent of those people we never see them again. They just move on. We catch them, we let them go. This is absurd. Police officers work too hard to capture these individuals just to let them go. We have to find facilities to house these people until they are deported. Put them on old military bases.

We have 10,000 trailers sitting in Hope, Arkansas, owned by FEMA. They are in Hope because they would not bring them down to hurricane areas like Texas because of the floodplain. That violates one of their policies. Why not use FEMA trailers as temporary housing for OTMs. Here we discriminate against Mexican nationals here illegally because we send them home. But if you are from some other Nation other than Mexico, you are released and told to come back. And then we are shocked that people do not come back.

We ought to deny benefits for people here illegally in this country. They shouldn't receive health care, education, welfare, housing, AFDC, Social Security and they certainly should not receive amnesty. The idea that we are going to tell people here is what we are going to do, we are going to give you amnesty, but you are going to have to pay a fine, pay some back taxes and learn English. What if they do not do that? We are going to do nothing because that is what we have been doing, nothing. What prompts those people to do that. They have been dealing with a cash economy. They do not even know what their back taxes are. So this whole idea of rewarding illegal behavior is wrong.

We ought to also go after employers that knowingly hire people illegally in this country. You know, 3 or 4 weeks ago we heard about a couple of businesses in the United States that were raided and captured folks that were here illegally, and the business was being prosecuted for hiring illegals. That has gone away. That is not in the news anymore. Why not? Because all that was a publicity stunt, in my opinion.

There are many businesses that hire people legally from other nations, and there are other businesses for cheap, plantation labor hiring them subpar. We ought to go after those people. It is follow the money. Follow the money trail, and that is something that we ought to do.

There are people with different motives that do not want our borders protected. There are some on the left, those northeastern elites who I think for political gain don't want our borders protected. There are people on the right for cheap labor that do not want our borders protected. Our borders need to be protected because all people in this country have the right to have our borders protected.

Mr. Speaker, the battle for America and its dignity is upon us. I think we ought to fight for our homeland. This has nothing to do with race. It has everything to do with the law. As I have mentioned, there are many good folks from other nations that are legally in this country that have become citizens. But those people that illegally flaunt our Nation and our laws should be held accountable. Our Nation has to be engaged in this process.

I am concerned that maybe our Nation is not engaged. Maybe we do not understand that there are those who wish to colonize our country. We cannot allow this unlawful, illegal invasion and insurgency and colonization to occur. The line has been drawn in the sand, and I hope we are willing to cross it and protect our border. The number one duty of government is public safety. We had better get in the fight. Instead of waving the white flag of indifference, we have to understand that our Nation is sovereign. Part of sovereignty is protecting the borders.

Mr. Speaker, history will reflect on these days and one wonders in the long lamentable catalog of human conduct, were these the best of days or were these the end of our days. Only history will tell how we as a people react to protecting our Nation, to establishing border security, to establishing a fair immigration policy, and then establishing a policy on what to do with those folks already here illegally. We can solve these problems, Mr. Speaker. America has always been able to solve every problem. With the good Lord's help, we have solved every problem we have ever had, but we must have the moral will, we must have the moral desire and the moral integrity to defend our borders.

Mr. Speaker, that's just the way it is.

COMMUNICATION FROM CHIEF OF STAFF OF HONORABLE ROBERT W. NEY, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCHENRY) laid before the House the following communication from William Heaton, Chief of Staff to the Honorable ROBERT W. NEY, Member of Congress:

MAY 18, 2006.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, I am notifying you that I have received a judicial subpoena from the United States District Court for the District of Columbia directing me to appear as a witness and provide testimony.

As required by Rule VIII 3., I shall undertake to determine whether the issuance of the subpoena is, among other matters, consistent with the privileges and precedents of the House.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM HEATON,
Chief of Staff,
The Honorable Robert W. Ney.

