DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 275 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. 2684.

□ 1245

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. OBEY. Madam Speaker, I make a point of order against the consideration of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The gentleman will state his point of order.

Mr. OBEY. Madam Speaker, I make a point of order that the bill provides new discretionary budget authority in an amount which would exceed the applicable allocation made pursuant to section 302(b) of the Congressional Budget Act, and therefore violates section 302(f) of the Congressional Budget Act.

The most recent subcommittee allocations filed under section 302(b), as contained in House Report 106–288, allocate a total $68.633 billion in new discretionary budget authority to the Subcommittee on VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies. According to the scoring table from the Congressional Budget Office, the bill appropriates $71.632 billion in discretionary budget authority. Therefore, and as the CBO scoring table indicates, the bill exceeds its section 302(b) allocation by $2.999 billion. A point of order, therefore, should lie against its consideration under section 302(f) of the Budget Act.

The reason that the bill is scored as exceeding its allocation is that the Committee on Appropriations is apparently counting as an offset a $3 billion reduction in the borrowing authority of the TVA. This is authority for TVA to borrow from the public and has nothing to do with appropriations or amounts in this bill. Neither CBO nor OMB regard this so-called offset as producing any budget authority savings whatsoever. Therefore, the bill exceeds its allocation.

I should also note a second consequence. Because OMB does not recognize the $3 billion supposed offset, if this bill were enacted in its present form, it would trigger an automatic across-the-board sequestration of appropriations under the Budget Enforcement Act, in the amount of $3 billion. That would roughly be about a billion and a half dollars sequestration that would be required in the Defense budget and about a billion and a half dollars that would be required to be sequestered on the domestic side of the appropriations ledger.

Now, I recognize that the chairman of the Committee on Budget could produce a letter which, in essence, urges the Congress to ignore this financial fact, but the fact is that, if it chooses to do that, there will, in fact, be a sequestration under this bill. Because if we take a look at the OMB Sequestration Update Report to the President and Congress for Fiscal Year 2000, we will see that, on page 11, it states: ''Current OMB estimates of House action to date, unless offset, indicate that a sequester of $3.7 billion in budget authority and $2.9 billion in outlays would be triggered.''

The major amounts in question are related to this bill. If we take a look at the table sent down by the CBO on their budget analysis, on page 18, we will see that they report the same results.

So, therefore, I would suggest that this bill, for reasons that I have cited, should not be before the House. I would certainly say that, even if the Committee on Budget chairman produces a letter which claims that this bill is not $3 billion over its authorized allocation, the fact is that, according to the people who are charged by law with actually measuring the bill, it is; and, therefore, it will result in the automatic reduction in the other programs that are not in this bill that I have just cited.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there any other Member who wishes to be heard on the point of order?

Does the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) insist on his point of order?

Mr. OBEY. Madam Speaker, I have no desire to delay this bill, and so I guess what I would say is that I think I have demonstrated, by raising the point of order, that this bill, in fact, is not in compliance. If the House wishes to proceed and vote for a bill which is going to result in the kind of massive sequestration that I have just indicated, then so be it. That would be the House's choice.

So I guess I am in a position where, in order to contribute to the ability of the House's ability to do its business, I will withdraw the point of order, but I would caution every Member who intends to vote for this bill that, if they do so, they will in fact be imposing just such a sequestration on both the Defense budget and on the domestic programs.

With that, Madam Speaker, I withdraw my point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman withdraws his point of order.

The Chair designates the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) as Chairman of the Committee of the Whole, and requests the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BARRETT) to assume the chair temporarily.

□ 1250

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. 2684) making appropriations for the Department of Veteran Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes, with Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska (Chairman pro tempore) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

Under the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH).

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

Mr. Chairman, it is my pleasure to bring before the full House today H.R. 2684, the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 2000.

As most Members are aware, we originally expected to bring this bill to the floor before the August recess. However, the circumstance of the death of the Honorable Robert Mollohan made doing so impossible, and I wanted to begin today by expressing my deepest sympathy to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN), my friend and colleague, and his family on the death of his father.

As my colleagues all know, the senior Mr. Mollohan served so ably in representing West Virginia in this House for 18 years, for the 2 terms during the early 1950s and then for 7 consecutive terms from 1969 to 1983. I hope and trust that the recess period has offered a time for reflection and healing for my good friend and his family.

Prior to proceeding, Mr. Chairman, in discussing the bill before us, I would also like to offer my sincere recognition and thanks to the staff on both sides of the aisle for their hard work and assistance. As I have stated on numerous occasions on this floor, we, the Members of the House, are very fortunate to have dedicated staff willing to spend countless hours preparing these bills. The public is well served by all of our employees.

My personal thanks to Frank Cushing, Valerie Baldwin, Tim Peterson, Dena Baron, and Angela Snell on the majority side, and to Del Davis and Lee Alman for the minority. I would also offer a special thanks to Ron Anderson and John Simmons and Art Jutton of my personal staff for all their assistance throughout this very difficult process.

Moving now to H.R. 2684, I firmly believe that this is a good and fair bill. It is funded with less money overall than was provided last year in 1999. Indeed, to meet our commitment to stay within the spending levels anticipated by the 1997 Budget Agreement, we have trimmed $1.2 billion from the 1999 actual enacted level, $2.3 billion below the fiscal year 1999 CBO freeze level, and $3.4 billion from the President's budget request.

Perhaps more important, Mr. Chairman, we have made these reductions at

the same time we have provided an increase of $1.7 billion, the level provided in the Fiscal Year 2000 Budget resolution, for VA medical care. This is the largest increase ever in veterans medical health care. It also, I might add, fully funds all expiring contracts for HUD's section 8 housing program.

Moreover, although nearly every other program in this bill was funded at or below the 1999 level, we made a great effort to assure that reductions were taken judiciously to assure that only the fat, and not the meat, was cut from each program. This is not to suggest that many decisions were not difficult or painful. Several programs at NASA, for example, and the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation, the National Science Foundation, and at HUD, to name just a few, are excellent programs which, if we had more resources, deserve a greater level of support.

Unfortunately, putting this bill together and expecting passage is a tremendous balancing act, and we do not get there by playing favorites with a small set of programs at the expense of others. We do not get there merely by taking payroll money from one agency or department and giving it to another. We do not get there by assuming that certain programs are in the domain of one political party at the expense of the other party. For every vote one may pick up with this type of exercise one is likely to lose the same number.

It was, therefore, very important for us to craft a the bill that first took care of the so-called special needs, specifically VA medical care and expiring section 8 contracts, and then look fairly at every other program and project with an eye to trim but not to slash.

Mr. Chairman, I firmly believe we have accomplished that goal of objective fairness; and, as a result, this bill should be fully supported.

In the interest of brevity, I will not run through the funding levels of every program in this very detailed bill. However, given the regard that Members have for this bill, I believe it is important to highlight just a few of the major program levels.

Veterans compensation and pension benefits are fully funded. Veterans medical care is funded at $19 billion, an increase of $1.7 billion above the President's request and the 1999 level. I would repeat, this is the largest single-year increase ever in VA medical health.

Veterans medical and prosthetic research is provided $326 million, a $10 million increase over the budget request. All other VA programs, except for new construction, are funded either at or above the 1999 level.

HUD section 8 expiring contracts are fully funded at $10.5 billion. Funds are sufficient to maintain the subsidy for every single current participant in the program. So if my colleagues hear later on that this is going to put people out of their homes, do not believe it. This program is fully funded.

HUD's Public Housing Operating Fund, Native American Housing Block Grants, Housing for People with AIDS, and Housing for Special Populations accounts are all funded at the 1999 levels.

While all other HUD programs have been slightly reduced, great care was taken to make sure that they remain viable. In other words, they were trimmed, but not gutted.

EPA received a reduction from the 1999 level but is actually an increase over the President's request. I would repeat, this is an increase over the President's request for the EPA budget. I think that is an important statement of our party's concern for the environment. It is important to note that this was done to restore funding for State and local waste water and drinking water problems which had been slashed dramatically by the President.

EPA's research programs have been funded slightly above the budget request while the agency's operating programs received a very modest $2 million increase above 1999 level. All other EPA programs are more than adequately funded.

Federal Emergency Management Agency operating funds have been fully funded, including $20 million for the pre-disaster mitigation program.

FEMA's disaster relief program has been provided the annual appropriated level of $300 million as requested by the President; however, forward funding for expected disasters has not been included. These funds are subject to emergency provisions of the Budget Act; and, while they have not been provided at this time, I suspect that enough natural disasters will occur in the coming months so as to necessitate our appropriating some additional disaster relief funds at some point during fiscal year 2000 as we seem to have done every year in the recent past.

For NASA, both Space Station and Shuttle programs have been adequately funded. The committee's approach to funding other NASA programs included an attempt to determine which new or planned programs could be delayed without doing harm to core programs. While some programs are canceled or deferred, most of the proposed reductions are in program areas where growth has been significant over the past 2 years.

In the aggregate, the National Science Foundation has been reduced 1 percent below the 1999 level. However, it is important to note that NSF research has actually been increased by $8.5 million over the 1999 level.

□ 1300

The only significant reduction within NSF occurs in the Major Research Equipment account, a $33.5 million reduction from the 1999 level, and reflects reductions, closings or completions of projects as requested by the President. Because of programmatic concerns as well as a lack of resources, this bill does not include funds requested by the President to at this time construct a new terra-scale computing facility. It was felt within our legislative community and the scientific community that that could not be accomplished this year.

Mr. Chairman, I have stated many times throughout this process that this is not a perfect bill. Indeed, had we had more money, I would have done some things differently. If this were not a product of bipartisan concern, I most certainly would do things differently. Nevertheless, this bill has been put together with the resources available to us in the spirit of the budget agreement most all of us agreed to, as well as in the spirit of bipartisan cooperation and understanding.

It is not perfect, but it is a good bill which deserves bipartisan support. So that we can take this House bill to conference and hopefully work for an even better legislative product, I urge every Member to support its final passage.

Mr. Chairman, I include for the RECORD the budget tables representing the mandatory and discretionary spending provided in H.R. 2648.

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2000 (H.R. 2684)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 1999 Enacted	FY 2000 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
TITLE I					
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS					
Veterans Benefits Administration					
Compensation and pensions	21,857,058	21,568,364	21,568,364	-288,694	
Readjustment benefits	1,175,000	1,469,000	1,469,000	+294,000	
Veterans insurance and indemnities	46,450	28,670	28,670	-17,780	
Veterans housing benefit program fund program account (indefinite)	300,266	282,342	282,342	-17,924	
(Limitation on direct loans)	(300)	(300)	(300)		
Administrative expenses	159,121	156,958	156,958	-2,163	
Education loan fund program account	1	1	1		
(Limitation on direct loans)	(3)	(3)	(3)		
Administrative expenses	206	214	214	+8	
Vocational rehabilitation loans program account	55	57	57	+2	
(Limitation on direct loans)	(2,401)	(2,531)	(2,531)	(+130)	
Administrative expenses	400	415	415	+15	
Native American Veteran Housing Loan Program Account	515	520	520	+5	
Total, Veterans Benefits Administration	23,539,072	23,506,541	23,506,541	-32,531	
Veterans Health Administration					
Medical care	16,528,000	16,671,000	18,371,000	+1,843,000	+1,700,000
Delayed equipment obligation	778,000	635,000	635,000	-143,000	
Total	17,306,000	17,306,000	19,006,000	+1,700,000	+1,700,000
(Transfer to general operating expenses)	(-27,420)			(+27,420)	
Medical care cost recovery collections:					
Offsetting receipts	-583,000	-608,000	-608,000	-25,000	
Appropriations (indefinite)	583,000	608,000	608,000	+25,000	
Total available	(17,889,000)	(17,914,000)	(19,614,000)	(+1,725,000)	(+1,700,000)
Medical and prosthetic research	316,000	316,000	326,000	+10,000	+10,000
Medical administration and miscellaneous operating expenses	63,000	61,200	61,200	-1,800	
General Post Fund, National Homes:					
Loan program account (by transfer)	(7)	(7)	(7)		
(Limitation on direct loans)	(70)	(70)	(70)		
Administrative expenses (by transfer)	(54)	(54)	(54)		
General post fund (transfer out)	(-61)	(-61)	(-61)		
Total, Veterans Health Administration	17,685,000	17,683,200	19,393,200	+1,708,200	+1,710,000
Departmental Administration					
General operating expenses	855,661	912,353	886,000	+30,339	-26,353
Offsetting receipts	(38,960)	(36,754)	(36,754)	(-2,206)	
Total, Program Level	(894,621)	(949,107)	(922,754)	(+28,133)	(-26,353)
(Transfer from medical care)	(27,420)			(-27,420)	
(Transfer from national cemetery)	(90)			(-90)	
(Transfer from inspector general)	(30)			(-30)	
National Cemetery Administration	92,006	97,000	97,000	+4,994	
(Transfer to general operating expenses)	(-90)			(+90)	
Office of Inspector General	36,000	43,200	38,500	+2,500	-4,700
(Transfer to general operating expenses)	(-30)			(+30)	
Construction, major projects	142,300	60,140	34,700	-107,600	-25,440
Construction, minor projects	175,000	175,000	102,300	-72,700	-72,700
Grants for construction of State extended care facilities	90,000	40,000	80,000	-10,000	+40,000
Grants for the construction of State veterans cemeteries	10,000	11,000	11,000	+1,000	
Capital asset fund		10,000			-10,000
Total, Departmental Administration	1,400,967	1,348,693	1,249,500	-151,467	-99,193
Total, title I, Department of Veterans Affairs	42,625,039	42,538,434	44,149,241	+1,524,202	+1,610,807
(By transfer)	(61)	(61)	(61)		
(Limitation on direct loans)	(2,774)	(2,904)	(2,904)	(+130)	
Consisting of:					
Mandatory	(23,378,774)	(23,348,376)	(23,348,376)	(-30,398)	
Discretionary	(19,246,265)	(19,190,058)	(20,800,865)	(+1,554,600)	(+1,610,807)
TITLE II					
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT					
Public and Indian Housing					
Housing Certificate Fund	8,326,542	11,522,095	10,540,135	+2,213,593	-981,960
(By transfer)		(183,000)	(183,000)	(+183,000)	
Housing set-asides:					
Expiring section 8 contracts	(9,600,000)	(10,640,135)	(10,540,135)	(+940,135)	(-100,000)
Section 8 relocation assistance	(433,542)	(156,000)		(-433,542)	(-156,000)
Regional opportunity counseling	(10,000)	(20,000)		(-10,000)	(-20,000)
Welfare to work housing vouchers	(283,000)	(144,400)		(-283,000)	(-144,400)
Contract administration		(209,000)			(-209,000)
Incremental vouchers		(346,560)			(-346,560)
Administrative fee change		(6,000)			(-6,000)
Section 8 rescission	(-2,000,000)			(+2,000,000)	
Subtotal	(8,326,542)	(11,522,095)	(10,540,135)	(+2,213,593)	(-981,960)

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2000 (H.R. 2684)—Continued
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 1999 Enacted	FY 2000 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Public housing capital fund	3,000,000	2,555,000	2,555,000	-445,000	
Public housing operating fund	2,818,000	3,003,000	2,818,000		-185,000
Subtotal	5,818,000	5,558,000	5,373,000	-445,000	-185,000
Drug elimination grants for low-income housing	310,000	310,000	290,000	-20,000	-20,000
Revitalization of severely distressed public housing (HOPE VI)	625,000	625,000	575,000	-50,000	-50,000
Indian housing block grant	620,000	620,000	620,000		
Indian housing loan guarantee fund program account	6,000	6,000	6,000		
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(68,881)	(71,956)	(71,956)	(+3,075)	
Total, Public and Indian Housing	15,705,542	18,641,095	17,404,135	+1,698,593	-1,236,960
Community Planning and Development					
Rural housing and economic development	25,000	20,000		-25,000	-20,000
Housing opportunities for persons with AIDS	215,000	240,000	215,000		-25,000
Additional provisions - Division A, P.L. 105-277	10,000			-10,000	
Community development block grants	4,750,000	4,775,000	4,500,200	-249,800	-274,800
Emergency funding	20,000			-20,000	
Section 108 loan guarantees:					
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(1,261,000)	(1,261,000)	(1,087,000)	(-174,000)	(-174,000)
Credit subsidy	29,000	29,000	25,000	-4,000	-4,000
Administrative expenses	1,000	1,000	1,000		
Brownfields redevelopment	25,000	50,000	20,000	-5,000	-30,000
Regional connections		50,000			-50,000
Regional empowerment zone initiative		50,000			-50,000
Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities Additional provisions - Division A, P.L. 105-277	45,000			-45,000	
America's private investment companies:					
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)		(1,000,000)			(-1,000,000)
Credit subsidy		37,000			-37,000
Redevelopment of abandoned buildings initiative		50,000			-50,000
HOME investment partnerships program	1,600,000	1,610,000	1,580,000	-20,000	-30,000
Homeless assistance grants	975,000	1,020,000	970,000	-5,000	-50,000
Homeless assistance demonstration project		5,000			-5,000
Total, Community planning and development	7,695,000	7,937,000	7,311,200	-383,800	-625,800
Housing Programs					
Housing for special populations	854,000	854,000	854,000		
Housing for the elderly	(660,000)	(660,000)	(660,000)		
Housing for the disabled	(194,000)	(194,000)	(194,000)		
Federal Housing Administration					
FHA - Mutual mortgage insurance program account:					
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(140,000,000)	(120,000,000)	(140,000,000)		(+20,000,000)
(Limitation on direct loans)	(100,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(-50,000)	
Administrative expenses	328,888	331,000	328,888		-2,112
Offsetting receipts	-529,000			+529,000	
FHA - General and special risk program account:					
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(18,100,000)	(18,100,000)	(18,100,000)		
(Limitation on direct loans)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)		
Administrative expenses	211,455	64,000	64,000	-147,455	
Administrative expenses (unobligated balances)		(147,000)	(147,000)	(+147,000)	
Negative subsidy	-125,000	-75,000	-75,000	+50,000	
Subsidy	81,000			-81,000	
Subsidy (unobligated balances)		(153,000)	(153,000)	(+153,000)	
Total, Federal Housing Administration	-32,657	320,000	317,888	+350,545	-2,112
Government National Mortgage Association					
Guarantees of mortgage-backed securities loan guarantee program account:					
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(200,000,000)	(200,000,000)	(200,000,000)		
Administrative expenses	9,383	15,383	9,383		-6,000
Offsetting receipts	-370,000	-422,000	-422,000	-52,000	
Policy Development and Research					
Research and technology	47,500	50,000	42,500	-5,000	-7,500
Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity					
Fair housing activities	40,000	47,000	37,500	-2,500	-9,500
Office of Lead Hazard Control					
Lead hazard reduction	80,000	80,000	70,000	-10,000	-10,000
Management and Administration					
Salaries and expenses	456,843	502,000	456,843		-45,157
(By transfer, limitation on FHA corporate funds)	(518,000)	(518,000)	(518,000)		
(By transfer, GNMA)	(9,383)	(9,383)	(9,383)		
(By transfer, Community Planning & Development)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)		
(By transfer, Title VI)	(200)	(150)	(150)	(-50)	
(By transfer, Indian Housing)	(400)	(200)	(200)	(-200)	
Total, Salaries and expenses	(985,826)	(1,030,733)	(985,576)	(-250)	(-45,157)
Y2K conversion (emergency funding)	12,200			-12,200	
Office of Inspector General	49,567	38,000	40,000	-9,567	+2,000
(By transfer, limitation on FHA corporate funds)	(22,343)	(22,343)	(22,343)		
(By transfer from Drug Elimination Grants)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)		
Total, Office of Inspector General	(81,910)	(70,343)	(72,343)	(-9,567)	(+2,000)

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2000 (H.R. 2684)—Continued
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 1999 Enacted	FY 2000 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight	16,000	19,493	19,493	+3,493	.....
Offsetting receipts	-16,000	-19,493	-19,493	-3,493	.....
Administrative Provisions					
Single Family Property Disposition	-400,000	.....	.....	+400,000	.....
Calculation of downpayment	15,000	.....	.....	-15,000	.....
FHA increase in loan amounts	-83,000	.....	.....	+83,000	.....
GSE user fee	.....	-10,000	.....	.....	+10,000
Annual contribution (transfer out)	.....	(-79,000)	(-79,000)	(-79,000)	.....
Annual contributions (transfer out)	.....	(-104,000)	(-104,000)	(-104,000)	.....
Sec. 212 Rescission	.....	.....	-74,400	-74,400	-74,400
Sec. 213 National Cities in Schools	.....	.....	5,000	+5,000	+5,000
Sec. 214 Moving to Work	.....	.....	5,000	+5,000	+5,000
Total, administrative provisions	-468,000	-10,000	-64,400	+403,600	-54,400
Total, title II, Department of Housing and Urban Development	24,079,378	28,052,478	26,057,049	+1,977,671	-1,995,429
Appropriations	(24,047,178)	(28,052,478)	(26,131,449)	(+2,084,271)	(-1,921,029)
Rescission	.....	.....	(-74,400)	(-74,400)	(-74,400)
Emergency appropriations	(32,200)	.....	.....	(-32,200)	.....
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(359,361,000)	(340,361,000)	(359,187,000)	(-174,000)	(+18,826,000)
(Limitation on corporate funds)	(561,326)	(561,076)	(561,076)	(-250)	.....
TITLE III					
INDEPENDENT AGENCIES					
American Battle Monuments Commission					
Salaries and expenses	26,431	26,467	28,467	+2,036	+2,000
Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board					
Salaries and expenses	6,500	7,500	9,000	+2,500	+1,500
Department of the Treasury					
Community Development Financial Institutions					
Community development financial institutions fund program account	80,000	110,000	70,000	-10,000	-40,000
Microenterprise technical assistance	.....	15,000	.....	.....	-15,000
Additional provisions - Division A, P.L. 105-277	15,000	.....	.....	-15,000	.....
Total	95,000	125,000	70,000	-25,000	-55,000
Consumer Product Safety Commission					
Salaries and expenses	47,000	50,500	47,000	.....	-3,500
Corporation for National and Community Service					
National and community service programs operating expenses	425,500	545,500	.....	-425,500	-545,500
Additional provisions - Division A, P.L. 105-277	10,000	.....	.....	-10,000	.....
Office of Inspector General	3,000	3,000	3,000	.....	.....
Total	438,500	548,500	3,000	-435,500	-545,500
United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims					
Salaries and expenses	10,195	11,450	11,450	+1,255	.....
Department of Defense - Civil					
Cemeterial Expenses, Army					
Salaries and expenses	11,666	12,473	12,473	+807	.....
Environmental Protection Agency					
Science and Technology	650,000	642,483	645,000	-5,000	+2,517
Transfer from Hazardous Substance Superfund	40,000	37,271	35,000	-5,000	-2,271
Additional provisions - Division A, P.L. 105-277	10,000	.....	.....	-10,000	.....
Subtotal, Science and Technology	700,000	679,754	680,000	-20,000	+246
Environmental Programs and Management	1,848,000	2,046,993	1,850,000	+2,000	-196,993
Transfer to STAG (P.L. 106-31)	-1,300	.....	.....	+1,300	.....
Subtotal, EPM	1,846,700	2,046,993	1,850,000	+3,300	-196,993
Office of Inspector General	31,154	29,409	30,000	-1,154	+591
Transfer from Hazardous Substance Superfund	12,237	10,753	11,000	-1,237	+247
Subtotal, OIG	43,391	40,162	41,000	-2,391	+838
Buildings and facilities	56,948	62,630	62,600	+5,652	-30
Hazardous Substance Superfund	1,400,000	1,500,000	1,450,000	+50,000	-50,000
Delay of obligation	100,000	.....	.....	-100,000	.....
Transfer to Office of Inspector General	-12,237	-10,753	-11,000	+1,237	-247
Transfer to Science and Technology	-40,000	-37,271	-35,000	+5,000	+2,271
Subtotal, Hazardous Substance Superfund	1,447,763	1,451,976	1,404,000	-43,763	-47,976
Leaking Underground Storage Tank Program	72,500	71,556	60,000	-12,500	-11,556
Oil spill response	15,000	15,618	15,000	.....	-618

