

non-mandatory professional qualifications for Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPS) and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs). This bill would also require that all DVOPS and LVERs successfully complete training by the National Veterans' Training Institute.

Madam Speaker, veterans as a group is one of this nation's largest assets. Their small businesses are very successful and they have proven to be excellent employees. The employment and entrepreneurial tools within H.R. 3082 would give our veterans the "leg-up" that they deserve.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3082, as amended.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3082, the Veterans Small Business and Memorial Affairs Act of 2006. I would also like to commend my good friend from my home state of Arkansas, Mr. BOOZMAN, for his leadership on this important and timely topic.

The Small Business Association believes that approximately 4 million small businesses in the United States are owned by veterans. Many of the 4 million veteran owned businesses are owned by veterans that were permanently disabled while serving this country. This legislation makes a step toward paying our debt to America's veterans by ensuring that veterans are not overlooked by the Small Business Administration. H.R. 3082 requires the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish annual contracting goals for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to enter into with small businesses owned and controlled by veterans and service-disabled veterans. The goal for service-disabled, veteran-owned small businesses would not be less than three percent.

Additionally, H.R. 3082 makes strides toward ensuring that our veterans receive important employment training services to meet the needs of our increasingly technologically driven economy. I am a strong believer in the utility of employment training and will continue to work in the Committee on Education and the Workforce to expand employment training so that we remain competitive in the 21st century. I hope that the efficacy of vocational training will once again be demonstrated by this program and that this body will invest sufficiently in employment training programs. Improved job skills make a real difference for both workers and our economy.

Ms HERSETH. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to express my support for the Veterans' Small Business and Memorial Affairs Act, H.R. 3082. I also would like to thank Rep. JOHN BOOZMAN, the Chairman of the Economic Opportunity Subcommittee, for his leadership on the small business provisions included in this bill.

As the Ranking Member of the Economic Opportunity Subcommittee, I am proud to have helped develop and strongly support the education, training, and employment measures contained in H.R. 3082.

These provisions are intended to improve veterans' small-business opportunities, job-training, and employment services, as well as the licensing and certification process for servicemembers transitioning into the civilian workforce.

Our nation's servicemembers, veterans and military families have earned the benefits and

opportunities provided within this legislation. Again, I am pleased to support the measures contained in the Veterans' Small Business and Memorial Affairs Act and encourage my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, the provisions in title two originated in the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs.

Section 201 would allow tribal governments to participate in the State Cemetery Grants Program to establish, expand, and improve veterans' cemeteries on trust lands.

The Department of Veterans Affairs' State Cemetery Grants Program was established in 1978 to complement VA's National Cemetery system. VA will pay for the construction costs, and states are responsible for providing the land and ongoing operating and maintenance expenses.

There are currently 60 state cemeteries and two under construction, and states are planning to open 18 new state veterans' cemeteries between 2007 and 2010.

Owing to the success of the State Cemetery Grants Program, Congress made it permanent in Public Law 108-183. However, tribal governments are not considered eligible for these cemetery grants. This section will provide Native American veterans the opportunity to be buried in a veterans' cemetery on trust land.

Madam Speaker, I'd like to thank Representative Tom Udall, a member of the Subcommittee, for bringing this issue to our attention so we could include it in the bill under consideration today.

Section 202 would make permanent the Secretary's authority to furnish a government marker for veterans interred in a marked grave at a private cemetery, as well as offering a headstone in lieu of a marker, if requested by the family. The headstone or marker would be placed on the grave, or as close to it as practicable.

The current five-year authority, which was effective for deaths that occurred as of September 11, 2001, expires on December 31st of this year. Prior to this authority, if a veteran was buried at a private cemetery and the family purchased a private headstone, the veteran was ineligible for a government marker.

We would also expand the benefit to include veterans who died between November 1, 1990 and September 10, 2001.

I want to recognize Representative Nancy Johnson, who has been championing this cause for over five years. I appreciate her working with the Subcommittee to ensure that veterans and their families continue to have access to symbolic expressions of remembrance.

Finally, section 203 would authorize the Secretary to permit the placement of a memorial headstone or marker in a national cemetery when a child's remains are unavailable for burial.

If feasible, VA would be authorized to add a memorial inscription to a veteran's headstone rather than providing a separate marker for the minor child.

Currently, VA may provide a memorial headstone or marker for a veteran, spouse, or surviving spouse when remains are unavailable.

However, if a spouse and child die at the same time and in the same manner, and the

remains for neither are available, a veteran cannot receive a memorial headstone honoring the child. This section would correct an inequity in current law. Since 2002, VA has received three such requests.

I want to thank Ms. BERKLEY, the other members of the Subcommittee, and staff on both sides of the aisle for their work on the provisions incorporated in title two of the amendment. I also thank Chairman BUYER, Ranking Member EVANS, and Acting Ranking Member FILNER for their continued leadership.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3082, as amended.

Mr. SALAZAR. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. BRADLEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3082, as amended.

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

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to make improvements to small business, memorial affairs, education, and employment programs for veterans, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 50 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m.

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□ 1830

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. CAPITO) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

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#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

S. 1496, by the yeas and nays;

S. 203, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 5534, by the yeas and nays.

The first and third electronic votes will be conducted as 15-minute votes. The second vote in this series will be a 5-minute vote.