COMMUNICATION FROM COUNSEL,
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Paul D. Vinovich, Counsel, Committee on House Administration:

MAY 19, 2006.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House,
The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, I am hereby notifying you that I have received a judicial subpoena from the United States District Court for the District of Columbia directing me to appear as a witness and provide testimony.

As required by rule VIII(3), I shall undertake to determine whether the issuance of the subpoena is; among other things, consistent with the privileges and precedents of the House.

Sincerely,

PAUL D. VINOVIICH,
Counsel, Committee on House Administration.

VACATING 5-MINUTE SPECIAL
ORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the order for a 5-minute speech by Mr. POE is vacated.

There was no objection.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. KANJORSKI (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today after 1:00 p.m. on account of official business in the district.

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for the week of May 15.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of a family medical emergency.

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of family reasons.

Mr. MANZULLO (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of son's graduation from college.

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFazio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SCHIFF, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. PRICE of Georgia) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. OSBORNE, for 5 minutes, May 22 and 23.

Mr. MCHENRY, for 5 minutes, May 22, 23, 24, 25, and 26.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 193. An act to increase the penalties for violations by television and radio broadcasters of the prohibitions against transmission of obscene, indecent, and profane language; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Mrs. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 1499. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow members of the Armed Forces serving in a combat zone to make contributions to their individual retirement plans even if the compensation on which such contribution is based is excluded from gross income, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, May 22, 2006, at 12:30 p.m., for morning hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS,
ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

7588. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures,

Weather Takeoff Minimums; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30480; Amtd. No. 3154] received April 27, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7589. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, Weather Takeoff Minimums; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30478; Amtd. No. 3152] received April 27, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7590. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30488; Amtd. No. 3161] received April 27, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7591. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30490; Amtd. No. 3163] received April 27, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7592. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, Weather Takeoff Minimums; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 3156] received April 27, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7593. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30483; Amtd. No. 3157] received April 27, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7594. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — IFR Altitude; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30477; Amtd. No. 459] received April 27, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7595. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30485; Amtd. No. 3159] received April 27, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7596. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, Weather Takeoff Minimums; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30484; Amtd. No. 3158] received April 27, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7597. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — IFR Altitudes; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30486; Amtd. No. 460] received April 27, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, report of committee were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. SENSENBRENNER: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 4356. A bill to amend title 18 United States Code, with respect to fraud in connection with major disaster or emergency funds (Rept. 109-473). Referred to the Committee of the whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. HOBSON: Committee on Appropriations. H.R. 5427. A bill making appropriations for energy and water development for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes (Rept. 109-474). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. WELLER (for himself, Mr. RUSH, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. HYDE, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. BEAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. KIRK, Mr. COSTELLO, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. EVANS, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. SHIMKUS, and Mr. HASTERT):

H.R. 5426. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 326 South Main Street in Princeton, Illinois, as the "Congressman Owen Lovejoy Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Mr. HOBSON:

H.R. 5427. A bill making appropriations for energy and water development for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes.

By Mr. WELLER (for himself, Mr. RUSH, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. HYDE, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. BEAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. KIRK, Mr. COSTELLO, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. EVANS, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. SHIMKUS, and Mr. HASTERT):

H.R. 5428. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 202 East Washington Street in Morris, Illinois, as the "Joshua A. Terando Princeton Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Mr. POMBO:

H.R. 5429. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish and implement a competitive oil and gas leasing program that will result in an environmentally sound program for the exploration, development, and production of the oil and gas resources of the Coastal Plain of Alaska, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. BERMAN:

H.R. 5430. A bill to establish sound criteria for civilian nuclear cooperation with certain countries; to the Committee on International Relations, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BOSWELL:

H.R. 5431. A bill to amend the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States to extend the tariff duties on ethanol; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. CAPITO (for herself, Mr. RAHALL, and Mr. MOLLOHAN):

H.R. 5432. A bill to amend the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 to improve the safety of miners; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. HOOLEY (for herself, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Mr. BLUMENAUER):