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2000 (H.R. 2684)—Continued
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 1999 Enacted	FY 2000 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
State and Tribal Assistance Grants	2,506,750	1,953,000	2,315,000	-191,750	+362,000
Categorical grants	880,000	884,957	884,957	+4,957	
Additional provisions - Division A, P.L. 105-277	20,000			-20,000	
Transfer from EMP (P.L. 106-31)	1,300			-1,300	
Subtotal, STAG	3,408,050	2,837,957	3,199,957	-208,093	+362,000
Total, EPA	7,590,352	7,206,646	7,312,557	-277,795	+105,911
Executive Office of the President					
Office of Science and Technology Policy	5,026	5,201	5,108	+82	-93
Council on Environmental Quality and Office of Environmental Quality	2,675	3,020	2,827	+152	-193
Total	7,701	8,221	7,935	+234	-286
Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation					
Office of Inspector General (transfer)	(34,666)	(33,666)	(33,666)	(-1,000)	
Federal Emergency Management Agency					
Disaster relief	307,745	300,000	300,000	-7,745	
(Transfer out)		(-3,000)	(-3,000)	(-3,000)	
Emergency funding	2,036,000	2,480,425		-2,036,000	-2,480,425
Pre-disaster mitigation		30,000			-30,000
(Transfer out)		(-3,000)			(+3,000)
Disaster assistance direct loan program account:					
State share loan	1,355	1,295	1,295	-60	
(Limitation on direct loans)	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)		
Administrative expenses	440	420	420	-20	
Salaries and expenses	171,138	189,720	177,720	+6,582	-12,000
Y2K conversion (emergency funding)	3,641			-3,641	
Office of Inspector General	5,400	8,015	6,515	+1,115	-1,500
Emergency management planning and assistance	240,824	250,850	280,787	+39,963	+29,937
(By transfer)		(6,000)	(3,000)	(+3,000)	(-3,000)
Y2K conversion (emergency funding)	3,711			-3,711	
Radiological emergency preparedness fund	12,849			-12,849	
Collection of fees	-12,849			+12,849	
New language		-1,000	-1,000	-1,000	
Emergency food and shelter program	100,000	125,000	110,000	+10,000	-15,000
Flood map modernization fund		5,000	5,000	+5,000	
National insurance development fund		(3,730)	(3,730)	(+3,730)	
National Flood Insurance Fund (limitation on administrative expenses):					
Salaries and expenses	(22,685)	(24,131)	(24,333)	(+1,648)	(+202)
Flood mitigation	(78,464)	(78,912)	(78,710)	(+246)	(-202)
(Transfer out)		(-20,000)	(-20,000)	(-20,000)	
National flood mitigation fund		12,000			-12,000
(By transfer)		(20,000)	(20,000)	(+20,000)	
Total, Federal Emergency Management Agency	2,870,254	3,401,725	880,737	-1,989,517	-2,520,988
Appropriations	(826,902)	(921,300)	(880,737)	(+53,835)	(-40,563)
Emergency funding	(2,043,352)	(2,480,425)		(-2,043,352)	(-2,480,425)
General Services Administration					
Consumer Information Center Fund	2,619	2,622	2,622	+3	
National Aeronautics and Space Administration					
Human space flight	5,480,000	5,638,000	5,388,000	-92,000	-250,000
Science, aeronautics and technology	5,653,900	5,424,700	4,975,700	-678,200	-449,000
Mission support	2,511,100	2,494,900	2,269,300	-241,800	-225,600
Office of Inspector General	20,000	20,800	20,800	+800	
Total, NASA	13,665,000	13,578,400	12,653,800	-1,011,200	-924,600
National Credit Union Administration					
Central liquidity facility:					
(Limitation on direct loans)	(600,000)	(600,000)		(-600,000)	(-600,000)
(Limitation on administrative expenses, corporate funds)	(176)	(257)	(257)	(+81)	
Revolving loan program	2,000		1,000	-1,000	+1,000
National Science Foundation					
Research and related activities	2,770,000	3,004,000	2,778,500	+8,500	-225,500
Major research equipment	90,000	85,000	56,500	-33,500	-28,500
Education and human resources	662,000	678,000	660,000	-2,000	-18,000
Salaries and expenses	144,000	149,000	146,500	+2,500	-2,500
Office of Inspector General	5,200	5,450	5,325	+125	-125
Total, NSF	3,671,200	3,921,450	3,646,825	-24,375	-274,625
Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation					
Payment to the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation	90,000	90,000	80,000	-10,000	-10,000
Selective Service System					
Salaries and expenses	24,176	25,250	7,000	-17,176	-18,250
Y2K conversion (emergency funding)	250			-250	
Total	24,426	25,250	7,000	-17,426	-18,250

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2000 (H.R. 2684)—Continued
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 1999 Enacted	FY 2000 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Total, title III, Independent agencies	28,558,844	29,016,204	24,773,866	-3,784,978	-4,242,338
Appropriations	(26,515,242)	(26,535,779)	(24,773,866)	(-1,741,376)	(-1,761,913)
Emergency funding	(2,043,602)	(2,480,425)	.....	(-2,043,602)	(-2,480,425)
(Limitation on administrative expenses)	(101,149)	(103,043)	(103,043)	(+1,894)	.....
(Limitation on direct loans)	(625,000)	(625,000)	(25,000)	(-600,000)	(-600,000)
(Limitation on corporate funds)	(176)	(257)	(257)	(+81)	.....
TITLE IV - GENERAL PROVISIONS					
Tennessee Valley Authority Borrowing Authority	.....	.....	-3,000,000	-3,000,000	-3,000,000
Grand total	95,263,261	99,607,116	91,980,156	-3,283,105	-7,626,960
Current year, FY 2000	(95,263,261)	(99,607,116)	(91,980,156)	(-3,283,105)	(-7,626,960)
Appropriations	(93,187,459)	(97,126,691)	(92,128,956)	(-1,058,503)	(-4,997,735)
Rescission	.....	.....	(-74,400)	(-74,400)	(-74,400)
Emergency funding	(2,075,802)	(2,480,425)	.....	(-2,075,802)	(-2,480,425)
(By transfer)	(34,727)	(236,727)	(236,727)	(+202,000)	.....
(Transfer out)	(-61)	(-203,061)	(-203,061)	(-203,000)	.....
(Limitation on administrative expenses)	(101,149)	(103,043)	(103,043)	(+1,894)	.....
(Limitation on direct loans)	(846,655)	(799,860)	(199,860)	(-646,795)	(-600,000)
(Limitation on guaranteed loans)	(359,361,000)	(340,361,000)	(359,187,000)	(-174,000)	(+18,826,000)
(Limitation on corporate funds)	(561,502)	(561,333)	(561,333)	(-169)	.....
Total amounts in this bill	95,263,261	99,607,116	91,980,156	-3,283,105	-7,626,960
Scorekeeping adjustments	-3,145,802	-6,294,000	-2,090,000	+1,055,802	+4,204,000
Total mandatory and discretionary	92,117,459	93,313,116	89,890,156	-2,227,303	-3,422,960
Mandatory	22,312,774	21,258,376	21,258,376	-1,054,398	.....
Discretionary	69,804,685	72,054,740	68,631,780	-1,172,905	-3,422,960

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

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

Before I begin, Mr. Chairman, I want to express my sincere gratitude to the Speaker and to both the majority and minority leadership for their consideration of my personal circumstances regarding the passing of my father immediately preceding the August recess. It was a courtesy which I and my family certainly appreciated. Dad was honored to serve his constituency in the U.S. House of Representatives, and it is gestures like this that explain why he was so honored and why I too am honored to serve in this body.

I would also like to extend thanks to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) for his comments today, which were certainly appreciated, and for his graciously supporting my request to postpone consideration of this bill.

Mr. Chairman, this is the first year for both the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) and myself in our respective roles as chairman and ranking member of the Subcommittee on VA, HUD and Independent Agencies bill, and I have been impressed by the chairman's capability and by the cooperation which he and his very able staff have extended to the minority. I am pleased to have been a part of that process, even as I remain concerned, Mr. Chairman, about the result that we have achieved to this point.

The bill before us has enough serious shortcomings that it is now under a veto threat from the President. However, I know the chairman shares many of my concerns and is committed to addressing these concerns as the bill moves forward, and I look forward to working with him in that regard.

Unfortunately, the bill provides inadequate funding levels in most major areas. Let me make clear, however, that I do not attribute these shortcomings to the chairman of the subcommittee. Regrettably, he was faced with a situation not of his own making. He has tried to do the best he could with the hand that he was dealt.

The basic problem is that the majority leadership instructed the Subcommittee on VA, HUD and Independent Agencies to produce a bill that cuts total spending below this year's level. As a result, the bill now before us provides an increase in veterans medical care but cuts most other agencies and programs, by small amounts in some cases and by large amounts in others.

Overall, including last year's emergency funding, the bill's total for fiscal year 2000 is about $3 billion below fiscal year 1999; $1 billion for emergency funding is excluded. And note that these figures represent reductions in actual dollar amounts, before any adjustment for inflation or otherwise. In terms of purchasing power, the cuts are even larger. How or why these limits were decided, I do not know. But I do know the damage that would be caused if this bill is not substantially changed as the process moves forward.

Let me begin with NASA, because that agency is slated for some of the largest cuts. Overall, the bill reduces the budget for NASA by $1 billion below current year spending. In short, these cuts seriously jeopardize our Nation's leadership in exploration and development of space.

The bill makes an 11 percent cut in space science, the area that funds the planetary probes and space-based astronomical observatories that have generated so much interest and excitement over the past several years. It makes a 20 percent reduction in earth sciences. And in both areas the cuts are heavily targeted to planning for future missions and to development of the next generation of technology, which is fundamentally important to basic research.

Over the past 5 years, NASA's budget has already been reduced by almost $1 billion. Simply put, the NASA budget should not be reduced any further. Our space programs advance human knowledge, foster development with wide-ranging uses, generate public interest in science, especially among our young people, and help us better understand what is happening here on Earth with our weather, our climate, and our environment. These cuts are not what our constituencies want, nor are they in the national interest.

The second major area of concern about this bill is housing. I am pleased the chairman was able to provide for the renewal of all expiring section 8 housing contracts. However, HUD fares relatively poorly in many other areas and needs additional funding in the section 8 area. We have worsening shortages of affordable housing in many parts of the country as the economic boom drives up rents beyond the reach of low-wage workers. HUD reports that more than 5 million very low-income families are spending more than half of their income for rent but are, at the same time, receiving no federal housing assistance whatsoever. The cuts in this bill would make that problem worse.

Public housing would be particularly hard hit: under the bill, basic funding for local housing authorities is cut $515 million below the fiscal 1999 level. Public housing exists throughout the country in small and medium-sized cities as well as large ones. It provides homes for more than 3 million people, more than 1 million of whom are age 62 or older.

The cuts in this bill will mean reduced staff, more deferred maintenance and a growing backlog of capital needs. They threaten to make the good housing worse while hampering efforts to fix the bad.

Another problem is the lack of any funding for incremental housing assistance vouchers. Last year, the VA–HUD bill funded 50,000 new housing vouchers, targeted specifically to helping families make the transition from welfare to work. The number of new vouchers funded by this bill is zero.

I have similar concerns about the large and small cuts in a wide range of other HUD housing programs; CDBG, homeless assistance grants, housing for people with AIDS, brownfields redevelopment, and lead paint hazard abatement, to name a few examples. I think it is unfortunate the bill rejects every one of the administration's proposals to spur development in areas left behind in the economic boom.

Turning to veterans, Mr. Chairman, I am pleased that the committee found a way to provide a $1.7 billion increase for veterans medical care. Although that amount falls short of the $3 billion increase that veterans' groups say is needed to keep up with the needs of war veterans, $1.7 billion is a substantial improvement. However, medical care is not the only area of concern at the VA.

The bill reduces the construction accounts by more than 50 percent below fiscal year 1999. Failing to update and maintain aging hospitals and other veterans facilities will only lead to more problems later.

Moving on to EPA, Mr. Chairman, I am pleased the committee provided a $106 million increase above the administration's request. Unfortunately, that still leaves the agency $278 million below this year's level. Specific programs that will suffer as a result of this cut include the Clean Water Action Plan and the program of pesticide reregistration mandated by the Food Quality Protection Act.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I should mention the bill's complete elimination of the Americorps program. This was not a choice that our subcommittee made, but rather one that was imposed at a later stage. Fundamentally, AmeriCorps gives young people an opportunity to do community service in exchange for a very modest stipend and help in financing their future education, which is just the sort of thing we want our young people to be doing. Can we really no longer afford the $400 or $500 million needed to continue this worthwhile effort?

I might better understand all of the cuts made by this bill if we were in a time of fiscal crisis, Mr. Chairman. But we are not. Rather, we are in a period of unprecedented prosperity. The federal budget deficit has declined steadily every year since 1992, and last year it turned into a surplus for the first time in 3 decades. Every projection shows that surplus continuing to grow. Yet we are told by the majority leadership that we do not even have enough money to continue many programs in the VA–HUD bill at the current year's level. I find that incredible. If we cannot adequately meet the needs of veterans' programs, affordable housing, and scientific research during these prosperous times, then when can we?

Even more discouraging is the fact that the majority's budget plans call

for this situation not only to continue year after year, but to actually get steadily worse. And here, of course, I am not referring to the majority on this committee but rather to the majority leadership of the House. The leadership's budget resolution calls for total appropriations for domestic programs in fiscal year 2001 to be less than those in fiscal year 2000. By fiscal year 2004, the resolution calls for domestic appropriations to have fallen by more than 20 percent in inflation-adjusted terms. Make no mistake about it, that is what pays for the nearly $800 billion tax cut that was passed by the Congress last month.

The vision for the future presented by that budget plan is that every year we do a little less; that every year our public housing gets a little more dilapidated; that every year we fund a little less basic science research; that every year the standard of medical care for our veterans goes down a bit; that every year the backlog of sewage treatment and safe drinking water needs gets a little bigger. And in the view of the majority's budget plan, all this is acceptable because it allows a huge tax cut bill to be enacted.

This steady decline in public services is not my vision for the future, nor do I think it is our constituents' vision for the future or, indeed, the vision of many of my colleagues in this Chamber. However, that is the path that this Congress appears to be headed down. And if this bill is not fixed before it is presented to the White House, we will have taken another big step down that path of decline.

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

Mr. Chairman, I yield 5½ minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN), a member of the subcommittee.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I rise today in support of the VA–HUD appropriations bill.

I want to commend the chairman, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), and the ranking member, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN), for all their hard work on this bill. The chairman and his very able staff were faced with a Herculean task of making this bill work while staying within the caps adopted by the 1997 budget agreement. And in the end, I think they found a good balance.

While I am supportive of our work together on behalf of science, space exploration, the environment, and other programs, I specifically want to discuss two provisions in today's bill. The first is veterans medical care. Last October I signed a letter to the President, along with 70 Members of the House and Senate on a bipartisan basis, asking the President to provide an extra $1.7 billion in his fiscal year 2000 budget submission for veterans medical care.

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It appears that our plea fell on deaf ears. While the President sent his budget to Capitol Hill in February, it flatlined spending for veterans' medical care. In plain English, his budget did not provide even one extra dollar over last year's amount for veterans' medical care. So again it was left to Congress to provide the critical additional funding for veterans' medical care.

This is not a partisan issue. Both Republicans and Democrats have worked together to provide money above and beyond the President's budget request for the past 4 years, and this year is no exception.

However, the bottom line is that the President's flatlined request shows how some in his administration are out of touch with the need of our veterans.

And it did not help and has not helped that the VA's leadership has been missing in action during this process. Our April public hearing on the VA's budget was an unqualified disappointment with Secretary West and Dr. Kizer, proving how out of touch they are with their inability to answer even the most basic questions before our committee and before the cameras.

Fortunately, with strong bipartisan support, this year's budget passed by the House called for an extra $1.7 billion for veterans' medical care. Veterans service organizations are right to demand, at a bare minimum, Congress provide a $1.7 billion increase. They are also rightly owed a VA that actually advocates for veterans and puts veterans' health care needs and services above so-called managed care goals, which put dollar savings before patient protections.

That is why I am pleased that the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) agreed to my request and others to provide this extra funding for a total of $19 billion for veterans' medical care. For countless veterans, many older, sicker, some nearly 100 percent dependent on the VA system for care, this additional money will be increased access to service and improve quality of care.

Unfortunately, this will not be true for all veterans. Despite this increase, veterans in the northeast and in my State of New Jersey will not see one extra dime for veterans' medical care. To provide our Veterans Integrated Service Network 3 with the same amount of funding as fiscal year 1999, Congress would have to provide a $2.4 billion amount above and beyond the President's request. However, our increase is an important improvement and reflects the amount set forth in this year's budget resolution.

I suspect we may see some finger-pointing and hear blame today from all sides. But the bottom line is that this Congress, in a bipartisan way, provided the extra money, real dollars, $1.7 billion, that did not come from surplus or assumed revenues. And for this reason alone, I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Second, this bill contains important funding for essential housing for the elderly and individuals with disabilities of all ages. As a result of my amendment and others which were offered during the subcommittee consideration of the bill, H.R. 2684 includes an additional $10 million each for two important programs. Next year we will provide $660 million for Section 202 housing for the elderly and $194 million for Section 811 housing for individuals with disabilities.

Finally, this bill continues a set-aside program that this committee started 3 years ago to meet the housing needs for people with disabilities. Our committee included $25 million for tenant-based rental assistance to ensure decent, safe, and affordable housing in communities with low-income individuals with disabilities. Further, it includes language directing the Secretary of HUD to use his waiver authority to allow nonprofit organizations to apply directly for these funds instead of going through public housing authorities.

It is my belief that that change will provide better access for housing for more individuals with disabilities. HUD has largely been deficient in meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities seeking affordable housing but was very quick to take credit for all these funds last year even though the administration's budget request did not request one dime for the program.

I am pleased that Congress took the lead again to provide the funding and it should receive the credit, as well. Again, I commend the chairman and the ranking member for their work and support of this bill and appropriation.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. Obey), the distinguished ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Chairman, this bill is an absolutely wonderful bill unless my colleagues think that the Congress ought to spend our time responding to the legitimate needs of the American people. If they do, then it turns out to be a bit of a turkey.

I do not blame the chairman of the subcommittee for that fact. He is a good man, and he is doing the best that he can under a ridiculous budget situation. But let me tell my colleagues what is wrong with this bill and why I intend to vote against it.

First of all, the bill is $2 billion below the request and $1 billion below last year for housing. It is $1 billion below last year for science at NASA. It is $275 million below the request of the National Science Foundation.

The administration's budget for veterans was totally inadequate. Everybody knows that. I do not know of any Member of the Congress who supports it. This bill itself is $1.3 billion below what the veterans groups regard as necessary to fund veterans' health care. The rule under which this bill is

being considered denied us the opportunity to add $750 million to take care of at least half of that shortfall by delaying for 1 year the capital gains giveaway that was in the recent tax bill that just passed. That alone is reason enough to vote against this bill.

The bill also zeros out funds for Americorps, which is a high Presidential priority. As I indicated when I made my point of order, in spite of all of that, this bill is $3 billion out of whack in its accounting because it has a ''let's pretend'' cut in TVA that does not save a dime. It then uses that ''let's pretend'' cut to fund $3 billion worth of money for other programs. But in fact, since neither the Congressional Budget Office or the Office of Management and Budget recognizes it as a real cut, this bill will trigger a sequestration and an across-the-board cut of all domestic programs of $1.5 billion; and we will trigger a defense cut of about $1.5 billion, as well.

On the issue of housing, I would simply like to make this observation. This bill accelerates the already rapid separation of this country into two separate societies. A report issued this past weekend by the Center for Budget Priorities indicated that the lower two-fifths of this country in terms of income are actually losing economic ground, while the top one-fifth are enjoying unprecedented prosperity.

Overall, the personal incomes of Americans have increased by about 20 percent over the past 22 years. But that increase has been distributed in a very even manner. Incomes at the top have doubled, while incomes for the 50 million households at the bottom have fallen.

This is taking place at the same time that housing costs have been rising and the number of rental units that were affordable to low-income families has been shrinking at a dramatic pace.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development estimates that the number of rental units available to very low-income families dropped by $900,000 just between 1993 and 1995, and the number of very low-income families who must spend more than 50 percent of their income on rent has jumped from 3.2 million in 1978 to over 5 million people today.

In other words, low-wage families are getting squeezed twice. First because their wages are not keeping pace, and secondly because housing costs are chewing up more and more of their meager paychecks. And neither party, in my view, is doing enough to deal with that problem. This bill makes the situation markedly worse. It cuts about $1 billion below last year's level from federal housing programs at about $2 billion below the request at a time when construction and rehabilitation costs are rising much faster than other costs in the economy.

Anybody who believes that this continued bifurcation of America can produce the kind of stable and peaceful and productive society that we all profess to want is simply not seeing things clearly.

I would also point out that Business Week carried a very interesting article which states in part: ''We have demonstrated that scientific research has created the New Economy, but now we are concerned that we are being trampled on as a reward for creating the economy that made the surplus possible.''

Those were the words of a scientist in describing the need to continue to invest in science programs that have been at the root of our ability to continue to expand this economy. Politicians brag a lot about what we have done to keep the economy going, but mostly what keeps the economy going is the right investment decisions both by the private sector and by the Government. And we are falling far short in meeting those obligations in science.

Allan Bromley, former science advisor to President Bush, says, ''Congress has lost sight of the critical role science plays in expanding the economy.'' I would very much agree with that.

So I would simply say there are a lot of good reasons to vote against this bill. We ought to be able to do better by veterans. We ought to be able to do better by housing. We ought to be able to do better by the basic science budget. And until they do, this Member is going to vote ''no.''

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, could you tell us how much time we have remaining?

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). The gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) has 14½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) has 13 minutes remaining.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 1 minute to just respond to a couple of points that have been made.

There is no question that we are below last year's funding level in this bill, and that is in keeping with the budget agreement. But let me just say a couple of things. If we take out of the HUD budget the $4 billion budget gimmick that the President used, and by ''gimmick'' I mean it was a $4 billion appropriation in the HUD budget and the President specifically said in his request that this money not be spent until the year 2001. That money is not available in this budget year that we are discussing here today. If you take that budget gimmick of $4 billion and throw it away, we are billions above the President's request for housing.

Number two, on VA medical, as I said, this is the largest increase ever in VA medical. We have letters from the veterans service organizations supporting our level of funding. And at the same time, this really underlines the dismal, dismal request that the President made and the lack of understanding for veterans' health needs in this country.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG), a member of the subcommittee.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman for yielding me this time. I rise in full support of this bill.

Mr. Chairman, I also want to thank the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN), the ranking member, who has done, I think, an outstanding job in working with the chairman.

I also want to extend a salute to the senior member of the staff, Frank Cushing, and all the staff who have contributed to bringing this bill about. Without their long hours, dedication and hard work, none of this would have been possible.

This appropriations bill is unique in that it covers an array of diverse agencies ranging from the Veterans Administration to the EPA. It is not an easy task to bring this wide range of interest together into a single bill. However, the gentleman from New York (Chairman WALSH) and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) have forged a relationship which I think makes this all possible.

H.R. 2684 is a good bill. Is it a perfect bill? No. Is it a fair bill? Absolutely, yes.

I would echo the words of my chairman that we are still early in the legislative process for dealing with this legislation. There will be plenty of opportunities for Members to offer their suggestions and amendments before the President finally puts his signature on it. I would implore my colleagues not to let perfection be the enemy of good.

The FY 2000 VA–HUD bill is a bill produced under very difficult circumstances. Those have been outlined. And it is within the budget caps. It responsibly provides the full $1.7 billion increase, the amount called for in the budget resolution for veterans' medical health care, and fully funds Section 8 housing.

It also provides $325 million above, that is above, the President's request for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund.

□ 1330

The gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) should be saluted for crafting this piece of legislation under very difficult circumstances, and I know he has worked in good faith with the ranking member, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN), to forge this bill that the House now has before it.

Mr. Chairman, this is a fair bill and there will be time to strengthen it and further it as the process moves along.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), a distinguished member of the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Chairman, like so many who have risen before me, I understand that

the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) and the committee are constrained by the dollars which have been allocated to their subcommittee for expenditure.

Having said that, that was the initial error. This bill ought not to be supported, because it is in the context, as the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) pointed out, of being constrained by what the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) and others have said is the 1997 Act. Yes, we voted on that act; but the fact is when we voted on that act we thought last year and this year would be in deficit. We thought we would not have balanced the budget by this time, consistent with OMB and CBO hypothesis at that time.

The context is different, and we ought not to do what we are doing, in my particular case, to NASA, basic science research.

I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 2684. Over the past 7 years, NASA has restructured, reduced personnel without layoffs and reduced its costs over those 7 years by $35 billion. This is not an agency that did not give at the office and at home. I know the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) knows that.

I am extraordinarily concerned. The agency has kept America at the forefront of science research. This bill severely cuts NASA by a billion dollars and undermines our role, in my opinion, as the world leader in science and technology.

In fact, according to administrator Dan Golden, two centers, if this budget were carried into place and followed, would have to be closed. The reduction of the research program will eliminate an estimated 600 grants to universities, NASA centers, and other agencies in every State, not just mine.

Bill Brody, the President of Johns Hopkins University, wrote to me expressing his concern about the NASA cuts. In his letter he states that 75 percent of Hopkins' applied physics laboratory space department is funded through sources cut by this bill, basic, top flight, world-class research.

I know the chairman does not want to cut that, but his bill does that.

Brody estimates that within the next year, Hopkins' ability to maintain core engineering capabilities will be crippled for years to come, and the bill threatens the loss of ongoing research and analysis.

According to the National Business Coalition for Federal Research, who also contacted me, and I quote, ''Republican cuts to scientific research under this bill are a recipe for failure.''

I agree. NASA funding made tracking the 1997 El Nino weather pattern easier and possible because of the satellite that followed its movement across the Pacific ocean. Clearly, our Nation's quality of life benefits from NASA's commitment to earth science research.

