

"Note: This document has been printed for informational purposes. It does not represent either findings or recommendations formally adopted by the Committee."

IX. AMENDMENT OF RULES

The rules of the Committee may be amended or revised at any time, provided that not less than a majority of the Committee present so determine at a Committee meeting preceded by at least 3 days notice of the amendments or revisions proposed.●

RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

● Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, pursuant to paragraph 2 of Rule XXVI, Standing Rules of the Senate, I submit for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the Rules of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs for the 106th Congress, as adopted by the Committee on March 1, 1999.

The rules follow:

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS RULES OF PROCEDURE

I. MEETINGS

(a) Unless otherwise ordered, the Committee shall meet on the first Wednesday of each month. The Chairman may, upon proper notice, call such additional meetings as he deems necessary.

(b) Except as provided in subparagraphs (b) and (d) of paragraph 5 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, meetings of the Committee shall be open to the public. The Committee shall prepare and keep a complete transcript or electronic recording adequate to fully record the proceedings of each meeting whether or not such meeting or any part thereof is closed to the public.

(c) The Chairman of the Committee or the Ranking Majority Member present in the absence of the Chairman, or such other Member as the Chairman may designate, shall preside at all meetings.

(d) No meeting of the Committee shall be scheduled except by majority vote of the Committee or by authorization of the Chairman of the Committee.

(e) The Committee shall notify the office designated by the Committee on Rules and Administration of the time, place, and purpose of each meeting. In the event such meeting is canceled, the Committee shall immediately notify such designated office.

(f) Written notice of a Committee meeting, accompanied by an agenda enumerating the items of business to be considered, shall be sent to all Committee members at least 72 hours (not counting Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays) in advance of each meeting. In the event that the giving of such 72-hour notice is prevented by unforeseen requirements or Committee business, the Committee staff shall communicate notice by the quickest appropriate means to members or appropriate staff assistants of Members and an agenda shall be furnished prior to the meeting.

(g) Subject to the second sentence of this paragraph, it shall not be in order for the Committee to consider any amendment in the first degree proposed to any measure under consideration by the Committee unless a written copy of such amendment has been delivered to each member of the Committee at least 24 hours before the meeting at which the amendment is to be proposed. This paragraph may be waived by a majority vote of the members and shall apply only

when 72-hour written notice has been provided in accordance with paragraph (f).

II. QUORUMS

(a) Subject to the provisions of paragraph (b), seven members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for the reporting or approving of any measure or matter or recommendation. Four members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for purposes of transacting any other business.

(b) In order to transact any business at a Committee meeting, at least one member of the minority shall be present. If, at any meeting, business cannot be transacted because of the absence of such a member, the matter shall lay over for a calendar day. If the presence of a minority member is not then obtained, business may be transacted by the appropriate quorum.

(c) One member shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of receiving testimony.

III. VOTING

(a) Votes may be cast by proxy. A proxy shall be written and may be conditioned by personal instructions. A proxy shall be valid only for the day given.

(b) There shall be a complete record kept of all Committee action. Such record shall contain the vote cast by each member of the Committee on any question on which a roll call vote is requested.

IV. HEARINGS AND HEARING PROCEDURES

(a) Except as specifically otherwise provided, the rules governing meetings shall govern hearings.

(b) At least 1 week in advance of the date of any hearing, the Committee shall undertake, consistent with the provisions of paragraph 4 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, to make public announcements of the date, place, time, and subject matter of such hearing.

(c) The Committee shall require each witness who is scheduled to testify at any hearing to file 40 copies of such witness' testimony with the Committee not later than 48 hours prior to the witness' scheduled appearance unless the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member determine there is good cause for failure to do so.

(d) The presiding member at any hearing is authorized to limit the time allotted to each witness appearing before the Committee.

(e) The Chairman, with the concurrence of the Ranking Minority Member of the Committee, is authorized to subpoena the attendance of witnesses and the production of memoranda, documents, records, and any other materials. If the Chairman or a Committee staff member designated by the Chairman has not received from the Ranking Minority Member or a Committee staff member designated by the Ranking Minority Member notice of the Ranking Minority Member's nonconcurrence in the subpoena within 48 hours (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays) of being notified of the Chairman's intention to subpoena attendance or production, the Chairman is authorized following the end of the 48-hour period involved to subpoena the same without the Ranking Minority Member's concurrence. Regardless of whether a subpoena has been concurred in by the Ranking Minority Member, such subpoena may be authorized by vote of the Members of the Committee. When the Committee or Chairman authorizes a subpoena, the subpoena may be issued upon the signature of the Chairman or of any other member of the Committee designated by the Chairman.