H.R. 5433. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for a Medicare Prescription Drug Ombudsman; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. NEY (for himself, Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. HOBSON, Mr. STRICKLAND, Mrs. SCHMIDT, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. GILLMOR, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. REGULA, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. TURNER, Mr. OXLEY, Mr. CHABOT, Ms. PRYCE of Ohio, and Mr. BOEHNER):

H.R. 5434. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 40 South Walnut Street in Chillicothe, Ohio, as the "Larry Cox Post Office"; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Mr. REYES:

H.R. 5435. A bill to amend the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 to extend by one year the deadline for the implementation of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. SCHIFF (for himself and Ms. HART):

H.R. 5436. A bill to improve foster care court capacity through loan forgiveness and performance measurement; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Education and the Workforce, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SHAW:

H.R. 5437. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to extend for 6 months the eligibility period for the "Welcome to Medicare" physical examination and to eliminate coinsurance for screening mammography and colorectal cancer screening tests in order to promote the early detection of cancer; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LANTOS (for himself, Mr. THOMAS, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. BERMAN, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. PENCE, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. KIRK, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. SOUDER, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. LYNCH, and Mrs. MALONEY):

H.J. Res. 86. A joint resolution approving the renewal of import restrictions contained in the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania (for himself and Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania):

H. Con. Res. 407. Concurrent resolution condemning the decision by the city of St. Denis, France, to name a street in honor of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the convicted murderer of Philadelphia Police Officer Danny Faulkner; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Inter-

national Relations, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BURTON of Indiana:

H. Con. Res. 408. Concurrent resolution commending the Government of Canada for its renewed commitment to the Global War on Terror; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. LEACH (for himself, Mr. LANTOS, and Mr. FALCOMAVAEGA):

H. Con. Res. 409. Concurrent resolution commemorating the 60th anniversary of the ascension to the throne of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Ms. SCHAKOWSKY (for herself, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. STARK, Ms. LEE, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. KUCINICH, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. EVANS, Mr. FARR, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HINCHEY, Ms. NORTON, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. NADLER, Mr. OLVER, Mr. OWENS, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SOLIS, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. WATERS, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. WEXLER, and Mr. WYNN):

H. Con. Res. 410. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the enactment of legislation that provides access to comprehensive health care for all Americans; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin:

H. Res. 823. A resolution commending the outstanding efforts by members of faith-based and community organizations in response to Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Ms. HARRIS (for herself, Mr. MACK, Mr. PUTNAM, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. FOLEY, and Ms. BORDALLO):

H. Res. 824. A resolution recognizing the effects of harmful algal blooms, including Red Tide, on the environment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, and in addition to the Committee on Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. KAPTUR:

H. Res. 825. A resolution to support the goals of an annual National Time-Out Day to promote patient safety and optimal outcomes in the operating room; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MCINTYRE (for himself, Mr. HULSHOF, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. KIND, Mr. PICKERING, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. WAMP, Mr. TIAHRT, and Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire):

H. Res. 826. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that a National Youth Sports Week should be established; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Ms. NORTON (for herself, Ms. LEE, Mr. RANGEL, and Mrs. CHRISTENSEN):

H. Res. 827. A resolution honoring the life and accomplishments of Damu Amiri Imapara Smith; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Mr. PITTS (for himself, Mr. FALCOMAVAEGA, Mr. LEACH, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. PUTNAM, and Mr. LANTOS):

H. Res. 828. A resolution commending the people of Mongolia, on the 800th anniversary of Mongolian statehood, for building strong, democratic institutions, and expressing the support of the House of Representatives for efforts by the United States to continue to strengthen its partnership with that country; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. SOUDER (for himself, Mr. SHADEGG, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. COLE of Oklahoma):

H. Res. 829. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Shadow Wolves should be preserved and fostered as one unit, located on the Tohono O'odham lands; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS TO PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 65: Mr. BACHUS, Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire, and Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 547: Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan.

H.R. 561: Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 784: Mr. WEXLER.