In my district, space science research programs are carried out by Goddard. Because my time is short, I will not be able to fully explain the consequences to Goddard, but let me say that this bill funds certain science and says to NASA Goddard, information can be collected through the Earth observation system but it then cuts the funding for the dissemination of that information on the Internet and throughout the country so that universities and scientific organizations can utilize the information we are collecting. That makes no sense.

I would say to my colleagues, we ought to reject this bill. We ought to send it back to committee, not because the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) or the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) have done anything wrong, but the constraints and the parameters that they were given were inappropriate, wrong, constrained, I would say, and add that as the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) did, by a $792 billion tax cut proposal. If we have $792 billion, surely we have the money, surely we have the money, to fund, as my friend from New Jersey says, veterans adequately and surely basic science adequately.

I urge my colleagues to reject this bill.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL).

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

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to compliment the committee, as well as the chairman of the subcommittee, for deleting the $24.5 million for the selective service system. That was a good move. To me it was a heroic step in the direction of more liberty for the individual.

There is no place in a free society to have a program of conscription and drafting of young people to fight unconstitutional wars. It saves $24 million, and I urge my colleagues not to support the funding for the selective service.

Ronald Reagan was a strong opponent of the draft. He spoke out against it. We do not need it. It is wasted money. It is absolutely unnecessary. The Department of Defense has spoken out clearly that it is not necessary for national security reasons to have a selective service system, and yet we continually spend $24.5 million annually for this program. So I urge all Members, all my colleagues, to oppose putting this money back in for the Selective Service System.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. VENTO).

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

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this bill. A month has passed since it has been delivered to the floor with some last-minute emergency modifications to fund various popular programs, but as time passes, all the defects and shortcomings of the bill, in spite of the efforts of the subcommittee to try to rationalize its actions, serious problems are very apparent in this bill.

I would just point out the serious shortfall in terms of funding for housing, based on obviously cooked numbers apparently from the committees and from the Committee on the Budget, and arguable numbers from the administration, some of which I agree and disagree with within this bill. There is $945M nearly 1 billion dollars less than in 1999 for housing. It is like the House is participating in a continued sham in terms of the Budget Act. The fact of the matter is that the public is rejecting the policy path that has been laid out by the Congress but the majority insists on getting up and passing bills that seriously underfund programs and seriously underfund housing.

This is almost a billion dollars less than what was actually funded last year based on trying to use standardized numbers, several billion dollars less than the administration has requested. I would say looking at what the need is that the serious problems of the past have now turned into a crisis with regards to housing. We cannot continue to use housing as the honey pot to take money out and spread it around to programs that have more popular support.

In my community, in Minnesota, we have about a 1 percent vacancy rate. In fact, vouchers that are often provided as an answer very often do not work and will not work. So even though all the facts change, all the circumstances change, the Congress acts as if in 1999, is still on a 1997 budget rationale. Funds are being split off for various purposes here, for an $800B in tax breaks for Pentagon spending, for other matters, and yet we do not respond to the various and the deep needs of the low income people in our communities and their housing crisis. The homeless funds are cut, lead paint abatement funding cut, community development, housing funds, those of the least powerful in our society are shortchanged. I urge my colleagues to reject this bill. I hope we could get to work and be in reality rather than remain in a state of denial. Regard the needs of people for shelter in safe sanitary housing.

Once again, the GOP leadership is relying upon gimmicks to hide their fiscal year 2000 appropriations process train wreck. By turning their backs on funding needs for important people programs and failing to invest in important social, housing, and community development programs, the Republicans have all but ensured a major confrontation this fall with congressional Democrats and the administration. The rush to provide tax cuts for special interests and the wealthy have clouded the need to address social program funding realities.

Unfortunately, the VA–HUD appropriation bill started out on a sour note with the Republican budget blueprint earlier this year. Adding salt to the wounds, the GOP majority appropriators chose to lay out unrealistic Labor-HHS-Education 302(b) allocations in order to spare from reductions popular defense spending, military pork projects, and NASA programs. All of these increases are provided at the extreme cost of housing and development programs and environmental protection. Such irresponsible GOP policies will put in place a convoluted process of shifting money into popular programs to attract votes and comply with the spending caps at the expense of the powerless in our society.

Sadly, this VA–HUD bill continues to force HUD to draw the short straw for housing and community development programs and that will impact real people through the loss of jobs and affordable housing. There are few improvements to mention, though I am pleased that there is finally some commitment to restore $10 million in funding to the FEMA Emergency Food and Shelter Program, a program that I have worked with Chairman WALSH in the past to increase funding.

However, the bill we will vote upon this week continues the theme of the past few years: making housing a principal wellspring for spending increases elsewhere and tax cuts for special interests and the wealthy. HUD estimates that in Minnesota we will lose over $23 million, jeopardizing 1,600 jobs and almost 2,400 units of housing for low-income families if this bill were enacted. The cuts in HOPWA, Housing for Persons with AIDS, and McKinney Homeless Assistance funds would result in 138 homeless and persons with AIDS not being served.

The St. Paul Public Housing Authority, one of the Nation's best, accurately explains the consequence: further cuts in public housing funds will jeopardize our safe, affordable, and quality public housing because cuts in operating subsidies will slow responses to repairs, cut key staff who screen applicants, and generally impair their ability to apply for and comply with Federal programs. The lack of commitment and cuts that this VA–HUD bill would deliver will result in fewer resident services and will mean less ability to deter criminal activity and other community concerns.

Unfortunately, the VA–HUD appropriations bill cuts close to a billion dollars in funds from HUD's budget last year and is some $3 billion below the administration's request. Despite trying to hide the cuts by spreading the pain around, it is clear that housing and community development will suffer under this bill—an atrophy by design. This atrophy has also hit successful programs like the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation which faces a $10 million cut in this bill. Further, while the overall VA–HUD bill has lost some of the emergency spending gimmicks, the GOP majority appropriators have chosen instead to gouge ever deeper in the Labor-HHS-Education funds in order to spare the popular Veterans and NASA programs.

Predictably, housing and community programs have been left with cuts to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and even the McKinney Homeless Assistance programs, housing for persons with AIDS, public housing, and the list goes on. No new housing assistance despite the commitments to authorize 100,000 new vouchers made in the 1999 budget authorization. This is a warped policy especially at a time when millions of people are on waiting lists for housing are on the streets, and according to a Department of Housing study deems 5.3 million families have worst case housing needs. This situation is frankly dire. The circumstances and facts change. The Federal budget is in better shape, but low-income housing needs have exploded. Yet the funding response ignores the facts.

The real need of our communities which should be addressed by this bill is in preserving our federally assisted housing from the ''opt-out'' or prepayment phenomenon by matching State programs to keep buildings affordable, or marking up market rents so landlords stay with our successful programs. But how will we be able to move forward for the future with preservation efforts when this bill does not squarely address the real housing needs of this country with what we have now? We are already sliding backward and the passage of the VA–HUD bill this week is like throwing a drowning person an anvil. This is not acceptable policy for housing our people or creating the economic opportunities that will help them move forward in tandem with their communities and neighborhoods. This appropriation process and budget blueprint is wholly inadequate. If we are going to cut spending it must be based on equal sharing of the burden, not loading all the cuts on the backs of low-income Americans and the programs which serve them. Certainly this policy path and bill should be rejected.

To add insult to injury, this spending measure makes no effort to reconcile the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars of rescinded section 8 moneys that have been usurped for emergency spending this year and the last. This year, for example, we lost $350 million in section 8 that is made up, if at all, on the backs of other critical housing programs like the CDBG block grant which serves low- and moderate-income folks in cities across the country.

While the committee may claim inadequate appropriation authority under the budget, the fact is that there are 215 earmarks spending money on special interest projects. The conclusion of this bill is to deny funding for housing and other needs but to buy off votes to pass it with projects and earmarked funds.

I am concerned regarding the cut in funding for the Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund. As the sponsor of the bill to maintain and improve the CDFI Fund which has been reported by the Banking Committee, I think it would be more appropriate to keep the funding for the program at $95 million, instead of what the committee provided through this bill, a reduction of $25 million. This underfunding is even more serious if we are to be able to have the running room to adequately fund the PRIME program that the Banking Committee has also reported out.

The PRIME Act, which stands for the Program for Investment in Microentrepreneurs, is a modest, but important piece of legislation that will provide training and technical assistance to help low-income entrepreneurs around the country to gain access to the knowledge and implementation strategies that will ensure the success of their own business ideas. We have had two successful hearings on this legislation and have moved it out of the committee. Both PRIME and CDFI leverage resources and talent in local communities and as such, Congress should be supporting them to the highest extent possible.

While this measure increases important veterans health care by a modest $1.5 billion more than last year, the GOP adopted a flawed rule before the recess that will prevent Democrats from offering amendments to further increase veterans health care. However, this bill still falls short to the desperately needed funding levels. After years of inadequate funding levels for the VA, we must work to push for full funding for our VA hospitals and nurses who are overworked and underpaid. This so-called increase in veterans health care would be offset from other existing VA programs; major VA construction would be cut by 76 percent. By simply shifting and shuffling existing priorities to meet other needs does not constitute an increase. Moreover, in a desperate plea to win votes, the GOP leadership has laced this bill with hundreds of pork-barrel projects for a range of activities requested by individual lawmakers. Such policy is clearly a rancid effort in order to win passage of a highly flawed bill.

Year after year, the Republicans have unsuccessfully attacked the President's Americorps program. Predictably, this legislation completely eliminates the Americorps program. Currently, over 20,000 Americorps members serve full or part time. In exchange for service, members receive education awards. The Americorps program allows and encourages people to strengthen our communities by providing needed human resources to schools, churches, community groups, and nonprofit organizations, while at the same time investing in their own education; both aspects are extremely important in ensuring a positive future for our nation. Despite the fact that the President adamantly supports this program and in fact has called upon Congress to allow even more of our young people to participate in Americorps this year, the Republican leadership has once again insisted on senseless, cyclical cuts to this beneficial program.

I am also disturbed by the lack of initiative taken by the majority to support several key programs administered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and critical to the health of the people and their land in this legislation. Today, global warming is becoming an ever increasing and prevalent threat. I don't think I need to point any further than outside the doors of the Capitol where this summer we are experiencing an unseasonably hot, humid, rain free, and pollution rich summer that forced many children to stay inside due to upper respiratory problems. Despite the faint glimmer of the sun through a gray haze on our doorstep, some Members continue to fight against the implementation of initiatives designed to curb global warming. why? Because these initiatives are a thinly veiled guise being instituted by the EPA in an attempt to secretly implement the Kyoto Protocol. Air quality programs are not the only programs seriously underfunded in this legislation. Research programs, both in-house and grant based, are flat lined from last years appropriation, thus stifling important research and possible technological breakthroughs, and leaving many worthy research projects in the dark. Superfund, a program designed to fix this Nation's most environmentally polluted and disastrous areas, has been reduced $50 million. Despite these egregious examples of the misappropriation of

Federal dollars to the EPA, the solution is simple—eliminate over 100 of the special interest projects that cost this legislation $352 million and apply that money to programs that benefit all of America.

Overall, this bill is a failure. While the House has now passed the trillion dollar tax cut for those who are well off, this GOP measure will siphon off much needed funds from important housing programs for the less fortunate; shifts around dollars from VA construction projects to fund critical health care needs, thus creating an illusionary increase; boost NASA spending at the expense of our environment; kills the Americorps programs; and is washed down with hundreds of pet projects. The unavoidable conclusion is that this measure is bad policy.

I urge a strong ''no'' vote.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM), a member of the committee.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Chairman, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) has had a difficult job operating under a balanced budget just like every other chairman. It is difficult to gauge where one is going to reduce spending for veterans or space programs, science programs and others, and I understand that; but I think it is even more difficult, if we do nothing, for our children and our grandchildren.

Day after day, people on both sides of the aisle will stand up and say, well, I supported the balanced budget, but yet many of those same people will stand here in the well and say in every one of the 13 appropriations bills, they want more spending, want more spending, want more spending, which will drive us to the 40 years of irresponsible spending when the Democrats controlled this House. We do not want to return to that.

I would love to increase more spending on veterans. They have been denied health care, and they have been promised that for years. We cannot do that under a balanced budget. And the space programs, I believe that our mission and our future is in space, but it is more important for us to maintain that balanced budget, to take a look at our priorities, and I think the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), with one exception, has done a good job at that.

I would say to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL), who spoke a minute ago, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense strongly support the selective service system, but it is in our children's best interest to support not only this bill for the tough decisions that the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) made but for the future and the balanced budget and living within those constraints.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2¼ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK).

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, I congratulate the previous speaker on the intellectual honesty of his statement when he noted that many who voted for the 1997 Balanced Budget Act will now be standing up here on both sides disclaiming any responsibility for its consequences.

It is, in fact, inconsistent to maintain those caps but then go home and tell people how much you love community development, block grants and want to do more, and want to be for more of this or more of that.

To some extent, what we are dealing with here is a matter of intellectual honesty. I believe the intellectually honest thing to do is to admit a mistake. I think what we have here is a little infallible envy.

Virtually every Member understands in his heart of hearts or her heart of hearts that the 1997 Balanced Budget Act was based on inaccurate information. I must say I thought it was wrong at the time.

As I get older, I learn that one of the few pleasures that improves with age is saying I told you so. I knew it was dumb then. Some of my colleagues may be later converts to it, but look at the consequences. As I told the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), I had a little sympathy for him describing this bill. As he explained it, he did a good job as he did, given what he was given to work with. He and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) did their best, but I thought of that story then of I felt sorry because I had no shoes and then I met a man who had no feet.

If one feels sorry for the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), wait until the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. PORTER) comes in with his bill. Not only does he have no feet, they cut him off about three ribs short of his shoulders.

This House is in a situation where we are providing far too little money for fundamental social purposes that hold this country together, and we are making a grave error.

Alan Greenspan in April said he regretted the fact that the international free trade consensus that used to exist in America has fallen apart, and he said I understand some people are getting hurt. We should not, he said, allow our inability to help these people to drive us away from support for internationalism, but it is not an inability.

It is not an inability that this bill shows. It is an unwillingness. This very rich country does not have to cut community development block grants and cut housing and put more of a burden on people. We are making a terribly grave social error. As capitalism flourishes and the rich get richer and the stock market approaches levels that make Mr. Greenspan nervous, we come in with a bill that takes away from the poorest of the poor, the neediest and the working poor.

Let us send this bill back and do the job right.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I demand that the gentleman's words be taken down and engraved upon the door, because they are absolutely correct.

□ 1345

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

Mr. Chairman, the gentleman certainly has the right to say I told you so, but that does not mean that he is right. This agreement caused us to make difficult choices, and we are trying to do that today.

But I would remind the committee and the Members that if they take the President's budget gimmick of $4.2 billion out of his request, this bill allocates $2 billion more than the President actually allowed or requested be spent on the housing programs for those exact same poor that the gentleman just mentioned.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BATEMAN).

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

Mr. BATEMAN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding the precious 1 minute. I use that minute to make the point that this bill by its reduction and acceptance of reductions from the administration for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration is doing a great disservice to this Nation. NASA is an agency and an institution within the United States which has made immeasurable contributions to the betterment of our society. We have gone forward with a space program which I applaud; but in the process, the administration, year after year, has submitted budgets proposed for NASA which are pitifully inadequate and have starved all the other programs and agencies within NASA to an extent that it is shameful.

In aviation alone $400 million has been deducted or reduced from the appropriations for that phase of NASA science and activities. No airplane in the world flies today without the benefit of the research done by NASA on aeronautics. It is virtually a crime. And we must fix it to see that these programs are restored; and we ought to do it at the earliest opportunity.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER).

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

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank my friend from West Virginia for the time.

I just want to encourage my 2 colleagues, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) who is a strong supporter of the AmeriCorps program, and I know the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) is a strong supporter, to make sure that while this program is completely eliminated, not a penny for AmeriCorps in this bill on the House floor, that we restore this money in conference with the Senate.

We have a crisis in our schools with teacher shortages and with school safety. The AmeriCorps program currently

mentors and tutors 2.6 million schoolchildren, and they help 564,000 at-risk children in after-school programs.

Now we can either approach this by appropriating more money in education bills that the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. PORTER) does not have for these problems or we can continue a program that is working with these AmeriCorps volunteers at places like the University of Notre Dame and help our schools do a better job and help our neighborhood schools with at-risk after-school programs.

So I would like to encourage the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) who has been a very strong supporter of this program to continue to work with us in conference.

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

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1¾ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER).

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the ranking member for the time.

Mr. Chairman, I am going to vote against this bill because it seriously underfunds our commitment to our veterans.

The gentleman from my hometown of San Diego, California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM) said we ought to fund our Nation's veterans, but we cannot. We cannot because of this agreement we made a couple years ago.

The subcommittee saw that as a problem and asked the full committee for an emergency designation for which it could receive an extra $3 billion for our veterans. They were overruled. I think the chairman was right. It is an emergency situation to fund our veterans. We are not keeping our commitment that we made to them.

This must be classified as an emergency today. Providing veterans health care is emergency. The VA health system is drastically underfunded and in danger of actual collapse. The national cemeteries that we should pride ourselves on are also facing disaster. We are releasing our veterans from the hospitals with Alzheimer's disease. We have serious illnesses that were contracted either in Vietnam or the Persian Gulf that are not getting adequate treatment.

Mr. Chairman, this is an emergency.

Now when we say we ought to put more money in the budget, my friends on the majority side say well the President underfunded the veterans in his proposal. Yes, he did. I agree with that; underfunded by $3 billion. But remember this is not the President's budget. This is a congressional budget. It is our responsibility, and we underfund veterans by at least a billion and a half.

Mr. Chairman, the veterans organizations of this Nation, all of them, combine to come up with what they thought was a reasonable amount to keep our VA health system going. They said $3.2 billion additional. This budget underfunds that by a billion and a half. We need that money, and it is an emergency. Let us put more money in for our veterans, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Chairman, on the points that the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) made, and I understand his commitment is very strong to America's veterans, as are all Members. Just to set the record straight, we provided the President's request level for veterans cemeteries. That is a $5 million increase over the 1999 enacted level. So we actually did increase the budget for veterans cemeteries.

As regards the request for emergency designation, we did do that, but we requested the $1.7 billion increase that was authorized by the committee, and that is consistent with what the veterans authorizing committee suggested and the budget document requested, and we were not given emergency designation. What we were given was an actual $1.7 billion in real dollars to increase the veterans health care budget.

So I think it shows a substantial commitment on the part of the subcommittee and the full Committee on Appropriations, and we will take on that mantle of being veterans advocates; if the Executive Branch will not, we will do that.

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

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Chairman, this bill is flawed from the sky above to the earth below. Here on terra firma the bill would hurt the poor, the elderly and the disabled by cutting their housing assistance and the sky above, our space program, and its innovation, its ability to create new jobs is being destroyed. Glenn Research Center in my district, which is one of the finest centers in this country, is under attack in this bill.

America is in effect eating its technological seed corn by destroying the ability of the space program to create new jobs with cuts like this, and at the same time America turns its back on the poor while the rich are getting richer, the poor are indeed getting poorer. It is time to take this bill away from fat city and send it back to committee.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield all the remaining time to the distinguished gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Illinois is recognized for 1¼ minutes.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I have to tell my colleagues I found this budget very hard to explain to people back home. While we are all here patting ourselves on the back for this string of unprecedented economic prosperity, it seems all too easy to overlook the communities that are not reaping the benefits. The unemployment rate in some of these communities is as high as 20 percent, Mr. Chairman, and more than 5 million families in our country are only a paycheck away from losing their homes.

In light of these problems that our families and our seniors are facing, we should use our prosperity to increase HUD's capacity to create jobs, to build homes; but instead we are cutting the HUD budget. The effects of these cuts on the lives of families and seniors and the homeless would be devastating. In my district alone, we would loose $4.5 billion; and hundreds of low-income families could be left out in the cold. In the city of Chicago where the Chicago housing authority is just beginning to turn the corner on a persistent housing crisis, we are going to be setting the CHA back.

We have a responsibility here, a responsibility to expand and not to cut vital housing and economic development programs. We need to take drastic steps, not to cut, but to develop a successful and comprehensive affordable housing and economic development policy. This should be a national priority, and at a time when we have a $14 billion federal budget surplus; if not now, when?

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

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

Mr. Chairman, briefly in closing I would like to thank the distinguished Chair for conducting this portion of the general debate and my colleagues for, I think, a very intelligent, thoughtful debate.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, earlier today at a press conference Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Andrew Cuomo made a very forceful and important statement about this particular bill. I thought the Secretary's statement was a very important contribution to the debate, so I am including the statement issued by Secretary Cuomo earlier today at the press conference for the RECORD, and would request that it be placed at the end of the general debate on the bill that was debated today.

The statement referred to follows:

STATEMENT OF SECRETARY CUOMO

Good afternoon. First I would like to thank Congressman Gephardt not just for his kind words of support today but for the support he has shown for HUD over these many years. I think the great turnout you see here today of Congress people from across the country reflects that leadership—and we need that leadership now.

Congressman Gephardt, I want to thank you very much for everything you have done for all of us. We heard a lot of talk about the $800 billion tax cut and how it is bad economic policy and it is risky and it is reckless—and I think it is undeniable. It gets worse when you look at who would get the tax cut and how it is fueled—obviously to the richest of the rich. You make $500,000 you get a $32,000 tax cut; if you make $18,000 you get $22—period. It makes the $800 billion tax cut more repugnant. When you then also consider the cuts to the essential programs that they would do simultaneously without tax cuts, the situations become unbearable

and it becomes frankly, in my opinion, repugnant in its clarity.

The programs that would be cut would hurt the poor, the working American families and the middle class American families right across the board. HUD is just a good example of it. A $1.6 billion cut which would cut virtually every program in the Department from soup to nuts, virtually every program—there are one or two programs that would not be cut. To give you a couple of examples: at a time when this nation has the highest need for affordable housing in its history, 5.3 million families need affordable housing; waiting lists for affordable housing all across the country are years long and are getting longer. Under their budget, the number of new units that would be produced next year goes to zero—zero—highest need in history, waiting lists are getting longer across the country—they would produce exactly zero units.

Our main economic development programs, when we are trying to get people from welfare to work, when we are trying to do something about income inequality, when we are trying to do something about urban areas that are struggling to catch up—they would cut the economic development program 90%. At a time when the nation is trying to come together as a community and President Clinton is talking about one America, at a time when we are moving towards a majority minority nation—they would cut the funds to fight racial discrimination. They would cut the funds to combat lead paint removal. Lead paint removal is removing the lead paint from older homes so children don't get poisoned. They would cut those funds. They would then cut the programs as the Congressman mentioned that literally go to house the homeless and house people with AIDS—about 16,000 fewer people would receive that assistance. The cuts will be felt by every city and every county across the states, not just one part of the country, one area, one location: it is not just urban American or suburban or rural, it is all across the country, coast to coast. Places like Boston will lose $15 million, the city of Atlanta will lose $9.5 million, Dallas $8.8 million. Every city, every country. We recently did a report which we have here today called ''Losing Ground'' which details the cuts Congressional District by Congressional District.

This budget will pull the rungs out of the ladder of opportunity and cut the safety net. We should expect more people to fall into poverty, more people to be unemployed, more homeless and expect their conditions in those situations to be worse. And as the Congressman pointed out, this country is doing very, very well, and President Clinton is very proud of the economic progress. But there is also no doubt that there are many hard working American families who have not yet shared in that economic progress. And what the HUD budget is all about is bringing them along, bringing all Americans up to share in that opportunity. Now is not the time to cut the rungs on the ladder of opportunity, now is the time we should be doing the exact opposite.

I thank Congressman Gephardt once again for his leadership and all the members who are here today for their stand on this proposal.

Mr. LARSON. Mr. Chairman, the VA–HUD Appropriations bill, H.R. 2684, that we are considering today has many shortcomings that prevent me from voting for it in its present form.

The major agency that takes the largest cuts in the bill is NASA. Total appropriations for FY 2000 under the bill are $1 billion, or 7% less than the FY 1999 level. These cuts, I believe, would jeopardize the future of our space research programs, including programs directed at solving problems here on earth, that are pushing forward the frontiers of knowledge about our universe.

These cuts to NASA's budget are being made despite recent legislation passed by the House, which I supported, that authorized higher levels of spending than those being proposed by Congress.

The VA–HUD Appropriations bill also fails to fund any incremental housing vouchers and would impose a 5% cut in the critical Community Development Block Grant program. According to HUD, the overall cuts would result in an estimated 156,000 fewer housing units for low-income families, at a time when their housing needs are at all-time high. As a result of these cuts persons with AIDS and 16,000 homeless families would not receive vital housing and related services. In addition, 97,000 jobs would not be generated in communities that need them. If passed by the full Congress, I believe these cuts would have a devastating impact on families and communities nationwide.

In addition, the AmeriCorps program is cut $435 million from the FY 1999 level, in effect, terminating the program.

AmeriCorps, the domestic Peace Corps, engages more than 40,000 Americans in intensive, results-driven service each year. AmeriCorps members are tackling critical problems like illiteracy, crime and poverty. They have taught, tutored or mentored more than 2.6 million children, served 564,000 at-risk youth in after-school programs, operated 40,500 safety patrols, rehabilitated 25,179 homes, aided more than 2.4 million homeless individuals, and immunized 419,000 people.

