

## NOT VOTING—21

Andrews	Hobson	Spratt
Carter	Johnson (GA)	Sullivan
Castor	Kennedy	Turner
Crenshaw	Lewis (GA)	Walden (OR)
Fossella	Paul	Walsh (NY)
Gillibrand	Rangel	Wexler
Herger	Rush	Young (AK)

□ 1342

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. I would have voted "yea."

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 354, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree to H. Res. 1194, Reaffirming the support of the House of Representatives for the legitimate, democratically-elected Government of Lebanon under Prime Minister Fouad Siniora, I was unavoidably absent due to a family medical emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam Speaker, I rise to state that due to unforeseen circumstances, I missed rollcall vote 354 to H. Res. 1194 taken on May 22, 2008. Had I been present for this vote, I would have voted "yea" on this measure.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY CHAIRMAN OF PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE REGARDING AVAILABILITY OF CLASSIFIED ANNEX

(Mr. REYES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. REYES. Madam Speaker, I wish to inform my colleagues that the classified annex to H.R. 5959, the Intelligence Authorization Act for fiscal year 2009, will be available for review by Members only during regular committee business hours. Staff are requested to call the committee to schedule a viewing appointment for Members. Members will be required to fill out the appropriate security paperwork to view the classified documents.

DUNCAN HUNTER NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. DEGETTE). Pursuant to House Resolution 1218 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 5658.

□ 1344

## 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 further consideration of the bill (H.R. 5658) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2009 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to pre-

scribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2009, and for other purposes, with Mr. SERRANO (Acting Chairman) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chairman, I first want to recognize Congressman IKE SKELTON, Chairman of the Armed Services Committee. I know how tirelessly he's worked to put this authorization bill together; and more than that, I know that no one in this House is a more dedicated advocate for our men and women in uniform.

This bill passed out of committee unanimously, and I expect it to pass the full House overwhelmingly, as well. That's because it's a bill that begins to repair our military while putting the needs of our troops first, a bill that responds to the Armed Forces' immense challenges while keeping them on the cutting edge. Let me touch on a few of its key provisions.

First, it authorizes \$70 billion for operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the war on terrorism. No doubt, an overwhelming majority of the American public would agree that our mission in Iraq has been marred by gross errors of judgment from our highest-ranking civilian officials, unending bloodshed, and a chronic lack of political progress. But at the same time, 150,000 American troops are still on the ground in the midst of that violence, they have done everything our Nation has asked of them, and I believe they must have the resources they need to defend themselves and try to stabilize Iraq. This bill recognizes that reality, and it includes funds to keep our troops safer under fire: funds for Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicles, up-armored Humvees, and personal body armor.

Second, this bill acknowledges the tremendous debt we owe our troops in this time of war. And the bill's military pay raise—a higher raise than the president requested—is a small way of beginning to pay that debt back. It also protects their access to health care by keeping down medical fees for our troops and retirees.

Third, this bill begins to restore our Nation's military readiness. With our forces stretched to the breaking point, Army National Guard units have, on average, less than two thirds of their required equipment. Army Vice Chief of Staff Richard Cody has testified that the Army "no longer has fully ready combat brigades on standby should a threat or conflict occur." That is simply too dangerous a risk to take. I'm glad that this bill takes some steps to mitigate it, authorizing nearly \$2 billion for unfunded readiness initiatives, \$800 million for National Guard and Reserve equipment, and larger active duty forces: 7,000 new soldiers, 5,000 more Marines, and more than 1,000 new sailors.

Fourth and finally, this bill's investments in high-tech equipment will keep our military the world's most advanced. It includes funding for next-generation fighters, like the F/A-22 Raptor and the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter; for advanced Navy vessels, from small littoral combat ships to new attack submarines; and for the initial deployment of a national missile defense system. At the same time, I realize that spending on this scale always opens the possibility of waste and abuse; that's why I'm grateful that this bill also comes equipped with increased congressional oversight of Defense acquisition programs.

Mr. Speaker, never in recent memory has our military been so worn down. The road

back to readiness will be long and hard—but it can begin today. I urge my colleagues to support this vital piece of legislation—vital for our troops and our families, and equally vital for our Nation's security.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the Department of Defense (DOD) Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009. This legislation achieves a number of very important goals. First and foremost, it provides our troops and their families with the support they need. This includes a military pay raise of 3.9 percent, which is larger than that requested by the President, a prohibition against fee increases for the military health care program known as TRICARE, an expansion of available health care services, and improved support for military families.

The bill also helps protect our troops by improving military readiness, and providing them with the equipment they need to keep them safe. The bill authorizes nearly \$2 billion for unfunded readiness initiatives, and authorizes \$800 million to provide the National Guard and Reserve, which are terribly stretched thin due to repeated deployments to Iraq, equipment they critically need. It also authorizes \$2.6 billion for additional Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles, \$947 million for additional Up-Armored Humvees, and \$783 million for the continued procurement and enhancement of personal body armor. This is equipment that will save countless lives in Iraq.

Finally, this legislation includes provisions making important changes to the government contracting system and adds increased accountability for those who are working for the government in Iraq. This bill reforms the DOD acquisition process, provides for a better trained acquisition workforce, and cracks down on conflicts of interest in defense contracts.

I want to thank my friend and colleague Chairman SKELTON for his hard work on this legislation. It has always been the bipartisan goal of the Congress to ensure that the United States military is the best trained, best equipped, and most capable fighting force in the world. This legislation accomplishes those goals, and has my strong support.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 5658, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009.

I would like to start by commending the outstanding service provided by our men and women in the armed forces and thanking them for the terrific job they do for us across the globe each and every day, often in very difficult and dangerous circumstances. In return, I believe it is our duty as Congress to provide our troops with the support and resources they need to do their job as safely and effectively as possible. It is a credit to Chairman SKELTON and Ranking Member HUNTER that we have been able to fulfill this important obligation with strong bipartisan support.

I especially thank the committee for addressing an issue of particular importance to me and one of my constituents in this legislation. During a 15-month deployment in Afghanistan, U.S. Army Sergeant Jeff Frawley endured extremely harsh conditions in the mountains near Pakistan. Despite these hardships, he selflessly re-enlisted to serve his country for another 4 years.

Upon his return to the United States, Sergeant Frawley's company was forced to live in barracks at Fort Bragg that were infested with mold, suffered from decrepit plumbing, and