H.R. 801: Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. MCCOTTER, and Mr. CROWLEY.

H.R. 807: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 817: Mr. COBLE.

H.R. 881: Mr. RAMSTAD.

H.R. 896: Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan.

H.R. 916: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. COLE of Oklahoma, and Mr. KUHLMAN of New York.

H.R. 997: Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota and Mr. MORAN of Kansas.

H.R. 1108: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 1130: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ and Mr. WU.

H.R. 1175: Mr. BOOZMAN.

H.R. 1306: Mr. COBLE.

H.R. 1429: Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. BOUCHER, and Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 1438: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.

H.R. 1589: Mr. MCNULTY.

H.R. 1633: Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 1707: Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania and Ms. Moore of Wisconsin.

H.R. 1708: Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania, Mr. BARROW, and Mr. UPTON.

H.R. 1951: Mrs. DAVIS of California.

H.R. 2070: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 2073: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 2088: Mr. SODREL.

H.R. 2134: Mr. KUHLMAN of New York.

H.R. 2238: Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire and Mr. ISTOOK.

H.R. 2257: Mr. HAYWORTH.

H.R. 2295: Mr. BROWN of South Carolina.

H.R. 3145: Mr. GERLACH and Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota.

H.R. 3155: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 3159: Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 3323: Mr. SWEENEY.

H.R. 3360: Mr. SNYDER.

H.R. 3427: Mr. FERGUSON and Mr. PASCRELL.

H.R. 3478: Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 3559: Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. PETRI, Mrs. MCCARTHY, and Mr. BACHUS.

H.R. 3579: Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 3883: Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia.

H.R. 4188: Mr. LEVIN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.

H.R. 4222: Ms. CARSON.

H.R. 4259: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN and Mr. ORTIZ.

H.R. 4298: Ms. HERSETH.

H.R. 4381: Mrs. MYRICK and Mr. GILLMOR.

H.R. 4542: Mr. WELLER.

H.R. 4547: Mr. SODREL and Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 4560: Mr. PETRI and Mrs. JONES of Ohio.

H.R. 4574: Mr. BECERRA, Mr. SABO, Mrs. LOWEY, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. CALVERT, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Mr. DICKS.

H.R. 4736: Mr. KUCINICH.

H.R. 4755: Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. HOSTETTLER, and Mr. WELLER.

H.R. 4761: Mrs. SCHMIDT.

H.R. 4769: Mr. PORTER.

H.R. 4772: Mr. POE and Mr. CONAWAY.

H.R. 4808: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.

H.R. 4873: Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota.

H.R. 4894: Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, and Mr. PETRI.

H.R. 4980: Mr. CASE.

H.R. 5005: Mr. SODREL.

H.R. 5013: Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, and Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey.

H.R. 5014: Ms. WATSON and Mr. GONZALEZ.

H.R. 5017: Mr. MCNULTY.

H.R. 5018: Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 5033: Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 5058: Mr. MCHUGH.

H.R. 5063: Ms. KAPTUR.

H.R. 5067: Mrs. MYRICK and Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan.

H.R. 5072: Mr. BOSWELL.

H.R. 5092: Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. KUHLMAN of New York, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Ms. FOX, Mr. ISTOOK, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. KLINE, Mr. FENEY, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. CARTER, Mr. DELAY, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. GOODE, Mr. SESSIONS, and Ms. HART.

H.R. 5106: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 5118: Mr. OSBORNE.

H.R. 5121: Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. GOODE, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania, and Mrs. BIGGERT.

H.R. 5139: Mr. EHLERS.

H.R. 5140: Mr. EHLERS.

H.R. 5148: Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. WAXMAN, and Mr. CARDIN.

H.R. 5150: Mr. CARDIN.

H.R. 5159: Mr. GORDON.

H.R. 5166: Mr. MCCOTTER, Ms. HART, and Miss McMorris.

H.R. 5167: Mr. REYES, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. BOEHLERT, Ms. LEE, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. STARK, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. BALDWIN, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 5171: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 5177: Mr. RYUN of Kansas and Mr. LINDER.