In Connecticut, more than 1,200 residents have served their communities through AmeriCorps.

Mr. Chairman, we all know that AmeriCorps helps solve critical problems in an effective way. It creates $1.66 worth benefits for each $1.00 spent. And for every full-time AmeriCorps member, 12 regular and occasional unpaid volunteers are recruited and mobilized. AmeriCorps is, indeed, effectively preparing young people for the future and strengthening local communities.

As a result of program cuts, however, a great number of important projects that foster involvement and learning in technology by children and adults, will go unfunded. One of these is Project FIRST (Fostering Instructional Reform through Service and Technology Initiatives), whose role it is to increase access to technology and its educational benefits in the nation's least-served schools. Another way AmeriCorps is involved with technology is through TechCorps, a national non-profit organization that is driven and staffed primarily with technologically proficient volunteers. However, if funding is not restored, TechCorps will not receive AmeriCorps/VISTA volunteers to bring this program to underserved, low-income communities.

I believe these programs are important, because even though American technology is propelling the nation's economy to unprecedented heights, growing concern remains for those who are not benefitting from his prosperity. For those left behind by the advancing technology, the divide growing between the ''haves'' and ''have-nots'' is increasing at an alarming rate, as demonstrated by the Department of Commerce in its July, 1999 report, ''Falling through the Net.''

These AmeriCorps programs bring technology to underserved populations and address weaknesses in our economy, such as unequal access to technology, teacher training, and evaluation.

However, I do not believe AmeriCorps is essential just because it can help close the ''digital divide.'' It is essential because it exposes young people to the ideal of serving their community and their nation. Colin Powell has succinctly captured this idea of community service by stating, ''For some of our young people, preserving our democratic way of life means shouldering a rifle or climbing into a cockpit or weighting anchor and setting out to sea. for others, it means helping a child to read or helping that child to secure needed vaccinations or it means building a park or helping bring peace to a troubled neighborhood or helping communities recover from natural disasters or reclaiming the environment.''

Harris Wofford, former United States Senator and now head of the Corporation for National Service, echoes Powell's thoughts, ''Our country needs more . . . patriotism. AmeriCorps encourages and inspires this patriotism on the home front.''

Finally, a quote by Vaclav Havel, I believe, explains the need to have an AmeriCorps, ''This dormant good will in people needs to be stirred. People need to hear that it makes sense to behave decently or to help others, to place common interest above their own, to respect the elementary rules of human coexistence. Good will longs to be recognized and cultivated.''

This, I believe, is the essential value of national service, and by extension, of AmeriCorps. Serving is as important and rewarding as being served.

Mr. Chairman, I believe the cuts in this bill would move America in the wrong direction. Despite unprecedented economic prosperity, there are significant unmet needs in our nation's communities and in our science and research programs. We should not cut programs that meet vital housing, economic development, and research needs. I will strongly oppose this bill because it fails to meet our responsibilities to war veterans, to provide relief and recovery after natural disasters, to provide service to the community, to protect the environment, to help to meet housing needs, and to undertake essential research that will greatly the American public.

We can do better, Mr. Chairman.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong opposition to HR 2684, the VA/HUD Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2000, because of the substantial and devastating cuts that the bill makes in funding for the Department of Housing and Urban Development. At a time when our nation is experiencing record budget surpluses, it is unconscionable that this body would cut funding that goes to some of the most neediest of our constituents.

The bill before us today could likely result in 40,000 Americans, including many of my constituents in the Virgin Islands, being forced out of their current HUD funded housing and onto the street due to the draconian cuts in the Section 8 program.

And as if these cuts weren't bad enough, the bill cuts the funds for repairing and maintaining public housing properties by a half a

billion dollars and underfunds operating subsidies by $400 million on top of the $400 million shortfall in the current fiscal year. As a result of these cuts, over 105,000 affordable housing units will not be modernized and properly maintained meaning that in districts like my own which are prone to natural disasters those units would be in even more jeopardy.

My colleagues, while our poorest families, the elderly and the disabled are the ones who will be most directly harmed by the cuts in this bill, ultimately all of us will all be affected and will pay the price of increased homelessness and dilapidated buildings.

For the Virgin Islands these cuts will be particularly hard felt because the local government is currently wrestling with a current fiscal year deficit of $100 million dollars and an accumulated deficit of one billion dollars. If the $250 million from the CDBG program isn't restored, the affect that it will have on hundreds of my constituents who benefit from the several worthy local programs which CDBG funds would be tragic.

I ask you, my friends in the majority: is it right that you would propose to spend almost all of the $800 billion non-Social Security surpluses on a politically motivated tax bill while at the same time refusing to fund the President's request for 100,000 incremental Section 8 vouchers when a record number of Americans face a lack of affordable housing?

I urge my colleagues to join the Association of Local Housing Finance Agencies, the National Community Development Association, the National Rural Housing Coalition, the National Association of Counties, the National Association of Housing Partnerships, the National League of Cities and the US Conference of Mayors in opposing this VA/HUD Appropriations bill because of what it will mean to the neediest among us.

Mr. SANDLIN. Mr. Chairman, it is our duty to fulfill our promises to our nation's veterans, the men and women who have put themselves in harm's way in service to their country. It is our duty to care for our veterans, and if we pass this legislation, we will fail miserably.

We are faced today with a bill that fails to deliver to our veterans the funding they so desperately need. If we pass this bill, we will only be perpetuating the failure of the President's severely lacking budget. Even though this bill would provide $1.7 billion more than the President's request, it is still not nearly enough. Two wrongs do not make a right, and if we pass this legislation our veterans will be wronged yet again, by Congress as well as the Administration.

The Republican leadership would have you believe that the Independent Budget submitted by the veterans themselves is bloated and overstates the funding needs for veterans programs. I reject this assertion completely and am horrified that the Republicans are alleging double-counting and padding of budget estimates by respected veterans' groups such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, AMVETS, and Paralyzed Veterans of America.

As if these allegations were not enough, the Republican leadership is now touting this anemic bill as a cause for celebration and criticizing veterans for ''complaining'' when they fail to celebrate over a bill that is lacking over one billion in critically needed funds. The Republicans have resorted to these tactics against veterans who fought to preserve the prosperity of this country—the prosperity in which veterans will not share if this bill is passed. These accusations are a slap in the face to our veterans and add insult to injury.

As a strong supporter of our nation's veterans, I am forced today to vote against this bill due to its severe lack of funding for veterans' programs. Veterans groups agree that this bill falls short by at least $1.1 billion. In light of projected budget surpluses and an irresponsible trillion dollar tax cut, it is especially disappointing to see the men and women who have served this country overlooked by those who would rather squander the surplus recklessly than use it to secure the future of critical programs such as veterans benefits and Social Security and reduction of our growing national debt.

Our veterans are aging, and their medical needs are growing as a result. This bill, however, does not address those needs. The number of VA medical facilities has decreased almost 35% in the last ten years, but this bill fails to address the growing demand for VA services as a result of the increasing number of veterans over the age of 65. According to the Congressional Research Service, 36% of all veterans are over the age of 65, and that number is expected to increase exponentially over the next eight years. An aging veterans population will undoubtedly put a strain on our nation's Veterans Health Services. At the current pace of construction, we will not have the necessary facilities to meet veterans' extended care needs.

Faced with this reality, I am unable to vote for a bill that will short-change veterans by over a billion dollars while Republicans insist on robbing Social Security and sacrificing veterans' healthcare, in favor of squandering the surplus on fiscally irresponsible tax cuts.

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Chairman, this bill is a travesty. The funding to provide services for our Veterans and to assist with housing for low-income families is wholely inadequate. At this time, I wish to address another area where this bill is unacceptable, the lack of funding for the Corporation for National Service (CNS) and its newest program, AmeriCorps.

All funding for the CNS was eliminated in Committee to shift money to other appropriations bills and to support a tax bill the American people know is a scam.

The CNS administers an impressive list of programs that provide assistance to people throughout the nation. From elementary school kids and seniors who are paired together through the Foster Grandparents program, to college and high school students involved in Learn and Serve America gaining college credit and benefiting from dedicated tutors, America is better off for the work Americans are doing through CNS programs.

AmeriCorps members are providing an invaluable service to communities around the country. In my district AmeriCorps members have worked with the Boys and Girls Club, Big Brothers and Sisters, and the Food Bank of Monterey. Currently they are serving at the Santa Cruz Community Credit Union and the Foundation of California State University, Monterey Bay.

In Santa Cruz, 24 men and women served as AmeriCorps members with the Homeless Garden Project. Not only did participants gain agricultural skills and farming experience, they worked with six Santa Cruz school gardens and mentored at-risk youth through involvement in garden activities.

AmeriCorps volunteers have been integral to the recovery from the many natural disasters faced by Americans in the past few years. AmeriCorps participants spend countless hours assisting FEMA and the American Red Cross with disaster relief. Participants have helped emergency efforts such as the Northwest Flood in January of 1997, California Floods of 1998, Southern California Fires of 1996, and the list goes on. AmeriCorps has been responsible for the sheltering of families, working at mobile food units, watching for floods, conducting traffic, and numerous other vitally important task for victims of natural disasters.

As expressed at the President's Summit on America's Future in Philadelphia, we need to encourage all Americans to volunteer. Each AmeriCorps member leverages approximately twelve to fourteen new volunteers. When you have a program where Americans are volunteering to assist others in need, it would be fostered and encouraged.

AmeriCorps members are making a difference in our communities and their presence will be sorely missed if this funding is cut. I encourage my colleagues to oppose this bill and insist on restoring funding for AmeriCorps and the Corporation for National Service.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition of H.R. 2684. While I support an increase in funding for our country's veterans, I feel that this bill unfairly cuts programs that affect low-income individuals. It slashes the total budget by $1.6 billion for the Department of Housing and Urban Development through cuts in nearly every program. At a time of historic prosperity and economic success, I think this is a serious mistake.

One of the major cuts is out of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). This wonderful program provides funding for every community in the country. Community Action Agencies depend on this funding as the backbone of programs for the poor in urban, suburban and rural communities. This money simply passes through HUD to states, counties and cities to use on community priorities. In Montgomery County, Ohio, CDBG provides an invaluable resource in addressing community needs, such as affordable housing and economic development. The U.S. Conference of Mayors has stated that CDBG funds benefit almost every single household at or below 80% of the national median income level. Millions of low- and middle-income Americans would be hurt by this cut.

This bill would also reduce funding for affordable housing. Secretary Cuomo's remarkable effort to create a ''continuum of care'' would be savaged by this bill. If we do not provide money for Section 8 vouchers, public housing, and Housing for Persons With AIDS, and even cut money for Habitat for Humanity, we handcuff ourselves into simply focusing on emergencies. We have too many people who are homeless already. Without these programs funded at adequate levels, we will become part of the problem instead of part of the solution.

I am thankful for all of the work that HUD does. Secretary Cuomo is to be commended for his efforts to eradicate poverty and expand the American dream of homeownership to all Americans, not just the wealthy. I was just

with Mrs. Tipper Gore and the Dayton Metropolitan Housing Authority in announcing an $18.3 million HOPE VI grant for a troubled community in my district.

This is exactly what we should be doing during this time of unprecedented economic growth. We would be shortsighted indeed to neglect those who most need our assistance. This bill would cost my district almost $2 million and the State of Ohio over $73 million.

In addition to slashing the HUD budget and thereby adversely affecting the poor, it completely defunds AmeriCorps. The thousands of volunteers in the AmeriCorps program are one of the best tools we have in fighting against poverty and assisting community-based organizations all around this country. The University of Dayton's SWEAT program and the Congressional Hunger Center's Beyond Food programs are terrific examples of AmeriCorps successes. Their members serve those in need day in and day out. I have had the opportunity to meet and serve with some of these wonderful servants who will undoubtedly become the future leaders that this country so desperately needs. We cannot cut funding for AmeriCorps and not hurt our communities.

I therefore oppose this bill and ask my colleagues to restore full funding fur HUD and AmeriCorps.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to applaud the VA–HUD Appropriations Committee in its efforts to provide proper funding levels for our nation's Veterans.

H.R. 2684, the VA–HUD—Independent Agencies Appropriation for Fiscal Year 2000, places the concerns of veterans at the front of the line. The promises our country has made to those who put themselves in harm's way for our nation are promises that must be kept. This legislation takes a good step forward in fulfilling those promises. This bill provides a total of $44.1 billion for VA programs and benefits, an increase of $1.5 billion over last year's bill.

The monies secured in this legislation will go to programs that are becoming increasingly essential to our aging veterans. Our World War II and Korean War era veterans are more reliant than ever on the medical services provided for by the VA for service connected disabilities. This legislation appropriates a total of $19 billion for medical care and treatment, an increase of $1.7 billion in funds with an additional $608 million to be collected from the Medical Care Collections Fund, totaling $19.6 billion. The funding increased in this legislation is a sign of this Congress' commitment to keep its word.

Mr. Chairman, while we must honor our promises to veterans, we must also keep those promises we have made to all Americans. This legislation may keep its word to veterans but it breaks it promise to many more Americans: education, science, housing and environmental protection programs are being stripped of the funds necessary to assure domestic security.

This legislation fails to meet the request for housing programs by $982 million and severely limits the ability of HUD to provide assistance to homeless families. This legislation reduces Community Development Block Grants by 6% and cuts ''Brownfields'' clean up by 20%. These are programs that are necessary for the health and welfare of our communities. This bill also eliminates Americorps, reduces funding for the National Science Foundation and cuts the NASA funding level by 7%.

Mr. Chairman, while I am encouraged by the renewed commitment this bill makes to our nation's former servicemen and women, I cannot vote for a bill which breaks our commitment to so many others.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I strongly support H.R. 2684.

Last February I hosted a town meeting in Kerrville, Texas, to discuss the President's VA budget and the future of the Kerrville VA Medical Center. Over 1,400 veterans attended and voiced their concerns about the President's proposed budget cuts that would reduce services at the Kerrville VA.

At that time, the President had submitted a proposed VA budget that was woefully inadequate. It was an insult to those that have served our nation.

But thanks to the leadership of the Appropriations Committee members and the millions of veterans around the country, this bill contains the largest veterans' medical care increase ever.

In the face of a seriously under-funded Administration budget for veterans' health care, this bill sends a clear message: Veterans will continue to receive the high quality, accessible health care they were promised.

Mr. Chairman, this budget keeps the promises that we made to our veterans.

I urge passage of H.R. 2684.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Chairman, I rise to oppose this bill for a number of reasons, but primarily because it breaks our promise of health care to our nation's veterans.

Many of us have worked hard to make improved funding for health care for veterans a hallmark of this Congress. I want to think the Members of both sides of the aisle for their efforts in this regard. We began this budget process with a funding proposal from the Administration that was inadequate. I believe the Administration's willingness to reconsider their initial proposal and add a billion dollars was responsible for leveraging the significant additional funds for veterans' health care this Congress is now discussing. I commend the Administration, and particularly, Vice President GORE for his leadership in the Administration's decision to increase its request for veterans medical care by $1 billion for fiscal year 2000.

That said, I am going to reject this proposal for VA–HUD appropriations. It goes further in meeting some of the challenges faced by the VA health care system, but it does not go far enough.

Although the add-on of $700 million the Republicans are now supporting sounds substantial, it still fails to meet the needs we have heard from VA officials both on and off-the-record. Unfortunately the Republican majority of the Committee on Rules failed to protect under the rule to consider the Edwards-Evans-Stabenow amendment to the measure before us which Republicans passed on a party-line vote. The Edwards-Evans-Stabenow amendment would have more than doubled the additional funds the appropriators added for the veterans' health care system. I regret that our efforts to delay a cut in the capital gains tax for one year will mean that veterans may not receive the VA health care that they need and the level of service that they deserve.

Many VA leaders would confess that these funds would have offered welcome relief to a system now overwhelmed by veterans' new and growing demand for health care. Additional funds would have meant VA would be able to expand access to veterans who have not previously been able to use VA because of their distance from the medical centers. It would have better ensured VA could eliminate serious problems with waiting times that confront veterans in primary care clinics (including the new community-based outpatient clinics), orthopedic clinics, ophthalmology and audiology. It would have helped veterans obtain prosthetics, including such necessities as wheelchairs, oxygen tanks, hearing aids, and eyeglasses on a more timely basis. Additional funds would help Va face the emerging public health crisis of Hepatitis C by adding funds to overextended pharmaceutical budgets. It would have assisted VA in restoring some of the significant reductions that it has made in mental health services or help facilities meet the overwhelming need from long-term care aging WW II veterans are now facing.

I also oppose this bill because it fails our nation's low-income families by reducing their access to affordable housing. The strong economy has boosted the cost of housing, placing this basic need further from the reach of struggling families and the elderly. Yet, the bill contains no new funding for new Section 8 housing vouchers. It also cuts funding for the construction and rehabilitation of public housing as well as cut assistance for the most needy, the homeless. This is unacceptable.

In my home state of Illinois there are 67,182 project-based Section 8 apartments of which 41,437 have expiring contracts within the next five years. The cuts in this bill would cost my district alone $2 Million in housing funds and cause 130 fewer affordable units to be built. Stable housing is fundamental to allowing those with low incomes to improve their economic well-being. I oppose this bill because it doesn't do enough to provide working poor families, the elderly and the homeless with the housing assistance they so desperately need.

Clearly this legislation lets down our veterans and some of the most needy in our society. I urge my colleagues to reject this legislation.

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Chairman, one of the biggest mistakes we can make during times of great prosperity is to turn our backs on those who have been left out of the economic mainstream. Our great country is experiencing an economic boom the likes of which we haven't seen in a generation. But it would be a grave mistake to forget that too many people have not been included in this financial good fortune. It is times like this when it becomes more important than ever to help those who are most in need. The legislation before us would make huge cuts to the Housing and Urban Development budget, which would drastically affect much needed housing, job creation and economic development programs that play a vital role serving distressed communities.

In Colorado, passage of this bill would result in a loss of more than $16 million HUD dollars at a time when affordable housing is becoming increasingly out of reach for more and more people. In my district alone, approximately $5 million would be lost, depriving my constituents of almost 300 jobs. This loss of funds would deny hundreds of low-income families affordable housing, and would take away housing assistance for over 75 families and/or individuals who are homeless or have AIDS.

These cuts are not something that people in my district can afford, nor can individuals or families in cities and counties across the country. A booming economy and demand for homes has made the affordable housing market extremely tight in my district, throughout the State of Colorado and across the country. Even in the midst of great prosperity, worst-case housing situations are nearing an all-time high.

It should come as no surprise to any of us that even with today's economy there are pockets of deep poverty throughout this country where people are suffering as much as they ever have. This is not time to abandon them. Cutting Section 8 vouchers, funding for Community Development Block Grants, the HOME Investment Partnerships program and HOPE VI grants is absolutely the wrong direction to be going in right now. These cuts will harm our most vulnerable populations and we need to use our vote today to prevent this from happening.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to discuss H.R. 2684, the Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act of 1999. This bill contains funding for the science programs of the National Science Foundation (NSF), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Last year, the Science Committee passed the National Science Foundation Authorization Act of 1999, now Public Law 105–207. This was a multi-year authorization for NSF and provided funding and programmatic direction for NSF for fiscal years 1998 through 2000.

H.R. 2684 provides $3.6 billion in funding for NSF for FY 2000. This is below both the level authorized in Public Law 105–207, and the level enacted for FY 1999. NSF is our Nation's premier federal basic research agency, and I believe its funding should be increasing, not decreasing. I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee during conference to correct this funding shortfall.

One priority within NSF is basic information technology (IT) research as outlined in H.R. 2086, the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Act (NITRD). NITRD is a long-term authorization for basic IT research introduced by a bipartisan coalition of members from the Committee on Science.

Fundamental IT research has played an essential role in fueling the information revolution and creating new industries and millions of new, high-paying jobs. Maintaining the Nation's global leadership in IT will require keeping open the pipeline of new ideas, technologies, and innovations that flow from basic research. Although the private sector provides most IT research funding, it tends to focus on short-term, applied work. The federal government, therefore, has a critical role to play in supporting the long-term, basic research the private sector requires but is ill-suited to pursue.

H.R. 2684 appropriates $35 million of new money specifically for NITRD. I appreciate the Appropriations Committee's initial support for what promises to be an important long-term research effort.

As for the space program, I want to first thank the gentleman from New York, Mr. WALSH, and the gentleman from Florida, Mr. YOUNG, for addressing some of the Science Committee's concerns during consideration of the bill at full Committee. The restoration of $400 million in the full Appropriations Committee to space science was a good first step. We've come a long way since the President's FY 1997 budget request, which presented the space community with the prospects of a 25% cut. That progress should not blind us to the importance of ensuring a healthy budget for space science. I look forward to working with the appropriators over the coming months to try and restore the remaining shortfalls.

The International Space Station also demands our attention. We need to reverse the bill's proposed $100 million reduction to this vital program. While I share the appropriators' frustration with the Administration's management of this program, this cut could prove penny-wise and pound-foolish.

Following continuous pressure from the Science Committee, the President has now decided to seek funding for a U.S.-built independent propulsion module. Cuts to the Space Station threaten this independent propulsion capability and could lengthen our dependence on the Russians, creating even bigger budget problems in the future.

We also need to reverse the cuts to the Shuttle program. Over the last five years, NASA and the United Space Alliance have done an excellent job of making the Shuttle lean and mean, but you can only go so far. Cutting the Shuttle budget further may affect safety. So, I want to express my willingness to continue working with the appropriators now and in the coming months to ensure that the Shuttle, Space Station and Space Science are fully funded.

Earlier this year, the House passed H.R. 1654, the NASA Authorization Act of 1999. That bill made low-cost access to space a higher priority by increasing funding for advanced space transportation. The Cox Committee reaffirmed that reliable, low-cost access to space was vital to U.S. national security, scientific, and commercial interests. I would hope that the final appropriations bill will be able to address this long-term need.

I would also like to note the EPA budget in H.R. 2684. The appropriators have provided EPA with $7.3 billion in FY 2000. This is $105 million over the President's request. EPA's Science and Technology account is funded at $645 million, an increase of $2.5 million over the President's request.

Finally, I want to take a moment to remember the former distinguished Chairman of the Committee on Science, Representative George Brown. George was a colleague and a friend and he recognized how critical science and technology were to the future of this country. While George and I differed on a number of policy issues, he always had the best interest of science in his heart. Let us honor his memory by working to ensure that science in America continues to move forward into the 21st Century.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to the FY 2000 VA/HUD appropriations bill. While I support the increases for veterans' medical care, this bill does more harm than good and should be defeated. This bill cuts vital programs like Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS, community development block grants, and brownfields cleanup and development. Section 8 housing receives only a minor increase and does not include funding for *any* new vouchers. My district alone will lose 475 housing units for low-income families, as well as 276 jobs. On top of these cuts, this bill steals $3.5 billion from the Labor-HHS appropriations bill. Mr. Chairman, we are playing with fire here. If this bill passes, the good that will come from the increase to veterans' medical care will be drowned out by the number of people who lose their housing because this Congress decided not to fund these critical programs. I urge a no vote on final passage of this bill.

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

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. All time has now expired for general debate.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

Before consideration of any other amendment, it shall be in order to consider the amendment printed in House Report 106–292. That amendment may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, may amend portions of the bill not yet read for amendment, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to amendment.

During consideration of the bill for further 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 chairman of the Committee of the Whole may postpone a request for a recorded vote on any amendment and may reduce to a minimum of 5 minutes the time for voting on any postponed question that immediately follows another vote, provided that the time for voting on the first question shall be a minimum of 15 minutes.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) be allowed to offer an amendment identified as Filner No. 1 which is at the desk at any point during the reading of the bill for amendment.

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

There was no objection.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

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 Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I—DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION

COMPENSATION AND PENSIONS

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS 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, 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 Article IV of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1940, as amended, and for other benefits as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. 107, 1312, 1977, and 2106, chapters 23, 51, 53, 55, and 61; 50 U.S.C. App. 540–548; 43 Stat. 122, 123; 45 Stat. 735; 76 Stat. 1198), $21,568,364,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided,* That not to exceed $17,932,000 of the amount appropriated shall be reimbursed to ''General operating expenses'' and ''Medical care'' for necessary expenses in implementing those provisions authorized in the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990, and in the Veterans' Benefits Act of 1992 (38 U.S.C. chapters 51, 53, and 55), 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 facilities revolving fund'' to augment the funding of individual medical facilities for nursing home care provided to pensioners as authorized.

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

Mr. Chairman, many of us have worked hard to improve funding for veterans health care, the hallmark in this Congress.

□ 1400

I want to thank Members on both sides of the aisle for their efforts in this regard. We began the budget process with a funding proposal from the administration that was totally inadequate. The $700 million add-on that the Republicans are now supporting sounds substantial, but it fails to meet the needs expressed by VA officials, both on and off the record.

For this reason, I am going to reject this proposal for VA–HUD appropriations. It goes farther in meeting some of the challenges faced by the VA healthcare system, but not far enough.