(f) Except as specified in Committee Rule VII (requiring oaths, under certain cir-

cumstances, at hearings to confirm Presidential nominations), witnesses at hearings will be required to give testimony under oath whenever the presiding member deems such to be advisable.

V. MEDIA COVERAGE

Any Committee meeting or hearing which is open to the public may be covered by television, radio, and print media. Photographers, reporters, and crew members using mechanical recording, filming or broadcasting devices shall position and use their equipment so as not to interfere with the seating, vision, or hearing of the Committee members or staff or with the orderly conduct of the meeting or hearing. The presiding member of the meeting or hearing may for good cause terminate, in whole or in part, the use of such mechanical devices or take such other action as the circumstances and the orderly conduct of the meeting or hearing may warrant.

VI. GENERAL

All applicable requirements of the Standing Rules of the Senate shall govern the Committee.

VII. PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATIONS

(a) Each Presidential nominee whose nomination is subject to Senate confirmation and referred to this Committee shall submit a statement of his or her background and financial interests, including the financial interests of his or her spouse and of children living in the nominee's household, on a form approved by the Committee which shall be sworn to as to its completeness and accuracy. The Committee form shall be in two parts—

(A) information concerning employment, education, and background of the nominee which generally relates to the position to which the individual is nominated, and which is to be made public; and

(B) information concerning the financial and other background of the nominee, to be made public when the Committee determines that such information bears directly on the nominee's qualifications to hold the position to which the individual is nominated.

Committee action on a nomination, including hearings or a meeting to consider a motion to recommend confirmation, shall not be initiated until at least five days after the nominee submits the form required by this rule unless the Chairman, with the concurrence of the Ranking Minority Member, waives this waiting period.

(b) At any hearing to confirm a Presidential nomination, the testimony of the nominee and, at the request of any Member, any other witness shall be under oath.

VIII. NAMING OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FACILITIES

It is the policy of the Committee that no Department of Veterans Affairs facility shall be named after any individual unless—

(A) such individual is deceased and was—

(1) a veteran who (i) was instrumental in the construction or the operation of the facility to be named, or (ii) was a recipient of the Medal of Honor or, as determined by the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, otherwise performed military service of an extraordinarily distinguished character;

(2) a member of the United States House of Representatives or Senate who had a direct association with such facility;

(3) an Administrator of Veterans' Affairs, a Secretary of Veterans Affairs, a Secretary of Defense or of a service branch, or a military or other Federal civilian official of comparable or higher rank; or

(4) an individual who, as determined by the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, performed outstanding service for veterans;

(B) each member of the Congressional delegation representing the State in which the designated facility is located has indicated in writing such member's support of the proposal to name such facility after such individual; and

(C) the pertinent State department or chapter of each Congressionally chartered veterans' organization having a national membership of at least 500,000 has indicated in writing its support of such proposal.

IX. AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES

The rules of the Committee may be changed, modified, amended, or suspended at any time, provided, however, that no less than a majority of the entire membership so determine at a regular meeting with due notice, or at a meeting specifically called for that purpose. The rules governing quorums for reporting legislative matters shall govern rules changes, modification, amendments, or suspension.●

MILITARY PAY AND BENEFITS BILL

● Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask that the article entitled "A Military Problem Money Can't Solve," which appeared in this morning's New York Times, be printed in the RECORD. It helps to illustrate why the Senate should have taken a closer look at the provisions of S. 4 before voting on it. Had hearings been held on the bill, and had we awaited the completion of studies by the CBO, GAO and Defense Department, perhaps some Senators would have had a chance to become familiar with the reasons that our service men and women leave the military. As this article makes clear, retention may depend more on improving quality of life than increasing pay and pensions.

The article follows:

[The New York Times, Tuesday, Mar. 2, 1999]

A MILITARY PROBLEM MONEY CAN'T SOLVE

(By Lucian K. Truscott 4th)

LOS ANGELES.—While members of the armed services are underpaid and overworked, the bill recently passed by the Senate that gives them a pay raise doesn't address the real problem: keeping skilled officers and noncommissioned officers from leaving in mid-career.

The Army, Navy and Air Force now face serious enlistment shortfalls. For example, last year the Navy fell 7,000 short of its recruitment goal. The bill would raise military pay 4.8 percent and increase reenlistment bonuses and retirement benefits.

But even if the improved benefit package helps attract more recruits, there will continue to be a shortfall unless the military does more to keep mid-career soldiers from resigning.

Over the past few years, I have been in touch with more than 100 men and women who have resigned from the service, chiefly because my last two books have been about the military. Not once have I heard them say that they left the service because the pay was low. For many, quality-of-life factors drove them away.