H.R. 5182: Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky.

H.R. 5196: Mr. MCCOTTER and Mr. TERRY.

H.R. 5199: Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, and Mr. CASE.

H.R. 5201: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, and Mr. FORD.

H.R. 5206: Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, and Mr. WYNN.

H.R. 5217: Mr. FORD Mr. MCINTYRE.

H.R. 5230: Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey.

H.R. 5238: Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. ORTIZ, and Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 5246: Mr. EVERETT, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. LAHOOD, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. HOLDEN, H.R. Mr. GIBBONS, Mr. CAMP of Michigan, and Mr. LUCAS.

H.R. 5255: Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky.

H.R. 5262: Mr. SOUDER.

H.R. 5264: Mr. GORDON.

H.R. 5269: Ms. WOOLSEY and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 5286: Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota.

H.R. 5289: Mr. KIRK.

H.R. 5308: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 5309: Mr. RAMSTAD and Mr. CAMP of Michigan.

H.R. 5316: Mr. MCINTYRE.

H.R. 5329: Mr. CAMPBELL of California.

H.R. 5341: Mr. ISRAEL.

H.R. 5353: Mr. OTTER.

H.R. 5363: Mr. COLE of Oklahoma.

H.R. 5364: Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. SOLIS, and Mr. ALLEN.

H.R. 5365: Mr. ALLEN, Mr. ROSS, Mr. GORDON, Mr. KILDEE, and Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 5371: Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. OLVER.

H.R. 5372: Mr. MCINTYRE, Mrs. MCCARTHY, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. TANNER, Mr. SKELTON, and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.

H.R. 5390: Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. WOLF, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. WYNN, and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 5420: Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, and Mr. GONZALEZ.

H. Con. Res. 368: Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania, Mr. KUHLMAN of New York, and Mr. WEXLER.

H. Con. Res. 380: Mr. SMITH of Texas.

H. Con. Res. 391: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.

H. Con. Res. 397: Mr. JEFFERSON.

H. Con. Res. 401: Mr. BAIRD and Ms. CARSON.

H. Con. Res. 402: Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania.

H. Con. Res. 403: Mr. HAYWORTH.

H. Res. 295: Mr. CAPUANO and Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan.

H. Res. 318: Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. WYNN, Mr. TERRY, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, and Mr. MEEKS of New York.

H. Res. 323: Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. BAKER, and Mr. MCCREERY.

H. Res. 723: Mr. HIGGINS, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mr. CHANDLER, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. NADLER.

H. Res. 735: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. STARK, Mr. HINCHEY, and Mr. LARSEN of Washington.

H. Res. 739: Mr. SCOTT of Georgia.

H. Res. 790: Mr. RAHALL.

H. Res. 792: Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. WELLER, and Ms. LEE.

H. Res. 799: Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. GERLACH, and Mr. BURTON of Indiana.

H. Res. 812: Mr. CONYERS.

DISCHARGE PETITIONS— ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

The following Members added their names to the following discharge petitions:

Petition 6 by Mr. ABERCROMBIE on House Resolution 543: Chaka Fattah, Adam B. Schiff, Eddie Bernice Johnson, and Bobby L. Rush.

Petition 12 by Mr. MARKEY on H.R. 4263: Danny K. Davis.

AMENDMENTS

Under clause 8 of rule XVIII, proposed amendments were submitted as follows:

H.R. 5385

OFFERED BY: Mr. BLUMENAUER

AMENDMENT No. 1: Under the heading "DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE ACCOUNT 1990", insert after the dollar amount

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(page 11, line 17) the following: “(increased by \$27,500,000)”. after the dollar amount (page 11, line 24) the following: “(reduced by \$440,000,000)”. insert after the dollar amount (page 18, line 14) the following: “(increased by 50,000,000)”.

Under the heading “DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE ACCOUNT 2005”, insert TORATION, FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES”.