Unfortunately, the Republican majority on the Committee on Rules failed to protect the Edwards–Evans-Stabenow amendment under the rule. The Edwards amendment would have more than doubled the additional funds the appropriators added to the VA healthcare system. Many VA leaders have agreed that these funds would have offered welcome relief to an overwhelmed VA hospital system facing growing pains. These additional funds would have expanded access to veterans not previously able to use VA hospital care.

The VA could have eliminated serious problems with waiting times that confront veterans in primary care clinics and other clinics. It would have helped veterans obtain much needed medical supplies, such as wheelchairs, oxygen tanks, hearing aids and eyeglasses, on a more timely basis. Additional funds would help VA face the emerging public health crisis of hepatitis C by adding funds to overextended pharmaceutical budgets. It would have assisted VA to restore some of the significant reductions that have been made in mental health services as well. It would have helped facilities meet the overwhelming need for long-term healthcare that our aging World War II veterans are now facing.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to join me in support of our Nation's veterans by opposing this measure.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). It is now in order to consider the amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. CUNNINGHAM

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

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment printed in House Report 106–292 offered by Mr. CUNNINGHAM:

Under the heading ''HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM'', insert after the first dollar amount the following: ''(reduced by $1,000,000)''.

Under the heading ''CHEMICAL SAFETY AND HAZARD INVESTIGATION BOARD—SALARIES AND EXPENSES'', insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(reduced by $1,500,000)''.

Under the heading ''ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY—SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY'', insert after the second dollar amount the following: ''(reduced by $5,000,000)''.

Under the heading ''EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING AND ASSISTANCE'', insert after both dollar amounts the following: ''(reduced by $5,000,000)''.

Under the heading ''EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER PROGRAM'', insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(reduced by $5,000,000)''.

Strike the item relating to the ''SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM'' and insert the following:

SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses of the Selective Service System, including expenses of attendance at meetings and of training for uniformed personnel assigned to the Selective Service System, as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 4101–4118 for civilian employees; and not to exceed $1,000 for official reception and representation expenses, $24,500,000: *Provided,* That during the current fiscal year, the President may exempt this appropriation from the provisions of 31 U.S.C. 1341, whenever he deems such action to be necessary in the interest of national defense: *Provided further,* That none of the funds appropriated by this Act may be expended for or in connection with induction of any person into the Armed Forces of the United States.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 275, the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM) and a Member opposed each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM).

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

Mr. Chairman, again I would like to thank the gentleman from New York (Chairman WALSH). The gentleman has had a difficult time finding different offsets for different programs. Although we operate under a balanced budget and we feel for our children and grandchildren, it is best in the long run to go through this process.

The amendment that I have restores the funding for the Selective Service program. We have done so with the support of the committee staff in going through what those offsets are. Each program is minimally impacted to the point that it does not affect their operation.

I would like to thank both sides of the aisle for the bipartisan support. The Secretary of Defense, Secretary Cohen, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of staff, and all the service chiefs, along with all veterans groups, support this amendment to restore the Selective Service System.

It is time-proven. Since World War I, we have had a strange dichotomy that our men and women fight our wars, and then we scale down. Then we have had to gear up, with dissipating effect.

Active duty and reserves make up the primary source of our Nation's military. Selective Service is a third tier to prepare our sources and our military to gear up in time of national emergency. The words ''Selective Service,'' for example, if we have a nuclear, chemical or biological attack similar to those that they have had in Japan and other countries, which, in my opinion is imminent, then the President can designate those healthcare workers, and that list would be used for those specifics.

With that, I rise in support of this amendment.

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

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Is there a Member in opposition to the amendment?

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) is recognized for 10 minutes.

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment, not because I so much disagree with him as to the merits of the Selective Service system, but because I have great concerns about the programs that will be cut to achieve this increase. The Selective Service has the responsibility of ensuring the peacetime registration of young men to provide insurance that the armed forces manpower needs will be met should a crisis occur. Just as importantly, the Selective Service agency also preserves the capability of conducting a draft of doctors or nurses

or medical technicians should their expertise be required in a war with mass casualties, or in any action with mass casualties.

All that being said, Mr. Chairman, I must oppose the gentleman's amendment due to its offsets. First, what may seem to be a small and innocuous $5 million cut to FEMA's emergency management planning and assistance account will require reductions in response and recovery, emergency preparedness, fire prevention and important technology development.

Likewise, my friend from California proposes to take $5 million from the emergency food and shelter program. The emergency food and shelter program, Mr. Chairman, is already severely strained, and such a cut would result in the following needs going unmet:

Just over 1 million fewer meals would be served at soup kitchens across this country with that cut; there would be 168,000 fewer bed nights at shelters and 23,000 fewer bed nights through short-term vouchers at hotels; and over 7,000 evictions would not be prevented if the gentleman's amendment were adopted and these offsets imposed.

Mr. Chairman, these are very real consequences that will be felt by very real people who happen to be in the greatest need in our country.

That is not the whole story. This amendment would take $1.5 million from the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board. This agency received its first year of funding just a few years ago and is already overburdened. In fact, I received a letter in late March from the Chairman of the Chemical Safety Board stating that the board does not have the resources to undertake further investigations this year. The 16 percent cut envisioned by the gentleman's amendment would ensure that this agency will not be able to meet the demands that it faces to fulfill its mission.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, this amendment will take $5 million from EPA's science and technology account. Many of my colleagues know of my own personal differences with EPA on many policy issues, but never on the need for sound science. At a time when there is a debate on global climate change, arguably one of the biggest scientific challenges ever faced by this agency, we need sound science now more than ever.

While I recognize the importance of the Selective Service system and do hope that we can restore funding in conference or as this process moves forward, I cannot support doing so here with these offsets. Therefore, I would ask my colleagues to oppose the gentleman's amendment.

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

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

Mr. Chairman, we thought very carefully when we went through the list on potential offsets and tried to minimize. For example, the FEMA funding of $5 million, the most it has ever been funded is $10 million each year. This year it still leaves $105 million, still an increase, but reduces it $5 million. It is still more than the actual request.

The $1.5 million from the chemical safety board, the board was funded at $9 million. OMB only requested $7.5. So this falls at level funding. The $5 million for EPA science and technology leaves $640 million left in that particular account. We feel that the deficit or lack of national security overrides the small offsets that we have in this particular bill.

I would also say to the gentleman, this gentleman is not hard on any one of these cuts. In conference I would be happy to work with the gentleman in the reduction in different areas. To me the reduction areas are not as important as saving Selective Service.

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

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), the chairman of the subcommittee.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment proposed by my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM).

Mr. Chairman, in the discussion about Selective Service, a good deal has been said about the fact that military enlistment is dropping and, therefore, the need for Selective Service is greater. But the fact is in the economy we currently have in a country where there is relatively low unemployment and high paying job opportunities, young men do not want to go in the military service because of the low pay and low standard of living that has been associated with the military in the recent past. That is something that Selective Service does not address, but it is something that the Congress is addressing and should address in terms of making sure the members of the military are well paid for the dangerous job that they do.

This is a matter of funds. We have a very difficult allocation, and we are talking about providing, or, if we honor the gentleman's request here, we would have to come up with $25 million basically for a mothballed program that is not delivering at the current time any services to us. At a time when we have such difficult budget constraints, it does not make sense to mothball a program that we can deal with in the eventuality that there is the need to find people to serve our country.

The Congress spent months debating whether or not to go into Kosovo, and there would have been more than adequate time to go out and find the additional men, and we have not discussed women in the sense of Selective Service, but go out certainly to find men and women to provide service in defense of the country in a situation like that or any other.

So I think this is the time in our history when we should use these funds to take care of the needs of the people of the country and stop paying to mothball this program.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL).

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate very much this opportunity to address this amendment. I rise in strong opposition to this amendment. I compliment the chairman of the subcommittee, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), for deleting these funds, in this bill.

This to me is a heroic step in the right direction. We have an agency of Government spending more than $24 million a year accomplishing nothing. We live in an age when we do not need a draft. We live in an age of technology that makes the draft obsolete. Not only is it unnecessarily militarily to have a draft, it is budgetarily not wise to spend this type of money.

More importantly, I rise in strong objection on moral principles that the draft is wrong. In most of our history we did not have a draft. The gentleman from California early on pointed out that essentially since World War I we have had a draft, and that is true. Since in this century we have seen a diminished respect for personal liberty with the growth of the state we have seen much more willingness to accept the idea that young men belong to the state.

That is what the registration is all about. I have a young grandson that had to register not too long ago, and he came to me and said, You know, ''they sent me a notice that I better go register. Why do I have to register, if they already know where I am and how old I am?'' That is the case. The purpose of registration is nothing more than putting an emphasis on the fact that the state owns all 18-year-olds.

The unfortunate part about a draft is that too often draftees are used in wars that are not legitimate. This is so often the case. If this country faced an attack, we should have volunteers. We should all volunteer. But, unfortunately, the generation of politicians who declare the wars too often never serve. Some of them have not even served in the past. But they are willing to start wars that are not legitimate, and yet they depend on the draft. They depend on the draft for the men to go out and fight and die.

The one really strong reason we should all reject the idea of the draft is it is so unfair.

□ 1415

Let us say an argument is made that it is necessary. I happen to believe it is

never necessary to violate somebody's liberty, but let us say there is a sincere belief that it is necessary to impose a draft.

There is no such thing as a fair draft. This is why the sixties were in such turmoil in this country, because the elite frequently evaded the draft. If they are smart enough to get a deferment, they got off. Who suffers from the draft? The poor and the less educated, the inner city teenagers. They end up getting the draft, and they do not get the deferments. They cannot avoid it.

It is very important that we consider not only this vote on fiscal reasons and where we are taking the money. Quite frankly, I would much rather see this money stay in the programs where, as a fiscal conservative, I would not have otherwise voted for those funds nay. But any funding of that sort is so much better on principle than voting to perpetuate a system that has no purpose other than to conscript.

Conscription is not part of the American dream. It is not part of the American philosophy. It is not part of liberty. It is a totalitarian notion. Congress has the authority to raise an army, but it does not have the constitutional authority to enslave a certain group to bear the brunt of the fighting. A society that cherishes liberty will easily find its volunteer defenders if it is attacked. A free society that cannot find those willing to defend itself without coercion cannot survive, and probably does not deserve to.

A free society that depends on the vicious totalitarian principle of conscription is, by its very nature, no longer free.

We gradually lost our love for individual liberty throughout the 20th century as the people and the Congresses capitulated to the notion of the military draft. The vote on the Selective Service System funding will determine whether or not we are willing to take a very welcome, positive step in the direction of more liberty by rejecting the appropriations for the Selective Service System.

There is no other vote that a Member of Congress can cast that defines one's belief and understanding regarding the principle of personal liberty than a vote supporting or rejecting the draft. This vote gives us a rare opportunity to reverse the trend toward bigger and more oppressive government.

Yes, preserving liberty is worth fighting and even dying for, but conscription is incompatible with that goal. We cannot make men free by first enslaving them and forcing them to sacrifice their lives and liberty for the policies conceived by misdirected politicians and international warmongers.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). The gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM) is recognized for 7 minutes.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Chairman, again I thank the gentleman from New York (Chairman WALSH). I know what a difficult time he has had. We happen to disagree on this issue; not only myself, but take a look at the supporters we have on this particular amendment.

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs disagreed with the last speaker. The Secretary of Defense disagrees strongly with the last speaker, as does the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPENCE), chairman of the defense authorization committee, and the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS), chairman of the Subcommittee on Defense of the Committee on Appropriations. The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURTHA), ranking member on the Subcommittee on Defense, opposes it.

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG), the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, opposes, which is very difficult, opposes his subcommittee chairman on this particular issue; not the bill, but on this particular issue.

Also, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER), chairman of the Subcommittee on Military Personnel; the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ORTIZ), and the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MEEK) opposes, and I could go right on down the line with the bipartisan support.

This is a controversial issue. This is the first time this has been debated. My colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) has a full right to believe like he does. The independent view, however, is not the view, and the gentleman votes 99 percent against everything on the House floor. I expected no less. I would almost let him speak more because I think he makes our case.

This is a time-proven event. If we have a chemical or biological weapons attack on the United States, with the selective service the President designates those health care workers, and then the Selective Service System would go in and select those people that are necessary to protect American citizens. Any delay in that would be foolhardy and would be very, very dangerous. The GAO said if we cut this program it would take up to an entire year to establish a system.

I would tell my friend, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL), I hope we never have to go to a subscription program. I hope that that emergency and the conflict against the United States never happens to that point. I do not think it will. It could in the future. If that is necessary, then we have to provide that backup. Think of the consequences if we do not. Millions of people, American citizens, their lives would be lost.

This is a better insurance policy than we can have in almost any bill that we vote on. It is very important. It is the third tier to our active duty and our reservists.

Peace and freedom is elusive. It is very fragile. In the history of the United States, in the history of the world, there has been conflict. Is there any Member here in this body that says that we will not be in another conflict in the next year? And with the threats out there that we have, we dare not not support this particular amendment.

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

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

The gentleman has called attention to my voting record. I would say that if I could show the gentleman that I voted 100 percent for the Constitution, would the gentleman still complain about my voting record being 90 percent, 99 percent in opposition? Being for liberty is not a negative position.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Chairman, I reclaim the balance of my time. I said the gentleman has the right to do so very much. I respect that. I just happen to disagree with the gentleman on this particular amendment. Mr. Chairman, to seek compliance in this, we are trying to let the potential registrars know what their requirement is so they do not break the law.

President Carter in 1980 asked Congress if we would allow women to register. The Supreme Court found that Congress could restrict that because at that time we did not have women in combat.

This issue has been debated five times, Mr. Chairman. Each time we have restored the Selective Service. We will restore it today, I am sure. I would also tell my colleagues who are opposed to this that in conference we will be happy to work off the different dollars in funding out of the different areas.

I am not hard and fast on any of the offsets. The more important factor to us is the reselection and readministration of the Selective Service System.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Chairman, as a former local draft board member, I rise in strong support of the amendment offered by my colleague from California. The most important decision Congress and the President can make is to send our young men and women to war. An all-volunteer military sometimes makes it easier for the President to use the military forces liberally. The draft and Selective Service ensure that we should only go to war when it is of vital concern to our national security.

At a time when our military services are failing to meet recruiting and retention goals, it is foolhardy and risky to eliminate the Selective Service System—a proven means of providing personnel to the Armed Forces during times of emergency. The men and women of our all-volunteer armed forces have performed superbly since its inception. The all-volunteer force is a strong force, but it is also a fragile force. It relies on recruiting and retaining quality people. Our armed forces have been reduced to the point where the military struggles to meet all the commitments we place on it. It should be noted that during the recent air war in Kosovo, the Air Force announced a ''stop

loss'' policy, which suspended normal separations and retirements for men and women in critical career fields. Thankfully we did not have a ground war in Kosovo or another crisis of similar proportion at the same time. But if we did, I am sure that the Army and Marine Corps would likely have been forced to institute their own ''stop loss'' policies resulting in the possibility of sending soldiers and Marines with expired enlistment contracts into harms way.

The all-volunteer force has not been tested during a conflict with mass casualties. Would young men and women continue to volunteer in the numbers required for the armed forces if the war in Kosovo produced significant casualties? What if the peacekeeping force suffers significant casualties? Hopefully they will continue to volunteer, but the Selective Service System is our nation's insurance policy for our national defense.

Some people may say that the Selective Service System is obsolete and may not provide the type of individuals required for our hi-tech armed forces. But the Selective Service System provides a means to draft people with critical skills—such as doctors, nurses and other health care personnel, and in the future individuals such as computer technicians may be needed by our military to combat cyberwarfare.

Providing for a strong national defense is one of Congress' most important responsibilities. The Selective Service System is part of our national defense strategy and I strongly urge all my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the Cunningham amendment.

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in full support of this amendment and urge my colleagues to support its passage.

In the post Cold War environment, the Selective Service System represents a ''national security insurance policy'' in a very volatile and unpredictable world community. Right now, American service personnel are deployed in numerous contingency operations around the globe. North Korea, Iraq and the Balkans still exist as potential flash points that could very easily erupt in the near future. Each would require a sizable force structure.

Simply put, the United States is militarily involved in three potential major theaters of war, despite having a force structure that is supposed to fight and win two near simultaneous major regional conflicts. This is truly alarming given the future uncertainty of military manpower as a result of the service's recruiting and retention problems. The Selective Service System is the primary source of leads for military recruiters when prospecting for candidates to join the all-volunteer force.

Equally important, registration represents one of the few remaining obligations our nation requires of its young men. In the nation's changing cultural environment that places more emphasis on receiving benefits, than on service to one's country, elimination of this program will further erode the consciousness of the populace about military service and its obligation to defend our country.

Finally, let me remind this chamber of its Constitutional obligation. Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution states ''that Congress shall have the power to . . . raise and support Armies, . . . to provide and maintain a Navy, . . . and to provide for organizing, arming and disciplining the Militia.'' I believe the Selective Service System is the foundation of this obligation.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to remember their Constitutional obligation and vote to pass this amendment in order to adequately fund the Selective Service System.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Cunningham-Spence amendment which will strike the language included in this bill to terminate the Selective Service System. Despite popular convention that the Selective Service System is an anachronistic vestige of days long gone, the fact remains that our nation requires an insurance policy in case of a national crisis. The Selective Service would provide manpower to the military by conducting a draft using a list of young men's names gathered through the Selective Service registration process. This process has stood the test of time and has proved its worth in times of emergency. And while the Selective Service System has been portrayed by some as an anachronistic vestige of a bygone era, the fact remains that it is a necessary component for the defense of our nation. Admittedly, the professionalization of the military has in some cases obviated the need to have a national registration system. However, should there ever be another global calamity such as the kind that occurred twice in this century, with the Selective Service System, our government would have the ready infrastructure in place to provide the necessary personnel resources to defend liberty. This safety net is provided at minimal cost to the taxpayer and is well worth the investment. I urge all my colleagues to vote for the Cunningham/Spence Amendment and restore the President's recommendation to fund the Selective Service System.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. Speaker, today, I reluctantly rise in opposition to the Cunningham-Spence-Buyer-Moran-Ortiz amendment to the Veterans/Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill for FY 00, H.R. 2684. While I believe the world remains a dangerous place and consider the selective service essential to ensuring the United States Armed Forces possesses adequate manpower for national emergencies, I cannot support legislation which cuts vital hurricane funding protection and environmental research for South Louisiana.

By striking $5 million from the FEMA Management and Planning account, the Louisiana coast will be unable to implement a buoy system to monitor hurricanes as they approach our coasts. Furthermore, the FEMA Management and Planning account includes funding to develop a New Orleans hurricane evacuation plan for a Category 3 or greater storm. Surely, providing $1 million to take steps toward implementing an evacuation plan for New Orleans is a small price to pay both in terms of lives and money.

In addition to the hurricane funding cuts, Congressman CUNNINGHAM's amendment would threaten to cut $1 million in funding from the University of New Orleans Urban Waste Management Center's budget. The UNO Urban Waste Management Center not only identifies the economic impact and benefits associated with various recycling programs, but it also provides additional educational institutions and national government agencies important waste management assistance.

In a $92 billion appropriations bill, it is unfortunate that we have not learned our lesson from previous hurricane tragedies and targeted superfluous spending to continue the selective service, instead of vital protection for the citizens of South Louisiana.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Chairman, I ask for a yes vote on the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM).

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

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

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 275, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM) will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

READJUSTMENT BENEFITS

For the payment of readjustment and rehabilitation benefits to or on behalf of veterans as authorized by 38 U.S.C. chapters 21, 30, 31, 34, 35, 36, 39, 51, 53, 55, and 61, $1,469,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided,* That funds shall be available to pay any court order, court award or any compromise settlement arising from litigation involving the vocational training program authorized by section 18 of Public Law 98–77, as amended.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. FILNER

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. FILNER:

In title I, in the item relating to ''VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION—READJUSTMENT BENEFITS'', insert at the end the following:

In addition, for ''Readjustment Benefits'', $881,000,000 for enhanced educational assistance under the Montgomery GI Bill: *Provided,* That the Congress hereby designates the entire such amount as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further,* That such amount shall be available only to the extent of a specific dollar amount for such purpose that is included in an official budget request transmitted by the President to the Congress and that is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to such section 251(b)(2)(A).

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

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. 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 pro tempore. The point of order is reserved.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman for his courtesy in making a unanimous consent request earlier in the day for another amendment which I will offer later, under our rules.

Mr. Chairman, I will be offering a series of amendments to increase funding under Title I for the Veterans Administration. I do this because I believe this budget is drastically underfunded.

From my personal relationships with the chairman, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), the ranking member, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN), I know these gentlemen are strongly in support of our veterans throughout the Nation.

They were given certain rules under which they had to operate. They, as the chairman points out, many times added a significant amount of money to the baseline budget. They wish they could add more. I wish I could add more. I have a series of amendments to make that wish come true.

Mr. Chairman, we all know that the veterans of this Nation got together early in our budget process and put together what they called an independent budget, a budget that called for about $3 billion more than the baseline for this year. That was a budget created by veterans for veterans. It was a very responsible, professional job.

The Democrats on the Committee on Veterans Affairs tried to offer that budget in our authorizing committee as instructions to the Committee on the Budget. We were not allowed by the majority in this Congress, the majority in that committee, to offer that amendment. They made the case that $3 billion must be added to this budget.

The chairman said that this budget offers the greatest increase in history to the veterans budget. That may be true, but that increase, number one, follows years and years of a real decline in our budget for veterans, so it follows probably the greatest decrease ever in the history of our veterans budget, and even their increase of $1.5 billion or so is only half of what responsible veterans organizations think is the minimum to keep our system going.

Even with this largest increase, as the chairman states, it presupposes, as I think the gentleman knows, and as stated in the Republican budget resolution that was passed by this Congress, that that $1.7 billion increase this year presupposes decreases over the next 10 years adding up to almost $3 billion.

If he is right in saying this is the largest increase in history, this is 1 year, and we will have larger decreases over the next decade. So my amendments, Mr. Chairman, are intended to redress this balance.

I took the idea for this amendment, that is, to declare this situation an emergency and therefore not requiring an offset, I took this idea from the subcommittee that has their report before us. They brought to their full committee a report that said we must declare the veterans programs an emergency and ask for about $3 billion.

I think they were right. I think their full committee was wrong in overruling that. My amendment declares the situation an emergency and asks for an addition of various amounts, according to the amendment I have before us.

Veterans in my district in San Diego and across the country cannot understand what my colleague, the gentleman from San Diego, said earlier, that we should be meeting our needs of our veterans but we cannot because we have this Balanced Budget Act of 1997. We should not allow something that Congress passed to prevent us from doing the right thing now, when the situation has changed.

They see a surplus of, depending on how we look at it, $1 trillion, $3 trillion. They say, why can we not have the $3 billion necessary to increase our health care and our benefit situation?

□ 1430

So, Mr. Chairman, this amendment under consideration at the present time asks for $881 million to enhance the Montgomery G.I. bill. This program was named after one of our most legendary Members who retired a couple of years ago, Sonny Montgomery, from Mississippi. He suggested this program. It is time that we made it clear that the modern member of the Armed Services needs an increased benefit if he is going to take advantage of this benefit.

POINT OF ORDER

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

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska). The gentleman will state his 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 in an appropriations bill and, therefore, violates clause 2 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 CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Does the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) want to reply to the point of order?

Mr. FILNER. If I may reply just briefly, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I assume that legislating in the appropriations bill refers to making this an emergency designation. I would just point out to the gentleman from California (Chairman WALSH) that is exactly what he would have asked the Committee on Rules to support had his subcommittee prevailed in those considerations for emergency designation.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The Chair is prepared to rule.

The Chair finds that a proposal to designate an appropriation as ''emergency spending'' within the meaning of the budget-enforcement laws is fundamentally legislative in character. It does not merely make the appropriation. It also characterizes the appropriation otherwise made. The resulting emergency designation alters the application of existing law with respect to that appropriation. Thus, the proposal is one to change existing law.

On these premises, the Chair holds that the amendment offered by the gentleman from California, by including a proposal to designate an appropriation as ''emergency spending'' within the meaning of the budget-enforcement laws constitutes legislation in violation of clause 2(b) of rule XXI.

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

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

VETERANS INSURANCE AND INDEMNITIES

For military and naval insurance, national service life insurance, servicemen's indemnities, service-disabled veterans insurance, and veterans mortgage life insurance as authorized by 38 U.S.C. chapter 19; 70 Stat. 887; 72 Stat. 487, $28,670,000, 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 38 U.S.C. chapter 37, as amended: *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, as amended: *Provided further*, That during fiscal year 2000, within the resources available, not to exceed $300,000 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, $156,958,000, which may be transferred to and merged with the appropriation for ''General operating expenses''.

EDUCATION LOAN FUND PROGRAM ACCOUNT

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the cost of direct loans, $1,000, as authorized by 38 U.S.C. 3698, as amended: *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, as amended: *Provided further*, That these funds are available to subsidize gross obligations for the principal amount of direct loans not to exceed $3,000.