They complain that junior officers and enlisted men and women with families are as-

signed to military housing that is old and badly maintained. On many bases both here and abroad, there is a shortage of housing, forcing many young families to live off the base. Civilian landlords in neighborhoods near military bases often charge above-market rents because they know military families are a captive market.

Deployments to far-off "peace-keeping" missions are another reason for mid-career attrition. With all of the services short-handed, assignments to these hardship missions are far more frequent than in the past. Moreover, to soldiers who have been trained to fight, many of these peacekeeping missions seem pointless.

But the complaint I've heard as often as any other has been about the system for advancement. One former officer told me that the military's traditional "zero defects" policy now applies to careers, not just to the readiness of a unit or to effectiveness in combat. One bad rating from a senior officer can end a career. "Everyone seems afraid to take the slightest chance at making a mistake," he said, for fear of getting a bad review.

So the mid-level officers may be jumping ship because the solution—which would include dissolving the unfair ratings system—is too radical to ever be considered.

Dissatisfaction with the overall ratings system for officers also helps to explain why the 20 percent increase in retirement benefits called for in the Senate bill is unlikely to improve retention rates. There are fewer slots as you go higher in rank, so promotions get harder.

In the past, for example, a major who wasn't promoted to lieutenant colonel could stay at the same rank and still get full retirement benefits after 20 years of service. Now many of those who don't get promoted are asked to leave the military.

The new officer rating system, established a year ago, has rigorous quotas that insure that only a certain number of soldiers are promoted—and reach retirement age. The ratings system uses four levels, but no more than half of the soldiers a superior officer oversees can be given the top rating. Soldiers who consistently score at the top are the ones who will qualify for retirement benefits, the bulk of which kick in at 20 years of service.

But that means the other half has little or no chance of qualifying for retirement, and it's this group that is more likely to resign from the service at mid-career. Several former military men have told me that after receiving what they considered to be unfair low ratings as junior officers they drew the conclusion that they would never be able to serve 20 years and reach retirement. Each of them decided to resign early rather than stick around and learn late in his career that his services were no longer wanted by the military.

"They tell you that if you're not going to go all the way to 20, you'd better get out by the end of your eighth year, because the corporate world won't take you after that," one former soldier explained.

Many former soldiers I have corresponded with have described their decisions to resign from the military as complex and painful. But the emotion they express most frequently is anger.

"I think the most important reason for leaving is that the Army pays lip service to taking care of its own, but it really doesn't," one former officer wrote.

Still another former military man described the plight of the mid-career profes-

sional soldier this way: "They are sent to far-off places with inadequate support, pointless missions and foolish rules of engagement so the cocktail party set back in D.C. . . . can have their consciences feel good."

Many of the military men and women I've interviewed see no one in senior leadership positions standing up and telling the politicians that while a pay raise is nice, there are a lot of other problems that need to be addressed. As one former officer wrote me, "Money would help, but it will not cure."●

NATIONAL TRIO DAY

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise to bring my colleagues attention to the celebration of National TRIO Day which took place on Saturday, February 28. National TRIO Day—which was created by a concurrent resolution during the 99th Congress—is celebrated every year on the last Saturday of February, and serves as a day of recognition for the Federal TRIO Programs.

As my colleagues are aware, the TRIO Programs actually consist of several educational programs: Talent Search; Upward Bound; Upward Bound Math/Science; Veterans Upward Bound; Student Support Services; Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program; and Educational Opportunity Centers. These programs, established over 30 years ago, provide services to low-income students and help them overcome a variety of barriers to obtaining a higher education, including class, social, and cultural barriers.

Currently, 2,000 colleges, universities and community agencies sponsor TRIO Programs, and more than 780,000 low-income middle school, high school, and adult students benefit from the services of these programs. By lifting students out of poverty, these students can pursue their highest aspirations and achieve the American dream, even as our nation is collectively lifted to new heights.

Mr. President, there are 15 TRIO Programs in my home State of Maine that serve 6,000 aspiring students each year. I know that these programs work because I have seen and heard of the tangible impact the programs have had—and continue to have—on individuals in Maine.

The impact of the TRIO Programs speaks for itself when considering that TRIO graduates can be found in every occupation one can think of, including doctors, lawyers, astronauts, television reporters, actors, state senators, and even Members of Congress. In fact, two of our colleagues in the House of Representatives—Congressman HENRY BONILLA and Congressman ALBERT R. WYNN—are graduates of the TRIO Programs.

In closing, as we celebrate National TRIO Day, I would like to encourage my colleagues to learn more about the TRIO Programs in their respective states, and see for themselves the impact the programs have had—and continue to have—on their constituents.