In addition, for administrative expenses necessary to carry out the direct loan program, $214,000, 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, $57,000, as authorized by 38 U.S.C. chapter 31, as amended: *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, as amended: *Provided further*, That these funds are available to subsidize gross obligations for the principal amount of direct loans not to exceed $2,531,000.

In addition, for administrative expenses necessary to carry out the direct loan program, $415,000, 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 38 U.S.C. chapter 37, subchapter V, as amended, $520,000, which may be transferred to and merged with the appropriation for ''General operating expenses''.

VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

MEDICAL CARE

For necessary expenses for the maintenance and operation of hospitals, nursing

homes, and domiciliary facilities; for furnishing, as authorized by law, inpatient and outpatient care and treatment to beneficiaries of the Department of Veterans Affairs, including care and treatment in facilities not under the jurisdiction of the Department; and furnishing recreational facilities, supplies, and equipment; funeral, burial, and other expenses incidental thereto for beneficiaries receiving care in the Department; 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; oversight, engineering and architectural activities not charged to project cost; 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; uniforms or allowances therefor, as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 5901–5902; aid to State homes as authorized by 38 U.S.C. 1741; administrative and legal expenses of the Department for collecting and recovering amounts owed the Department as authorized under 38 U.S.C. chapter 17, and the Federal Medical Care Recovery Act, 42 U.S.C. 2651 et seq.; and not to exceed $8,000,000 to fund cost comparison studies as referred to in 38 U.S.C. 8110(a)(5),

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. ROEMER

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. ROEMER:

In the matter relating to ''VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION; MEDICAL CARE'', after the second dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $350,000,000)''.

In the matter relating to ''PUBLIC AND INDIAN HOUSING; REVITALIZATION OF SEVERELY DISTRESSED PUBLIC HOUSING (HOPE VI)'', after the first dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $50,000,000)''.

In the matter relating to ''NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION; HUMAN SPACE FLIGHT'', after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $2,080,000,000)''.

In the matter relating to ''NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION; SCIENCE, AERONAUTICS AND TECHNOLOGY'', after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $675,000,000)''.

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Chairman, I offer this amendment with the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD) which will obviously do two things. One, this amendment will eliminate the funding for the over budget and ineffective Space Station. Secondly, more justly, more effectively, more compassionately, and more fairly allocate that $2 billion that we are going to spend on the Space Station this year to some programs that vitally need the funding, including almost $1 billion for debt reduction, $350 million for our veterans health care, and $50 million for distressed public housing for the poorest of the poor in America, where their budget was cut by $50 million in this bill.

The Space Station, which continues to be billions and billions of dollars over the $8 billion initial funding figure, now the projections for the total cost will be well over $100 billion. It does not seem to matter how many delays and cancellations and inefficiencies are in the Space Station.

But when we come to the poorest of the poor, when we come to the severely distressed, housing needs, we cut them by $50 million. So this amendment would restore some balance and some fairness to that.

Why are we trying to cut the Space Station? The preeminent scientist in the mid-1800s Louis Pasteur said, and I will paraphrase him, I am getting closer and closer to the mystery, and the veils are becoming thinner and thinner and thinner. Well, the veils that have really camouflaged the Space Station over the last decade are now becoming very apparent.

What is the status of NASA, let alone a Space Station that was supposed to cost $8 billion and now is well over $100 billion for the American taxpayer? Well, the status of NASA today is that, in about 1989, the Space Station took about 4 percent of the NASA budget. In 1999, Space Station will take almost one-fifth of every dollar that we appropriate for NASA. One-fifth of every dollar is going to be eaten up by the Space Station when there are so many other important programs within NASA that are doing magnificent work, whether it be Mars or Jupiter, whether it be follow-ups to our Cassinis and Rovers.

These programs are legitimate science and helpful science, and we have a Space Station that continues to massively vacuum up every available dollar.

The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) said that this $1 billion cut to NASA will probably result in the closing of two NASA space centers. The entire shuttle fleet today in September is grounded. We cannot put a shuttle up today. We are cutting shuttle safety. We are cutting back on science and aeronautics efforts within the NASA budget.

It seems to me, Mr. Chairman, that we have to save the Space Station from consuming the NASA budget, and kill the Space Station, and put the money back into these other important programs as well as put $1 billion toward debt reduction.

Now, I also am very concerned about the severely distressed housing for the poorest of the poor in America. We allocated $625 million last year. This year, that allocation is $575 million, a $50 million cut.

Now, one travels as a citizen or a Member of Congress to Chicago, in the South side, and one sees some of the 40-year-old housing that we put people in in America that are drug infested and rat infested that we are going to continue to ask people to live in those kinds of severely distressed public housing for another year and another year and another year; but we have unlimited funds for a Space Station for 7 astronauts to be housed in when tens of thousands of Americans have to put up with housing that is unsafe, that is unsanitary, that should not be fit for children to have to live in, that some children risk having nose and ears bitten by rats. We should not be at this situation in America going into this new century.

So this Roemer-Sanford amendment would shut down the Space Station on its own merits or lack of them and restore $350 million to veterans health, $50 million to severely distressed public housing, and $1 billion for debt reduction.

I encourage support for this bipartisan amendment.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word and speak in opposition to the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in very strong opposition to this amendment. It is a tradition here in the House of Representatives to take up the Roemer amendment every year in the VA, HUD bill. I began debating the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) and his supporters, his dwindling number of supporters for his amendment, back in 1995 when I first got elected, both in the full Committee on Science, in the Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics, on the floor of the House.

I commend the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) for his persistence in clinging to the idea that America should not be creating a permanent human presence in space and taking the next step that we should be taking in the process of human exploration of the universe.

But, clearly, the will of the House has been consistently in opposition to this. Indeed, in many ways, I am very pleased he is offering the amendment again, because each year we get more and more votes against the amendment. There is a reason for that, Mr. Chairman.

The reason is, number one, NASA is one agency that has been doing more with less. It is one of the few agencies in the entire Federal Government that has actually been responding to the demands of the Congress, and that is to reform and become more efficient. There is probably no better program than the Space Station program.

Many people like to point out the so-called cost overruns in the Space Station program. The vast majority of those cost overruns are being generated by some of the problems that the gentleman alluded to, the problems with the Russians. But here are some things we need to consider about the Space Station. Number one, most of it has been paid for already in terms of construction.

We are now at a point where we are ready to launch most of the elements. We are waiting for a Russian element; and when that element is on orbit, we will be in the process of constructing it, and then permanently putting a crew up there.

I think one of the most important aspects of this is that it has excited school children all over the country. When I talk to teachers anywhere I go, they all say the same thing to me, that the thing that they find motivates their kids more than anything else to

study math and science, which is so critical to the future of our Nation, is when they use examples from space.

Let me talk about one other issue. We all know the incredible scientific breakthroughs that accrue to the entire human race from our human space exploration program. Everybody is familiar with some products like velcro, for example, something we see everywhere, a spin-off from NASA.

Before I came to the U.S. Congress, I worked as a medical doctor. I am a physician. I can tell my colleagues that I used to see the impact of NASA in prolonging lives, in improving lives, the new prosthetic devices using materials that are direct spin-offs of our space program, in imaging technologies, in MRI and CAT scanning, in materials that are used for pacemakers and cardiac catheterization.

Indeed, there are entire books published by NASA called spin-offs that are just filled with page after page of our investment in science and technology through our NASA investment.

So here we are today. We have got Space Station elements stacked up and ready to go at Kennedy Space Center. We have got the Japanese ready to deliver their element. The Europeans are ready to deliver their section. The Canadians have already delivered theirs. This is the greatest scientific and engineering undertaking in human history. Much of it has already been expended.

I say to my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this amendment, and let us proceed with the program, and let us make sure that we have a future. This country was founded by pioneers. The pioneering spirit dwells in the hearts of all Americans. The place where that pioneering spirit is fulfilled is within NASA and the work that the men and women of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration are doing on a daily basis.

So I encourage all of my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the Roemer-Sanford amendment and continue our effort to explore the universe.

□ 1445

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word, and I rise in opposition to the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, again my friend, the gentleman from Indiana, joined by the gentleman from South Carolina, has proposed to terminate the International Space Station. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to that amendment. In years past this has been an ideological battle: Do we or do we not want to have a permanent human presence in Earth's orbit? Time and again this body has answered that question with a clear and increasingly resounding ''yes.'' Let me quickly run through recent votes on virtually identical amendments. Reviewing these votes will, I believe, demonstrate the support which the International Space Station does enjoy in this House.

On April 29, 1992, the gentleman offered an amendment to delete authorization for Space Station. That amendment was defeated 254 to 159. On June 23, 1993, the gentleman offered an amendment to terminate Space Station on the NASA authorization, the only close vote we have had on it, but that amendment was defeated 216 to 215. On May 30, 1996, the gentleman offered an amendment to the authorization bill to terminate Space Station and that was defeated 286 to 127. Again, on April 24, 1997, an amendment was offered to terminate the station and that was defeated 305 to 112. On July 29, 1998, an amendment to the appropriations bill was offered to strike funding. That was defeated 323 to 109. And, finally, on May 19, 1999, just this spring, the gentleman offered an amendment to delete the station from the authorization bill, and that was defeated by a rather resounding vote of 337 to 92.

My colleagues, this trend is very clear. Support is growing for Space Station in this body, not subsiding. The time has passed when we should even be considering termination of Space Station. We have had this debate on authorization and appropriations bills in years past, and each time proponents of the Space Station have prevailed. At some point there must be some finality to the decision to proceed. Mr. Chairman, I think that time has come.

We have already spent more than $22 billion on Space Station, and that investment is beginning to bear fruit. Further, we are not the only country who has invested great sums of money into the Space Station. In addition to Russia, our international partners include Canada, Japan, Italy, France, and a number of other European countries. We must not suddenly pull the plug on the Space Station and leave our investments and those of our partners to go down the drain.

All that aside, Mr. Chairman, this is no longer simply an ideological debate. As of December 6, 1998, when a team of American astronauts and Russian cosmonauts connected the Russian Zarya module with the American Unity craft, we have a functional Space Station in Earth's orbit. What is more, the long awaited launch of the Russian Service Module will take place late this fall. Once it has docked with the existing structure, the International Space Station will finally be ready for a human crew. Once that happens, the Space Station will begin to fulfill its mission. As a scientific and as a technological platform, it represents the next logical step in our efforts to explore space by providing the necessary experience with building and operating large space-based structures and with measuring the effects on humans of long-term space travel.

The Space Station will also provide a platform for important scientific research, particularly medical and materials science research that require a microgravity environment. And like any other major undertaking at the cutting edge of technology, Mr. Chairman, the Space Station has had and will continue to have important spin-off benefits in terms of new products, new technologies, and new industrial processes.

Mr. Chairman, it is time to end this debate once and for all, and I urge my colleagues to vote against this amendment and subsequent amendments to the Space Station.

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

Mr. MOLLOHAN. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Chairman, I thank my good friend from West Virginia for yielding to me and note his recollection of my tenacity but my losing record of Space Station.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Chairman, I would note that I admire the gentleman's tenacity.

Mr. ROEMER. If the gentleman will continue to yield, I want to note for the gentleman, as he mentioned in his remarks, that we have spent about $22 billion on the Space Station, and I think that is absolutely accurate, as my friend always is, but that the General Accounting Office has estimated that the total cost of putting a space station in space will be over $100 billion. So we still have $80 billion to go.

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

I first of all want to commend the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON) because if I lived in the area around Cape Canaveral, Titusville, Florida, I would want the gentleman as my representative; but I do not, and so I find myself with the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) on this amendment, reluctantly, because the gentleman has consistently been a tireless advocate for NASA and associated programs.

I rise in support of this amendment, though, because I think it makes common sense, first of all simply from the standpoint of the budget caps. The budget caps have become a bad word here in Washington, but in essence they are the rails along the highway that set the course in terms of what we are willing to spend out of people's pockets, our folks back home. We may well go over those rails, we may break the budget caps; but if we are serious about the budget caps, we have to find a couple of areas wherein we say we actually want to limit the growth of Government in this, that, or some other program; and this is an amendment that actually does that.

And, again, if we are going to stay true to those budget caps, doing that is incredibly important. And that is why, for instance, Citizens Against Government Waste have come out in support of this amendment, the National Taxpayers Union has come out in support of this amendment, and Taxpayers for Common Sense has come out in support of this amendment, because it helps us maintain some kind of fiscal discipline in this House.

The second reason I think this amendment makes sense is that there

is a giant check floating around Washington, D.C. and on the top of that check are marked the words ''insufficient funds.'' And the person that that check is to be made payable to are the veterans of America. Because what I consistently hear from folks back home is that they fought in World War II, they had some friends killed in World War II, they either lost a limb or was shot, or maybe they were not even hurt at all but the promise made to them by the Federal Government was that when they grew a little older, when it came to retirement age, they would be taken care of. It turns out there are insufficient funds in that account.

So this amendment does something about that. It moves $350 million out of this funding, which is truly out in space, to something very much in need here on Earth. And that is why this amendment is supported by the American Legion, it is supported by American Veterans, it is supported by Paralyzed Veterans of America, and it is supported by Vietnam Veterans of America, because it addresses this critical need to which right now there is a check marked insufficient funds.

Thirdly, I support this amendment, going back to this theme of gravity, because we are looking, as the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) correctly pointed out earlier, we are looking at a program that basically started to the tune of around $8 billion or so and it has now grown to $100 billion. We are not talking about the elimination of NASA; we are not talking about the elimination of space programs. What we are talking about is one specific program. Because it is crowding out a lot of other priorities.

Going back to the point that the gentleman from Indiana raised earlier, if we were $200 short toward fixing our car, let us say the fixup would supposedly cost $1,000, but the $800 would not fix the car, would we spend the other $800? Or if we were going to make an investment and it was going to cost $2,000, but the total investment would be $10,000, would we spend the other $8,000 if it was a bad investment? I think the answer is clearly no. And that is where we are on this, I think.

Because this is what this amendment does: it moves $675 million of funding to things like, for instance, the Pathfinder, where for $250 million we can get to Mars; for $75 million on the Clementine we can get to the Moon. It goes to some fairly effective space programs. In fact, it restores 62 percent of the cut that was in that particular account in NASA, and it moves to some things that we can actually do something about, I think some much higher priority items.

Fourthly, I would just mention the issue of certainty. This has been touched on by several other folks. But anytime we have in the course of a critical path, whether it is in commerce or whether it is in business, a partner that is uncertain, is that the kind of investment we would make? At minimum we would put the brakes on and say let us look at this thing closely. I think that is where we should be with the Space Station.

Finally, this is about priorities. There are a limited number of dollars in Washington. And while inspiring schoolchildren is nice, if we really want to motivate them, we should put dollars into the classroom. That is how we really motivate students. This is about priorities and, therefore, I urge its adoption.

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Roemer-Sanford amendment which would provide a $350 million increase for health care for our Nation's veterans. This will bring the total funding increase for VA health care to $2.05 billion. This amount is almost exactly what was proposed in the additional and dissenting views offered to the Committee on the Budget by Democratic members of the Committee on Veterans Affairs.

I want to thank my colleagues, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD), for inviting me to work with them on this important amendment. The amendment will allow the VA to make important enhancements in veterans' health care. It will provide funding to reimburse emergency care for veterans. This will ensure veterans are not reduced to second-class citizenry as other Americans benefit from a patients' bill of rights.

It will allow critically needed funding to shore up long-term care and mental health programs, and it will assure adequate funds to provide screening and treatment for veterans who have the hepatitis C virus.

Veterans who served during the Vietnam era are at a greater risk for having hepatitis C virus than any other Americans; yet I have had to request VA's Inspector General to investigate allegations that, because of underfunding, the VA has to ration the screening and care it provides to our Nation's heroes with this disease.

I understand that this debate is about our priorities. I have encouraged and been encouraged by the efforts I have seen from Members on both sides of the aisle. It is high time we make our veterans a high national priority. A vote for the Roemer-Sanford amendment will allow us to do so. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting it.

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me, and I just want to make two brief points.

The gentleman from South Carolina who spoke in support of this amendment mentioned the $100 billion price tag on the Space Station. I just want to again reiterate for my colleagues a point I have made previously in this debate, and that is that that $100 billion includes the construction cost of the Space Station, all of the shuttle mission costs, and all of the research that is going on there.

The gentleman's earlier assertion is akin, I would say, to someone who was going to purchase a house for $75,000 to say that they were actually spending around $300,000 because that is what it would cost for the cable bills and the electric bills and for the purchaser's food and clothing over the next 30 years. The actual construction cost on the Space Station is about $24 billion. I agree that is a lot of money, but it is money that has already been spent. We are ready to roll.

And for the sake of abbreviating the debate here, we have had this debate for many, many years, I will conclude and again encourage all my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the Roemer-Sanford amendment.

□ 1500

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Chairman, I would say to my friends, the issue of whether we want to end up in space or not is a valid issue. But we are ready to go with this system. The gentleman talks about cost, but this Space Station has been redesigned and redesigned and redesigned each time because of cuts in funding that has increased the funding. It is just like if we want to buy a system and we have to redesign it, then we have to almost double the cost. This would also kill the entire program.

I, unlike my colleagues, believe that the spin-offs are going to be very important. Whether we are looking at the world and the temperature controls or the different environmental concerns that we have on Earth, I think we are going to look at those from space; and there has been good evidence to do that.

In space, we can look at a cell from four different angles. On Earth, we can only do it in one dimension. The scientists at NIH and other areas have said that this kind of research is going to lead to the cure of AIDS and those different things in which they cannot even look at the cell division.

So I would rise in opposition to my friend. And though his goals are noteworthy in the areas that he wants to increase, I think for us to turn our heads away from a program that is ready to go with all the other nations that are involved not only sends a poor message to the leadership of this country but to what we will be able to achieve in space itself.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I rise to strike the requisite number of words and speak in opposition to the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, the committee and the subcommittee recommendation already cuts NASA funding more than

any other program within this bill, with the exception of AmeriCorps and Selective Service.

The committee, while severe in the minds of some, still allows NASA to operate its core programs. This amendment would make it next to impossible for NASA operations to be conducted and it may jeopardize other programs within NASA.

The proposal to delete $2 billion of the funding for the International Space Station would effectively cause us to waste an investment of over $20 billion already expended in the program at a time when we are so close to making real progress on assembly and utilization of the on-orbit facilities.

The figure of $100 billion has been mentioned a couple of times. But, in fact, the General Accounting Office, as recently as August of 1999 suggested the total shuttle costs, including assembly, development, and all the science and research that have gone into this and the operation, GAO's estimate is $53 billion, not $100 billion. And so, almost all the major components of this station have been manufactured.

I recently visited Kennedy Space Center and witnessed as they had all of these different parts and pieces brought together, parts that were assembled all over the world, Italy, Russia, U.S., Canada, and so forth, testing them out; and now the really exciting aspect of this project begins, the aspect of this project that young people all over the country are focusing on at space camp and in schools and colleges around the country where they are glued to what is about to happen as we start sending these parts and pieces up into space, assemble them within the telescopic eye of everyone on Earth. Everyone has an opportunity to participate and be excited in this program.

And so the corner has been turned. It has been difficult and expensive to get to this point, but now we begin the assembly. But we have arrived at this point and it would be tragic if we are not to go forward and see the process through to its successful conclusion. A tremendous investment has been made and we should not waste it.

Much has been said about keeping commitments, especially keeping commitments to veterans. We have done that, Mr. Chairman. We have, as I said, increased the veterans medical health care budget by an amount of $1.7 billion, the largest increase in the history of veterans medical health care; and we are proud of that commitment that the subcommittee bill has made. But we need to keep our other commitments, too, within this bill. Given the budgetary constraints that we have had, it has been difficult, but we have accomplished that. We need to keep the commitments made to our partners here.

I urge that the Committee of the Whole reject this amendment.

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong and unchanged opposition to the Roemer amendment.

I am a little bit uneasy about the things that I have to say, and I am trying to think of something nice to say about the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) that I have not said before on all the other occasions that we have voted this amendment down.

A good American? You bet. Bad amendment? Absolutely. Great Member of Congress? No question about it. Bad amendment? It is a cinch it is a bad amendment. Fine personal friend? I do not have any better. As a matter of fact, we probably voted together on every other item that comes before this Congress but this one amendment.

He is a wonderful guy, just wrong on this amendment. I thought it was a bad amendment back when he first brought it up. I still think it is bad. This amendment, I think everybody knows, would cancel the Space Station just when we are really getting ready to reap the rewards of the investment we already made in this program, a huge investment we made.

The first two pieces of the Station are already in place. Much of the rest of the Station is hardware that is stacked out there somewhere around Cape Kennedy that is ready to be put in place, much of it already purchased. It would be a colossal waste of money to stop the Space Station at this late date just as we are starting to assemble it. At the same time, crippling the Space Station would really cripple our ability to conduct the important biomedical and research plan for the Space Station. And that is one of the reasons I am still in Congress, to see the biomedical thrust in space.

All of us have a reason for this. My reason is personal because I have had cancer in my family. I have had them wasting away in the cancer ward. I know the benefit of a biomedical thrust in space. We have it up there now. We have to keep it up there.

I think the U.S. and the taxpayers of this country are ready for a breakthrough from space. I say to the gentleman who has the amendment, we are ready for something other than giant expenditures of money. I agree with him on that. We are ready for something other than ticker tape parades. We are ready for a break-through from space, like a cure for cancer, diabetes, or any of the other dreaded diseases.

I think that certainly includes research that can help the veterans that are wasting away in VA hospitals with the dreaded diseases that we cannot cure today with the technology that we have.

My colleagues all know that I am a supporter of the veterans and I am a supporter of fiscal responsibility. However, this amendment does nothing to help either cause. It should be defeated. I urge the Members to oppose the amendment.

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

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the words of those NASA supporters here today; and I rise, too, in opposition to the Roemer amendment, which he is offering for the second time this year.

I have been here since the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) came here when we came into Congress together, and I have gone through this drill with him since 1992. And here we are again.

I would say some good things about him, but the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) has already said those good things about him. The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) and I are occasionally on the same side of the same issue but never never over this issue of NASA.

I want to say to the chairman of the subcommittee, I am new to the subcommittee, as of course the chairman knows, and I have gone to the subcommittee because I looked forward to working with the chairman, looked forward to working with my ranking member, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) here. I appreciate both their words today here in support of NASA. Of course, I am troubled by the overall NASA mark in this bill and hope that this is just the beginning of what we will have to go through and that we will eventually correct funding for NASA in general. Because I think, in general, a $1 billion cut is an unacceptable cut.

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

Mr. CRAMER. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I hate to take any of the valuable time of the Member because I know he has been waiting, but I would like to suggest that I look forward to working with him as we go through this process to try to find a way to meet the needs of a very important department in our Federal Government, and that is NASA.

I associate myself with the remarks of the gentleman regarding the funding of NASA, and I urge him to work with us as we go along.

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, I appreciate that attitude and the attitude of the staff, as well. I know that this is a very difficult position for the chairman to be in, especially as our bill proceeds through this process late in the game. It has been very tough for us to come up with a passable bill. But I thank the gentleman for those remarks.

To the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) as well, we have been through this battle over the Space Station, over efforts to fund NASA at an appropriate level that would allow science and the Space Station to do the things that we know they can do, and I appreciate his work here today, as well.

I would say to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) that he is wrong again. It is about time that he directs his attention to issues other than killing the Space Station. Let us look for

other ways that we can work together other than having to come to the floor like this and go through what I now consider a very unnecessary drill here.

As my colleague knows, the prime contractor is 84 percent through with building the Space Station. I think it has already been said in this debate, if not in this debate, in the debate earlier this year, that by the end of this year half a million pounds will be in space. It is too late for us to turn our back on the Space Station program.

We are fooling ourselves to think that if we end the Space Station we will help all of NASA. That is simply not true. If we pull the heart out of NASA through killing the Space Station program, then we will be pulling the heart out of the science program.

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

Mr. CRAMER. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Chairman, I too want to join in saying nice things about my colleague as well.

My good friend from Alabama (Mr. CRAMER) and I have served on the Committee on Science for many years and had fought to restore money into the aeronautics account and worked on the Doppler radar systems together for our respective districts.

This is just a difference of opinion. We have a bill before us that has great leadership in the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN). But we have a billion-dollar shortfall on the NASA budget the we have no money for AmeriCorps. We have $50 million less for severely distressed public housing for the poorest of the poor.

I do not support tax increases, as my colleague does not. We voted together against tax increases. So the only way that we can try to in some kind of fair and principled way resolve our differences is for me to go after a program that has not worked very well, in my humble opinion, and put money into debt reduction, put money back into severely distressed housing, and put money back into veterans organizations.

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, because I do not have that much time to spare, I, of course, disagree with my colleague from Indiana. This is the wrong time to pull a further rug out from under NASA; and my colleagues are fooling themselves if they think by killing the Space Station they are helping other parts of this very difficult appropriations bill.

We have got our work cut out for us. I might agree with my colleagues that funding should be restored to other programs within this bill, but killing the Space Station is certainly not the way to do it and this is certainly not the time to do it. I hope the Members coming back here after this long and enjoyable August break are not fooled by this annual battle that my colleague takes us through.

Oppose the Roemer amendment.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mr. Chairman, I certainly want to follow up with some kind words of my good friend, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER), who shared so many hours on the Committee on Science. And I thought for a moment he might be born again, but I realize his commitment. And it gives me the opportunity to explain to the American people why this is a misdirected and wrong-headed approach to budget cuts or concerns about overspending because that is not what we are having in NASA.

Let me also thank the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) for their kind remarks in opposing this amendment and their leadership.

Although joining my colleague, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. CRAMER), I take great issue in the billion-dollar cut that we face in NASA overall in this bill, the VA-HUD bill, and think we need to fix it and hope that my colleagues will join me tomorrow in fixing it.

But I say to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER), this particular amendment is again wrong, juxtaposed against the billion-dollar cut. I, too, am a supporter of AmeriCorps. I am a supporter of veterans health care. In fact, I have made a commitment and talked to my veterans in my community to indicate to them that I would always stand with them for the kind of funding that they need that pays the right amount of respect for what veterans have done for America.

But at the same time, we are being foolhardy in cutting NASA, an agency that has cut itself. NASA has been one of the leanest and I would like not to say meanest but one of the most fiscally responsible agencies that the United States has had. And here we are attempting to cut NASA on top of the $924 million, almost a billion dollars, that is being cut.

What does that mean? I used a metaphor just a few minutes ago. To build or rebuild the San Francisco bridge, for many of us who have admired this bridge, get it halfway over the water and simply say, stop.

We realize that the Russian MIR is on its way to retirement. There is 77,000 tons in space now. The Space Station is potentially utilized to do research in space that covers aeronautical research or aviation safety. It covers, as well, research in HIV–AIDS, high blood pressure, heart condition, and cancer.

We still have not reached the point of determining the questions to those dreadful diseases or symptoms. At the same time we are talking about cutting NASA.

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In addition, we are talking about people who have invested their lives to do research for America so that we can advance and make life better for Americans all over this Nation.

We are a world power, and we stand strong as a leader in space and yet when we ask our partners, Italy and France and others, to be fiscally responsible and keep their commitment, look what we are doing today, cutting NASA again and then cutting it with a $924 billion cut.

In light of the docking that we have seen this summer, and Frank Culbersome of NASA said that the docking that went on with the Space Shuttle Discovery was a historic moment and yet today we cut NASA. Just a few years ago, some of my colleagues in Congress, before I came, thought it was important to cut the super collider. Many of my colleagues may not remember that, but right now most of that research is going on overseas and some of us think we have missed the boat.

We have been talking over the years about math and science prowess with our students and so NASA has been working with our educational systems, our school systems, our primary and secondary schools, to ensure that our children are excited about and competitive in math and science; and yet the dollars that I know my friend and colleague will be cutting will be cutting those very programs to make us competitive in the world and international markets. This is wrong headed and that is why I hope tomorrow to find the goodwill of my colleagues in restoring the $924 million that they will join me in recognizing that, though the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) is consistent that his cuts, added to the $1 billion cut or almost $1 billion cut, is completely hypocritical in light of the $792 billion tax cut that the American people are not asking for, but yet my Republican colleagues persist in wanting to give.

I would think that the American people want to see us fund veterans health care; and I would like my colleagues to support me in that, as well in housing, and to ensure that we remain competitive with the NASA leadership, provide our young people with training in science and math, be on the cutting edge of technology, provide us with safe travel and air travel, and ensure that the space shuttle and the space station stay on schedule and that we do not throw good money after bad and ruin the leadership role that the United States has had in space research and exploration.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to voice my concern because in its present form the VA–HUD appropriation bill will surely and deservedly be vetoed. The path that this bill presents is a steady decline in services. Despite the current economic strength of our nation, this Congress is ready to approve a budget that cannot even spend the same amount as last year on housing assistance for low income elderly or families with children, or basic research funded by

NASA and the NSF, or on community service by our youth, or financial support for building businesses in impoverished urban and rural communities. During this time of prosperity we cannot afford these programs but we can afford an $800 billion tax cut.

I am proud of the Johnson Space Center and its many accomplishments, and I am a staunch supporter of NASA and its various programs. NASA has had a stunningly brilliant 40 years, and I see no reason why it could not have another 40 successful years.

There is no doubt, the spirit of NASA captures America's most treasured and valuable virtues—curiosity of the unknown, ingenuity beyond measure, and undaunted resolve in the face of adversity. That spirit is born out of the character of the NASA family, which is made up of agency employees and their loved ones, along with the business and residential communities of Houston.

This year, the Appropriations Committee has recommended funding for NASA that is over $924 million short of the NASA request. This situation is untenable. We cannot underfund this important agency.

In particular, the Committee's recommendation falls $250 million short of NASA's request for its Human Space Flight department. This greatly concerns me because this budget item provides for human space flight activities, including the development of the international space station and the operation of the space shuttle.

I firmly believe that a viable, cost-effective International Space Station has been devised. We already have many of the space station's components in orbit. Already the space station is 77-feet long and weighs over 77,000 pounds. We have tangible results from the money we have spent on this program.

Just this past summer, we had a historic docking of the space shuttle Discovery with the International Space Station. The entire world rejoiced as Mission Commander Kent Rominger guided the Discovery as the shuttle connected with our international outpost for the first time. The shuttle crew attached a crane and transferred over two tons of supplies to the space station.

Frank Culbertson, NASA's deputy program manager for space station operations noted, ''The history of this moment shouldn't be lost on us. [This docking] was a very significant event.''

Culbertson's words should not be lost on us mere months after he uttered them. History has been made, yet, we seek to withdraw funding for the two vital components, the space station and the space shuttle, that made this moment possible. We cannot lose sight of the big picture. With another 45 space missions necessary to complete the space station, it would be a grave error of judgment to impede on the progress of this significant step toward further space exploration.

Given NASA's recognition of a need for increased funding for shuttle safety upgrades, it is NASA's assessment that the impact of a $150 million cut in shuttle funding would be a reduction in shuttle flight rate, specifically impacting ISS assembly. Slowing the progress of the ISS assembly would defer full research capabilities and would result in cost increases.

Both the International Space Station and the space shuttle have a long, glorious history of international relations. We can recall the images of our space shuttle docking with the Russian Mir space station. Our nations have made such a connection nine times in recent years. This connection transcended scientific discovery: it signified the true end of the Cold War and represented an important step toward international harmony.

The International Space Station, designed and built by 16 nations from across the globe, also represents a great international endeavor. Astronauts have already delivered the American-made Unity chamber and have connected it to the Russian-built Zarya control module. Countless people from various countries have spent their time and efforts on the space station.

To under-fund this project is to turn our backs on our international neighbors. Space exploration and scientific discovery is universal, and it is imperative that we continue to move forward.

I plan to offer three amendments that would add $15.5 million to the Human Space Flight section of the NASA budget because it is imperative that we provide adequate funding for the Human Space Flight's programs. Offsets for this funding would come from the American Battle Monuments Commission, the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, and Emergency Management Planning and Assistance.

These amendments do not come close to repairing the damage done by the Appropriations Committee, but they will provide much needed assistance, and they will show NASA, America, and our international neighbors that we do care about space exploration and our glorious history that we continue to create.

I also denounce the cuts made by the Appropriations Committee to NASA's science, aeronautics, and technology. This bill cuts funding for this program $678 million below the 1999 level.

By cutting this portion of the NASA budget, we will be unable to develop new methodologies, better observing instruments, and improved techniques for translating raw data into useful end products. It also cancels our ''Pathfinder'' generation of earth probes.

Reducing funding for NASA's science, aeronautics, and technology hinders the work of our space sciences, our earth sciences, our academic programs, and many other vitally important programs. By under-funding this item by $449 million, the Appropriations Committee will severely impede upon the progress of these NASA projects.

Some of the largest cuts in the bill come in the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Reductions in HUD programs below the prior year's level are spread throughout the bill. Of the 24 on going accounts within the HUD title, the bill increases spending for one, freezes 9 at the 1999 level, and cuts the remaining 14 below 1999. Some of the cuts are small, others are substantial. A recent study on housing needs found more than 5.3 million very low income families with worst case needs who were receiving no federal housing assistance at all.

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

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

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment and, for that matter, I rise in opposition to the bill as it is currently drafted. First, with respect to the amendment, in a press conference that a number of us just held where we talked about the bill, the underlying bill itself and how it funds NASA, one of my colleagues talked about how this bill was like eating the seed corn.

Well, this amendment, unfortunately, while well intentioned by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) is a little bit like cutting your crops down before they are harvested. We have already put the seed in the ground. We have already fertilized the ground. We have already raised the crops and we are about to harvest those crops; and instead of doing so, we are just going to burn the field; and we are going to burn our entire investment in this program where we have already had some yield, but before we get the full potential of the crop or of the product, and I think that would be a terrible mistake.

If the gentleman believes, and I totally disagree with this, but if the gentleman believes that the funding is a waste of taxpayer dollars, what a terrible waste of taxpayer dollars it would be to destroy the project right now and get nothing in return for it.

I think that would be a very big mistake, and I would hope that our colleagues would once again reject this amendment.

Now, with respect to the underlying bill, I think the fact that we are cutting about a billion dollars out of NASA or proposing to cut about a billion dollars out of NASA, cutting about a quarter of a billion dollars from the National Science Foundation is really wrong headed, and I know that the chairman of the subcommittee and the ranking member and the chairman of the committee who is on the floor tried to do the best they can with what they have, but this bill and perhaps the coming Labor HHS bill, if that ever gets to the floor in a singular form, is a product of a failure on the part of the Congress to adhere to the agreement that we made in the 1997 Budget Act.

I sat on the Committee on the Budget in 1997 when we wrote that; and the fact is over the last couple of years, through abusive use of emergency spending, through a highway bill that was incredibly bloated, and through actions taken this year, we have blown through the caps in discretionary spending at the front end and now we are taking it out on the back end, and I do not think there is anybody in the Congress who truly believes at the end of the day that we are going to abide by that.

In the meantime, all we are doing is making these illusory cuts and saying that we are going to make these cuts which really send the country backwards. I think it would be a mistake. We ought to be making an investment in the future rather than consuming today, but the way this bill is written we would be consuming our seed corn and not investing for the future.

I would hope that my colleagues would reject the Roemer amendment and would reject the underlying bill as it is currently drafted, if it cannot be corrected during the amendment process.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment to terminate the International Space Station.

We go through this exercise every year and the outcome is a foregone conclusion. When Mr. ROEMER offered a similar amendment to the authorization bill this spring, he could not even muster 100 votes. We beat back this amendment by the biggest margin in the Space Station's history. We will do so again. But, there are a few points we should make clear before doing so.

First, the gentleman has challenged Congress to set priorities. The fact is, we have. Scientific research aboard the Space Station is—and has been—our top priority for the civil space program. Congress has made that clear on a bipartisan basis for years.

Second, there is hardware in orbit. Right now, the first and second elements are assembled in space and circling the Earth. Terminating now would send the program to a fiery ending as those elements burn up upon re-entering Earth's atmosphere. That's not the right beginning to the next millennium.

Third, we have already spent the bulk of the Space Station's development funding. We've passed the roughest financial hurdles and invested some $20 billion getting the hardware on the ground ready for launch. You can see that hardware at the Kennedy Space Center right now. It belongs in orbit, not in a museum.

Finally, there are 16 other countries counting on us to finish the Space Station. They have committed billions to this project because we made a pledge to them. That's a pledge we should not break. While it is true that Russia has let the partnership down and that the Administration's decision to put Russia in the critical path has cost the taxpayers more money, two wrongs don't make a right.

Mr. Chairman, I ask all my colleagues to do what is right for our country and vote down the Roemer amendment again.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER).

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

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote, and pending that, I make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 275, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

$19,006,000,000, plus reimbursements: *Provided,* That of the funds made available under this heading, $635,000,000 is for the equipment and land and structures object classifications only, which amount shall not become available for obligation until August 1, 2000, and shall remain available until September 30, 2001.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. EDWARDS

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. EDWARDS:

In the paragraph in title I for the Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration, Medical Care, account—

(1) after the second dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $730,000,000)''; and

(2) strike the period at the end and insert a colon and the following:

Provided further, That any reduction in the rate of tax on net capital gain of individuals or corporations under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 enacted during 1999 shall not apply to a taxable year beginning before January 1, 2001.

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

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, let me first thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN), the ranking member, for the plus-up that they are responsible for on a bipartisan basis in the Committee on Appropriations for VA health care. Because of these two gentlemen, veterans will get care that they otherwise would not have received. I, among others, appreciate that effort.

But my amendment is very straightforward. It tries to more adequately fund VA health care. It says that Congress should delay for one year the capital gains tax cut recently passed in this House and take that $730 million and add it for additional spending for VA health care so that we can at least try to maintain present levels of services for our Nation's veterans.

What this amendment says, in effect, is a Congress that can afford to offer Bill Gates a multimillion dollar if not a billion dollar tax cut ought to be able to afford to fully and adequately fund veterans health care.

Let us look at where we are today, even with the $1.7 billion plus-up that the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) have been responsible for pushing. Let me quote Andrew Kistler, national commander of disabled American veterans. ''While we greatly appreciate the $1.7 billion increase over the administration's budget request contained in the VA appropriations bill, it does not go far enough to provide for the health care needs of a sicker, older veterans population.''

Let me read from the American Legion a letter dated August 4 of this year from Steve Robertson, director of the National Legislative Coalition. He says: ''The VA currently has an extremely long list of veterans seeking various types of long-term care. The VA's budgetary constraints limit its ability to effectively and efficiently meet their needs. Currently, waiting times for appointments in the VA system are staggering. We are not talking days or weeks but months. If a veteran needs a specialist, the wait is even longer.''

He goes on to say: ''The American Legion supports this amendment and any waiver that may be in order for the amendment to proceed to the floor.''

Mr. Chairman, virtually every major veterans organization in this country has come out in support of this amendment which failed by only one vote in committee, and I would urge its passage on this floor.

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

Mr. EDWARDS. I yield to the gentleman from Illinois, who has been a great leader and fighter on behalf of veterans, the ranking member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS) to add $730 million for veterans medical care in fiscal year 2000. This amendment, which the Republican members of the Committee on Rules failed to protect under the rule, assures America's veterans of the health care they need and at the level they deserve.

To offset the costs of additional funding for veterans health care, the Edwards amendment would delay implementing for one year a proposed cut in the capital gains tax, a fraction of the nearly $800 billion tax cut being proposed and passed by this House.

The Edwards amendment is about our national priorities, providing additional resources for our veterans medical care, for delaying a tax cut for the wealthiest Americans for 1 year. For me, the choice is very simple. I strongly support the Edwards amendment for the same reasons I voted against the rule on this bill. The Congress needs to provide a higher priority to veterans medical care than tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans. Congress must take the initiative to fund VA and allow it to rebuild its most excellent programs, those that serve the veterans who were injured on the battleground, those that have borne the battle. The Edwards amendment will allow VA to do this.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the measure that supports America's veterans. I appreciate the leadership of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS) on this issue.

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

Mr. EDWARDS. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS) for offering this amendment. It shows clearly that this Congress is playing off the needs of the veterans against the politics of tax cuts for those who least need them. That has been made very clear.

Now, we do not have any misunderstanding about what is going to happen to the gentleman's amendment. It is going to be ruled out of order on a technicality and the veterans all over this Nation should know that this Congress on a technicality will not pass additional funds for veterans health care.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the amendment offered by CHET EDWARDS to add $730 million for veterans' medical care in fiscal year 2000. This amendment, which the Republican members of the Committee on Rules failed to make in order under the rule assures America's veterans of the health care they need delivered at a level of service they deserve.

To offset the cost of providing the additional funds for veterans' health care, the Edwards amendment would have delayed implementation of a proposed cut in the capital gains tax for one year, a fraction of nearly $800 billion tax cut passed by this House. I ask members of this body, can't Americans wealthy enough to benefit from this tax cut afford this small sacrifice to assure our veterans won't have to deal with delays and barriers in their access to high-quality health care? The Edwards amendment is about our national priorities. Providing additional resources for our veterans medical care programs or delaying a tax break for the wealthiest Americans for one year. For me this choice is simple. I am strongly supporting the Edwards amendment for the same reasons I voted against the rule on this bill. This Congress needs to provide a higher priority to veterans medical care than tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans.

Earlier this year, the Committee on Veterans Affairs considered fiscal year 2000 funding for VA health care. Unfortunately, I was denied the opportunity to offer an amendment providing more funding than proposed by our Chairman. The Edwards amendment will provide approximately the same increase in discretionary funding for VA next fiscal year, $2.4 billion, as I had earlier sought to provide. There remains a critical need for this significant increase in funding.

Our veterans know this. Their service organizations have steadfastly supported efforts to add funds to the VA health care budget. The American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, and Paralyzed Veterans of America sent letters to the Rules Committee in support of the Edwards amendment being made in order. A coalition of veterans' groups had earlier supported the increased funding level I planned to propose to the VA Committee.

The last few years in VA health care system have been pivotal ones. VA has reformed its delivery system, bringing its acute care system into line with modern health care practice. But clinicians and patients alike have begun to cite waiting times and other problems with access to care that have been affected by this sea of change. I, and other Democratic Members met with members of the Administration to discuss this vital need. These meetings ultimately contributed to Democrats' success in securing a revised plan offered by Vice President GORE to add a billion dollars to the Presdient's FY 2000 proposal for VA health care and construction. I believe the President's revised budget proposal was critical to bringing awareness of the emerging crisis confronting the veterans' health care to Congress and I thank them for their willingness to hear the concerns of Members and take appropriate action.

There is still a case to be made for increasing the VA health care budget. Unfortunately just prior to the August District Work Period, this House voted for a rule that failed to protect the Edwards amendment being in order. This party-line vote is ''déjà vu all over again'' in helping us to help America's veterans. I remain incredulous that this Congress would knowingly choose a brief delay in the capital gains tax cut over adding funding that will better assure high-quality veterans' programs and I certainly understand why Republicans have thus far taken steps to avoid this debate.

VA needs this money. Members are aware that VA's progress in implementing some positive and necessary changes has come at a price. Shifting health care practice styles are eroding some of the VA's best programs—its long-term care programs, it rehabilitative and extended care for seriously disabled veterans, and its mental health care treatment for veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder or substance abuse issues. We are now at a point where we must restore certain programs to their past distinction. Congress must take the initiative to fund VA and allow it to re-build its most excellent programs—those that serve the veterans who were injured physically or psychically on the battleground—those that have borne the battle. The Edwards amendment will allow VA to do this. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting a measure that supports America's veterans. Vote for the Edwards amendment.

[In billions of dollars]

	Medical care appropriation	VA discretionary programs
President's original request	17.3	19.8
VA Committee Democrats	19.3	22.1
VA Committee	19	21.5
Budget Committee	19	19
President's revised request		20.8
Appropriations Committee	19	21.5
Edwards-Stabenow-Evans amendment	19.7	22.2

POINT OF ORDER

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Does the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) insist on his point of order?

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I do.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH).

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I would like to yield time to the gentleman for the purpose of discussion. My understanding was that the gentleman was going to withdraw this amendment. Is that correct?

Mr. EDWARDS. No, I did not make that representation to anyone.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, my understanding was that he would withdraw this amendment. Since that is my understanding, I will insist on the point of order.

Mr. Chairman, I make a point of order against the amendment because it proposes to change the existing law and constitutes legislation in an appropriations bill.

Mr. Chairman, I might add that this is not a real choice. This is anything but a real choice. First of all, this money is not available. I would suspect that the gentleman who proposes the amendment would oppose the tax increase in the first instance and would not vote for it. So to take funds that are out there somewhere in the ether and offer them for veterans health care is pretty disingenuous to the veterans.

What we have offered is real money. We have offered to provide $1.7 billion to the veterans to increase the medical care that we have promised them. This is keeping the commitment that we made. The President decided not to keep that commitment and the Congress, I believe, has stood up and offered to make the veterans medical administration whole.

So I would insist, Mr. Chairman, that the point of order be taken against this. This is truly, in my view, authorizing on an appropriations bill.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, may I be recognized on the point of order?

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS) is recognized on the point of order.

Mr. EDWARDS. First of all, let me again say the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) did as well as they could for veterans health care funding given the constraints of the budget that have been built in by the tax bill.

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I do not understand, frankly, the point that this would not be real money. If it is not real money, then it should not have been part of the tax bill that was passed and has been talked about greatly by my Republican colleagues over the last 30 days. If it is real money, which I assume it was when they voted for this in the tax cut bill, then it should be real money, just as real for veterans health care as it could be for tax cuts.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. My point, Mr. Chairman, is, and I do not mean to argue, but my point is that this is not real money until the President signs that tax cut into law, and I think he would agree that the President has made his position fairly clear on that.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas.

Mr. EDWARDS. Right, but I guess the point I would like to make is that if the Republican leadership felt $730 million was available for a tax cut, capital gains tax cut for 1 year for some of the wealthiest families in America then I would say I would argue that money is available, should be made available, to veterans.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. EDWARDS. I do have a parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. EDWARDS. It is about the question, Mr. Chairman, one of the questions that has been raised: Is this legislating on an appropriation bill? I think in the committee discussion it came up, the point that perhaps there were some tax provisions in an appropriation bill.

My parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Chairman, is that on October 21 of last year, less than 1 year ago today, public law 105–277 was signed into law. This was the omnibus appropriations bill, and could I inquire to the Chair how was it that that appropriation bill allowed 6 different provisions dealing

with research and other tax provisions, the research credit, the work opportunity tax credit, the welfare to work tax credit, contributions of stock to private foundations that tax credit, subpart F exemption for active finance and income tax credit, and finally the disclosure of returned information on the income contingent student loans. All of those provisions were legislating in effect and dealt with the issue of taxes, and my question is:

What rules of this House allow the House to pass less than 1 year ago an appropriation bill that funded, as my colleagues know I think it was $37 million for King Cove, Alaska, a community of 800 people, and yet today the House might not be allowed to offer this tax provision which pays for the veterans health care increase on a similar appropriation bill.

The CHAIRMAN. The matter before the House is the point of order raised by the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), and the Chair will not comment on waivers that may have been granted for prior proceedings in the House on other measures.

Does the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN) wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may proceed.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I just rise to commend the gentleman for offering this amendment. I wish it were in order, and I wish the Chair would rule it in order because it joins better than any other amendment or joins better than any other amendment I have heard the issue that is before us in the Congress and the Nation at large, and that is, as my colleagues know, how are we going to deal with this surplus; tax cuts, or are we going to fund veterans, homeless, education, health care? I commend the gentleman for successfully doing that, I am afraid the amendment is not going to be in order, but I think this issue that it raises is very important and is the issue as we move forward policy in the next year.

Mr. EDWARDS. If I could just finish very, very briefly, I guess my point, Mr. Chairman, if this is ruled out of order is that I want to make it clear that this House had the right to, through its Committee on Rules, to write a rule that would have made this amendment in order that was supported by virtually every major veterans organization in America, and a very similar thing was done on issues I thought were far less important less than a year ago on a very similar appropriations bill.

The CHAIRMAN. The amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS) constitutes legislation on an appropriations bill in violation of clause 2(c) of rule XXI. Since the gentleman from Texas has argued the tax nature of the amendment. The amendment also constitutes a tax measure in violation of clause 5(a) of rule XXI. The point of order is sustained, and the amendment is not in order.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. FILNER

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. FILNER:

In title I, in the item relating to ''VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION—MEDICAL CARE'', insert at the end the following:

In addition, for ''Medical Care'', $3,000,000 to provide a presumption of service-connection for veterans who were exposed to Hepatitis C risk factors during military service and now have Hepatitis C: *Provided,* That the Congress hereby designates the entire such amount as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further,* That such amount shall be available only to the extent of a specific dollar amount for such purpose that is included in an official budget request transmitted by the President to the Congress and that is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to such section 251(b)(2)(A).

Mr. FILNER (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 gentleman's amendment.

Mr. FILNER. Again, Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for courtesy, for discussions of these issues.

Mr. Chairman, this is another in a series of amendments that I am offering this evening to show that the veterans health budget and the Veterans Administration budget in general is greatly underfunded.

We have a chance in this Congress to fund adequately what veterans need. We know what that figure is. All the veterans organizations of this Nation came together to recommend to us what they call the independent budget, a budget that recommended $3 billion more than the baseline we have been dealing with.

The President's budget that was submitted to this Congress was inadequate. It was $3 billion under what this recommendation was as it kept a straight-line budget. The budget, as recommended by this committee, does put in an additional 1.7 billion but that is only 50 percent of what all the veterans organizations say they need, and I might point out, Mr. Chairman, that that 1.7 billion increase presupposes about a $3 billion decrease for veterans programs over the next 10 years.

So what we see here is the biggest cut in veterans funding over a long period of time.

Now we have argued on this side of the aisle for additional funding that would do some things for our Nation's veterans that just will not be able to be handled if this budget goes through. We will not be able to have care for veterans who are involved in radiation risk activities and subsequently develop cancer. We will not have funding to increase long-term care programs for our aging veterans. We will not have funding to restore the VA psychiatric wards and an increase in mental illness research education. We will not have funding to keep Alzheimer's veterans in hospitals. We will not be able to treat the Persian Gulf war veterans who have come down, tens of thousands of them, with an unexplained illness; and, Mr. Chairman, we will not have the money as this amendment will try to correct to fund new health care initiatives for veterans suffering from hepatitis C-related illness.

Now this is a new situation, Mr. Chairman, and is why I have designated this funding as emergency. Hepatitis C is a disease which was only recently identified by reliable laboratory tests. So in the past, there has been no way to diagnose it at the time when veterans became infected. This infection may not have produced any symptoms or mild ones similar to a flu at the time of service to our country. The virus hides latent in the body for many years and may not show up for 20 or 40 more years after the initial infection.

Veterans at a particular risk for the disease include those who received blood or blood products prior to 1992 and veterans who worked in health care occupations are exposed to blood in combat situations. Veterans who were infected many years ago are now showing symptoms of the disease, and too often this disease, Mr. Chairman, is fatal. A fatal disease, hepatitis C, is now known to infect hundreds if not thousands of our veterans, and we do not put the money in for this program.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment would say that we have an emergency medical situation, that we should fund $3 million to provide funding for service- and presumed service-connection for veterans who are exposed to hepatitis C and make sure that we treat our veterans with the respect and commitment that we should.

Mr. Chairman, I know this amendment has been challenged by point of order. I assume that that challenge will be upheld by the Chair. At some point in the evening I will, as the Chairman knows, challenge the Chairman's interpretation of these points of order, but I am hoping that this Congress will not on a technicality, because we know we legislate on appropriation items all through the course of this process, will not on a technicality refuse the refunding for veterans who have hepatitis C and face death unless we come to their aid.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I must insist on the point of order against the amendment because it proposes to change existing law and constitutes legislation in an appropriation bill and therefore violates clause 2 of rule XXI. And if I might add, Mr. Chairman? The gentleman who offers the amendment is a good and respected member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. I

would humbly submit that this is where these items should be discussed. These are authorizing issues. What he is proposing, this and several others to follow, are legislative riders.

Now we all hear the horror stories about legislative riders. These are not necessarily horror stories, but legislative riders do not belong on appropriation bills. Do they happen? Of course they happen in the course of events. But the Committee on Veterans' Affairs is a very activist committee. Members from all over the country really need to sit down and hash these things out and then come to the Committee on Appropriations and tell us what the committee wants us to do, and they have not done that in this case. An individual Member can have a pet project; they can have a pet policy. Basically the process is for the committee to come to a conclusion, establish priorities, set an agenda, and then bring it to us to help to get the funding, and that is the proper course of events here, Mr. Chairman.

So, Mr. Chairman, I would insist on the point of order.

The CHAIRMAN. Does the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. FILNER. In response to my good friend from New York, Mr. Chairman, the advice that he gave me is good advice. In fact, the Democrats on the Committee on Veterans Affairs tried to offer a budget which included these items. Not only did we not fail on that vote, we were not permitted a vote by the chairman of that committee, and as the budget rules point out, unless the budget that is accepted by the Committee on the Budget includes these items, the authorizing committee cannot later add them.

So the gentleman's advice is good. I wish the chairman of the authorizing committee had allowed us to have a vote on these issues so we could include them in the budget, and now I am asking for an emergency designation to make sure that we keep our commitment to our Nation's veterans.

The CHAIRMAN. As stated by the Chair earlier today, a proposal designating an appropriation as emergency spending within the meaning of budget enforcement laws constitutes legislation in violation of clause 2 of rule XXI.

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

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. FILNER

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. FILNER:

In title I, in the item relating to ''VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION—MEDICAL CARE'', insert at the end the following:

In addition, for ''Medical Care'', $4,600,000 to provide pay parity for dentists with physicians employed by the Veterans Health Administration: *Provided,* That the Congress hereby designates the entire such amount as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further,* That such amount shall be available only to the extent of a specific dollar amount for such purpose that is included in an official budget request transmitted by the President to the Congress and that is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to such section 251(b)(2)(A).

Mr. FILNER (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 gentleman's amendment.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, out of respect for the courtesy offered by the Chair I will be very brief and point out that the $4.6 million included in this amendment goes to establish parity for the dentists who are employed by the VA, parity with physicians. I embody this amendment in legislation which I called: ''put your money where your mouth is.'' That is that we ought to be funding dentistry where we have an enormous recruitment and retention problem parity with physicians. Over the past 5 years, in fact, VA has experienced a decline of dentists from 830 to 677, and the turnover rate in the last 2 years has been over 11 percent. Young and mid-career dentists are leaving the VA in increasing numbers, and there are fewer higher qualified applicants available to fill these positions.

We must, I think, establish parity and make sure that dentists in the VA system are given the same pay respect that physicians are.

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, and if I could just briefly explain the opposition?

We really are not opposed to this. Unless there is authorization, specific authorization that would preclude this from happening, the Secretary of the Veterans Administration should be able to do this, and I do not know specifically whether or not there is authorization that is specific to this expenditure, but it would seem to me that if this was a priority for the Veterans Administration and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, it should happen. But this is the wrong place to do it, Mr. Chairman, and I respectfully request that the point of order be upheld.

□ 1545

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). As stated by the Chair earlier today, a proposal designating an appropriation as ''emergency spending'' within the meaning of the budget enforcement laws, constitutes legislation in violation of clause 2 of rule XXI.

The point of order is sustained, and the amendment is not in order.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. FILNER

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. FILNER:

In title I, in the item relating to ''VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION—MEDICAL CARE'', insert at the end the following:

In addition, for ''Medical Care'', $35,200,000 for health care benefits for Filipino World War II veterans who were excluded from benefits by the Rescissions Acts of 1946 and to increase service-connected disability compensation from the peso rate to the full dollar amount for Filipino World War II veterans living in the United States: *Provided,* That the Congress hereby designates the entire such amount as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further,* That such amount shall be available only to the extent of a specific dollar amount for such purpose that is included in an official budget request transmitted by the President to the Congress and that is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to such section 251(b)(2)(A).

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

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. 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.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleagues for their patience in dealing with these amendments.

Mr. Chairman, once again we have a situation which is an emergency dealing with veterans of World War II who are in their late seventies and early eighties and do not have long to live if we are going to recognize their service in World War II.

I would preempt the advice from my distinguished friend from New York who said this should be authorized by our committee. Again, the chairman of the committee would not allow this particular amendment to come before our committee, so the process breaks down in a circular sort of argument. When you advise me to get authorization, the authorizing committee says we will not take it up, so we have to come here to the floor.

We have a situation, Mr. Chairman, where there are approximately 75,000 living veterans of World War II, who happen to be two-thirds of them Filipino in nationality, one-third Filipino in ethnic origin but U.S. citizens. These veterans of World War II fought as brave soldiers and helped us win the war in the Pacific. After being drafted by President Roosevelt, they fought side by side with us in the battles of Corregidor and Bataan, and many marched to their death in the famous Bataan death march.

We rewarded this service to the United States as a Congress in 1946 by taking away all of the veterans benefits that had been promised and due them. For 52 years now, 53 years, this

really dishonorable and immoral action by an earlier Congress has clouded our relationships with the Philippines and has made sure that we have a body of people who are rightfully claiming that their grievance be redressed. My amendment would go partway toward restoring benefits to these heroic veterans of World War II.

Whereas veterans are entitled to, under conditions that are given by law, certain pensions and certain medical care, this amendment gives medical care to those Filipino soldiers who fought alongside Americans. It would make available monies for care in this country and a small portion for our VA clinic in Manila, which serves U.S. citizens there.

What we are saying in this amendment is that the honor and bravery of veterans of World War II be recognized finally by the Congress, 53 years after they were taken away.

I would ask again this body to say let us recognize the bravery of our allies in World War II, our Filipinos who we drafted, and provide with them the eligibility for benefits, healthcare benefits, that are given to U.S. soldiers of the same war.

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

Mr. Chairman, I just want to get something off my chest. I just want to take a few minutes to air my opinion about our VA medical system.

My older brother died in a veterans hospital 100 miles from his home. When a veteran is diagnosed with a terminal condition and is near death, why can that veteran not be allowed to spend his remaining days in a local hospital near his family and friends who will come and visit him?

I would also like to criticize the treatment many of our veterans receive in VA hospitals and the expenditure of tax dollars on new VA construction, when many existing VA hospitals are underutilized with many beds empty.

In Catawba County, North Carolina, when I was a county commissioner, we built a state-of-the-art 250-bed hospital for less than $8 million, complete with an oncology unit and outpatient unit. Now the VA is constructing an outpatient clinic in the mountains of North Carolina for an estimated $25 million. It is an expansion to an existing 300-bed VA hospital that is less than 50 percent occupied. Why should those tax dollars not be used to better utilize the existing underused space and transfer the remaining funds to provide the needed doctors, nurses, and medicine? Does anyone examine how VA capital expenditures are being made and whether they are needed or not?

POINT OF ORDER

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Does the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) insist on his point of order?

Mr. WALSH. I do, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Does the gentleman wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. WALSH. Just to explain, Mr. Chairman, I make the point of order against the amendment because it proposes to change existing law and constitutes legislation in an appropriations bill and therefore violates clause 2 of rule XXI.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. As stated by the Chair earlier today, a proposal designating an appropriation as ''emergency spending'' within the meaning of the budget enforcement laws, constitutes legislation in violation of clause 2 of rule XXI.

The point of order is sustained, and the amendment is not in order.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

In addition, in conformance with Public Law 105–33 establishing the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Care Collections Fund, such sums as may be deposited to such Fund pursuant to 38 U.S.C. 1729A may be transferred to this account, to remain available until expended for the purposes of this account.

MEDICAL AND PROSTHETIC RESEARCH

For necessary expenses in carrying out programs of medical and prosthetic research and development as authorized by 38 U.S.C. chapter 73, to remain available until September 30, 2001, $326,000,000, plus reimbursements.

MEDICAL ADMINISTRATION AND MISCELLANEOUS OPERATING EXPENSES

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, $61,200,000 plus reimbursements, to remain available until September 31, 2001: *Provided*, That project technical and consulting services offered by the Facilities Management Service Delivery Office, including technical consulting services, project management, real property administration (including leases, site acquisition and disposal activities directly supporting projects), shall be provided to Department of Veterans Affairs components only on a reimbursable basis, and such amounts will remain available until September 30, 2000.

GENERAL POST FUND, NATIONAL HOMES

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the cost of direct loans, $7,000, as authorized by Public Law 102–54, section 8, which shall be transferred from the ''General post fund'': *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, as amended: *Provided further*, That these funds are available to subsidize gross obligations for the principal amount of direct loans not to exceed $70,000.

In addition, for administrative expenses to carry out the direct loan programs, $54,000, which shall be transferred from the ''General post fund'', as authorized by Public Law 102–54, section 8.

DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION

GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES

For necessary operating expenses of the Department of Veterans Affairs, not otherwise provided for, including 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, $886,000,000 to remain available until September 30, 2001: *Provided*, That funds under this heading shall be available to administer the Service Members Occupational Conversion and Training Act.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. FILNER

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. FILNER:

In title I, in the item relating to ''DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION—GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES'', insert at the end the following:

In addition, for ''General Operating Expenses'', $6,250,000 to provide an additional 250 employees to reduce backlog and waiting time for adjudication of claims: *Provided*, That the Congress hereby designates the entire such amount as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That such amount shall be available only to the extent of a specific dollar amount for such purpose that is included in an official budget request transmitted by the President to the Congress and that is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to such section 251(b)(2)(A).

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

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. 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.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, again, this is one of a series of amendments that shows specifically where we are underfunding the VA budget for the fiscal year 2000. I think any of us who have talked to veterans during the recent recess period, town hall meetings and tours of VA facilities, have constantly heard the complaint that our veterans are prevented from knowing about the adjudication of their claims for month after month after month after month after month. Six, 8, 12 months go by, maybe even 1 or 2 years, and if a process has to be appealed, it can go even longer.

The independent budget of the veterans organizations of this country proposed that an additional 250 positions dedicated to reduce the backlog and waiting time for the adjudication of these claims was absolutely necessary.

Mr. Chairman, we have an emergency situation amongst our veterans. These are the folks who fought for us, who have given us our freedom, given us our liberty, and we make them wait 1 year, 2 years, even longer, to find out whether their claims for disability or other such legal situations will be in fact granted to them. I think this is an emergency situation which would allow us to put in the $6.25 million that we need for this situation.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I insist on the point of order.

Mr. Chairman, we have within this bill added funds to hire employees to take care of this backlog. We did it last

year, we are doing it this year, and I would submit to my colleague that if the Secretary of the Veterans Administration wants to do this, they can do this. To my knowledge, there is no specific authorization that prevents the Veterans Administration from hiring additional people with existing funds and from moving them around within the department, reassigning them to different tasks.

This is purely within their discretion. You do not need an act of Congress to do that. What you need is a secretary who sees things the same way that this Member does, eyeball to eyeball, and let him make that decision. But this is not an action that should be undertaken by the Committee on Appropriations. This is an action that should be taken by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, speaking to the point of order, I understand the arguments of the gentleman. The department is authorized to move people around. It is authorized to put people in different positions. But the fact of the matter is, there are not sufficient funds that would allow them to put money into one area without taking it from another area. If you drop the backlog of one, you hurt healthcare somewhere else, so we are robbing Peter to pay Paul in this issue.

We need more money. I know the gentleman agrees with me that we need more money. If only we could get through these technicalities, we could provide the money. Our veterans do not understand with a $1 trillion surplus why we do not have $6 million to put in to improve the backlog.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, just briefly, we have added within this budget, we have plussed up an additional $30 million for general operating expenses. Clearly what the gentleman is requesting is only one-fifth of that amount. So those funds are available at the Secretary's discretion to hire these people.

Let us not forget that we have added an additional $1.7 billion to this part of the budget, the largest increase ever. I hope that they can spend it all next year, but I have my doubts that they can spend all this money next year.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, I would say to the gentleman, who knows full well that the needs of the VA are far in excess of the money we granted to them, they have had to prepare for layoffs; have had to prepare possibly for closure of hospitals. There is not sufficient money within the budget to treat all of the different areas that we want to do. You can play off any one I bring up and say, Oh, we have the money to do that, but you do not have enough money do all the things that veterans need in this budget.

I would just say again to the Chair, who, again, maybe rightfully says this is the biggest increase in history, it presupposes the biggest decrease in history over the next 10 years and is based on, under the Congress, of which his party is a majority, the biggest decrease over the last 8 years or so in real spending in the VA.

□ 1600

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The Chair is considering debate on the point of order at this moment. Does the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) wish to be heard on the point of order and insist on his point of order?

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I insist on the point of order.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. As stated by the Chair earlier today, a proposal designating an appropriation as ''emergency spending'' within the meaning of the budget-enforcement laws 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:

NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

For necessary expenses for the maintenance and operation of the National Cemetery Administration, not otherwise provided for, including uniforms or allowances therefor; cemeterial expenses as authorized by law; purchase of two passenger motor vehicles for use in cemeterial operations; and hire of passenger motor vehicles, $97,000.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. FILNER

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment Offered by Mr. FILNER:

In title I, in the item relating to ''DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION—NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION'', insert at the end the following:

In addition, for ''National Cemetery Administration'', $9,500,000 to reduce the repair backlog at national veterans cemeteries: *Provided,* That the Congress hereby designates the entire such amount as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further,* That such amount shall be available only to the extent of a specific dollar amount for such purpose that is included in an official budget request transmitted by the President to the Congress and that is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to such section 251(b)(2)(A).

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

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. 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 on the gentleman's amendment.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) reserves a point of order on the amendment.

Mr. FILNER. Again, Mr. Chairman, this is one of a series of amendments to show how we are underfunding our veterans in this Nation. This one specifically asks for $9.5 million to reduce the repair backlog at veterans national cemeteries.

I know the chairman will say that the Department is authorized to do that, that we have plussed up the money, that we have put in the biggest money in the history of our Congress. The fact remains, Mr. Chairman, that while that could be said about any one item that I bring up today, the sum total of all the items that are in this budget that was prepared by our veterans organization, the independent budget, we simply cannot fund all of those with the present funding. We need another $1.5 billion or so to do that.

While any individual item I may bring up can be handled within the appropriation, all of the needs our veterans have cannot be.

Over the years the national cemetery system has struggled to maintain the appearance of our 115 national cemeteries, but budget shortfalls in the past have forced the system to address only the highest priority projects. As a result, preventative maintenance and infrastructure repairs have been neglected. Broken sprinkler systems, for example, which result in parched and dead grass and sunken graves which have not been reinforced contribute to an appearance of neglect in many cemeteries. This is not a way to treat the memory of our veterans. Some cemeteries have not had the funds to repair badly cracked walkways, and they are actually hazardous to the many older people visiting the grave of a loved one. Backhoes and other important equipment stand idle because funding is not available for repairs.

Families must postpone funerals, they must postpone funerals, Mr. Chairman, because the equipment required cannot even be used. National cemeteries are hallowed ground. They must be properly maintained if they are to look like the national shrines that all Americans consider they should be.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment is to plus up funds specifically to maintain our cemeteries. I know this amendment will be challenged on a point of order and will be sustained. I would hope that the veterans of this country would understand that on technicalities this Congress is being prevented from funding urgent needs for our Nation's veterans.

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

Mr. Chairman, I find it a bit ironic. I have been trying to get to the floor today to speak to a number of issues, a number of concerns that deal with veterans. I want to first of all, Mr. Chairman, thank the gentleman from California for coming out to my district last week to attend a veterans town hall meeting.

At this town hall meeting we discussed a number of issues, a number of concerns that were raised that were raised by our veteran population. There are a number of things that we deal with in this House that are vitally important. I cannot think of a single

thing that is more important than the issue of benefits that were promised to our veterans and benefits on which we have not kept our word.

That message came across loud and clear last week. That message is coming across loud and clear this afternoon in this House. There is a tremendous, deep sense of frustration by our veteran community that they have been betrayed by their government.

This issue here, whether we are talking about the amount of funding proposed, the amount of funding that was approved, the amount of funding that theoretically is or is not, this in the eyes and minds of our veterans is irrelevant. It is irrelevant because they have a deep sense of frustration when they go to the VA hospital, to the VA clinic, to the military hospital. They are asked to wait 4 to 6 months for an appointment.

It is irrelevant because this afternoon, as I was sitting in a hearing dealing with diabetes, diabetes that affects our veteran population as well as the rest of the population in this country, veterans are frustrated because they cannot get the kind of medical attention they need and that they must have.

It seems to me that as we talk and talk about issues dealing with the Veterans Administration about who proposes a budget here, who counters with an equal amount of money there, the bottom line keeps coming back, we are not doing the job for veteran communities. We must do better. We have to do better. Our veterans deserve better.

Let me tell the Members, the veterans understand, by virtue of the frustration that they expressed last week in a town hall meeting in El Paso, they understand that we are not doing the job for them, that we are not coming through on the promises that were made.

The last thing I would like to say, Mr. Chairman, in closing, is that as we deal with the Veterans Administration budget, I hope that we have a sense of obligation to our veterans community. I hope that we can stand alongside our veterans, and I hope that finally we realize that we owe them, in a time of great prosperity in this country, we owe them that funding that the veterans service organizations have identified and they have proposed.

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

Mr. REYES. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, I want to just thank the gentleman for his comments, but also to thank the gentleman for holding a series of meetings across his district in El Paso. I was able to attend a town hall meeting with him. Representatives of the 60,000 veterans that he has in his district were there.

I would just say to the chairman, and I am sure he is aware of this, the veterans that I represent in San Diego, the veterans that the gentleman represents in El Paso, and I am sure that the gentleman represents in Syracuse, all of them are frustrated. They do not understand how we can have this surplus and talk about these tax cuts, yet they walk into the VA and they are told that this specialist does not exist, or they have to wait 8 months for that appointment, or they cannot get honors at this funeral, or their family member has to be released even though they have Alzheimer's, and on and on and on.

I would just say that this frustration is going to break out and come back at all of us unless we can find a way to adequately fund these programs.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

Let me just in closing, Mr. Chairman, say that I have a deep sense of frustration when in our own committee we are unable to bring forth and even get a vote on the budget that was proposed by the veterans service organizations. Frustration is going round and round, but the buck stops here. The buck stops here in the people's House.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I insist on the point of order against the amendment because it proposes to change existing law, and constitutes legislation on an appropriation bill.

If I may go on and explain, again, this is another legislative rider that, unless specifically denied during existing law and authorization, the Secretary can implement these expenditures.

We have increased in this bill the Veterans Cemetery Administration by $5 billion, equal to the President's request. I would remind my colleagues again that the President requested a freeze in veterans' medical health care. He requested a freeze. In other words, he saw no reason to increase the budget for veterans' medical health.

Everyone we have heard on the floor today has said that we need more money for veterans' medical coverage. Everyone agrees, except for the President. The President does not think the veterans should get those additional funds, although recently, approximately a month ago, we did receive a letter from the White House suggesting that yes, now they, too, agree that Congress was right by increasing the funding, the appropriation for veterans' health. We have put an additional $1.7 billion into this bill to provide for those needs.

Mr. Chairman, in the discussion, as I have mentioned and as my colleague, the gentleman from California, has also mentioned, the largest increase ever in veterans' medical care has been put in, but it is not on the heels of, as my colleague suggested, the largest decrease in the history of veterans' medical care.

In fact, there has been no decrease. I have the budget figures before me. In 1996, which was the first budget that my party as the majority party was responsible for, was $15.7 billion for the Veterans Health Administration. In fiscal year 1997, it was $16.3. In fiscal year 1998, it was $17 billion. In fiscal year 1999, it was $17.3 billion. We are proposing for fiscal year 2000 a $19 billion budget.

Those are consistent increases, so there has been no dramatic cut in veterans' health care. Has it gone up rapidly enough? No, it has not. But we are trying to resolve that situation this year by providing the largest increase in the history of veterans' health. So the facts belie the argument. The facts are that this is a substantial increase, and this is the authorized level from the Veterans Affairs committee. It is the authorized level under the budget document.

So I insist on the point of order, Mr. Chairman, and await the Chair's ruling.

Mr. FILNER. I would speak to the point of order, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) may speak to the point of order.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, I would speak to the point of order as the gentleman from New York spoke to the point of order. The real needs, the real dollars of the VA have decreased over the last 5 years because of the aging population and because of the increase of needs of our population.

I will repeat to the gentleman that the $1.7 billion plus-up presupposes the biggest decrease in history over the next 10 years, as there will be declines from that $19 billion over the next 10 years in the budget.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. As stated by the Chair earlier today, a proposal designating an appropriation as ''emergency spending'' within the meaning of budget-enforcement laws 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:

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

For necessary expenses of the Office of Inspector General in carrying out the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, $38,500,000.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. FILNER

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. FILNER:

In title I, in the item relating to ''DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION—OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL'', insert at the end the following:

In addition, for ''Office of Inspector General'', $838,430 to provide an additional 10 employees for the Office of Inspector General Hotline: *Provided,* That the Congress hereby designates the entire such amount as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further,* That such amount shall be available only to the extent of a specific dollar amount for such purpose that is included in an official budget request transmitted by the President to the Congress and that is

designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to such section 251(b)(2)(A).

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

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. 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 gentleman's amendment.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) reserves a point of order.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman of the subcommittee and the ranking member, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN), for allowing me to make the points that this process allows us to do. I sincerely believe that all of us want to do better by our veterans, that we want to see to it that our commitment is kept. I know the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) believes that personally, and would like to see that happen institutionally.

We are governed, unfortunately, by certain agreements in the past. I believe those commitments were made in error and that we should in effect look at the reality at the present time.

Again, this is just one last example of where we might improve our services, less than $1 million to the office of Inspector General to provide for the hotline that they have. Thousands of veterans, tens of thousands of veterans, use this hotline. It is vastly understaffed. Most of the comments received and the situations described have to be referred rather than followed up by the Office of Inspector General.

I would hope that this Congress could fund additional monies to make sure that the frustration of our veterans that we have heard from both sides of the aisle be met, and that we fund this item.

Once again, I do thank the chairman and the ranking member for their courtesies and indulgence. This will be the last amendment, up until the point provided for by the unanimous consent agreement that the gentleman will have to rise and make the point of order on, Mr. Chairman.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I insist on my point of order against the amendment because it proposes to change existing law and constitutes legislation on an appropriation bill.

On this specific amendment, Mr. Chairman, the gentleman is asking that the Committee on Appropriations and the Congress of the United States direct the Secretary to spend $838,000 in a specific way.

□ 1615

This is a $44 billion bill. Now my colleagues can imagine if we directed the Secretary to spend every parcel of $500 to $500,000 how long this process might take. The fact is, hopefully, ideally, the Secretary has a better idea on how to spend that than Congress does.

So this is another legislative rider. And I would suggest that this is micromanaging the Veterans Affairs Department. We have given them an additional $1.7 billion this year for health care. It is the largest increase in history for the Veterans Administration, I remind my colleagues once again.

I also remind my colleagues that we have letters of support from the Veterans of Foreign Wars who support this level of funding, as we do from the American Legion who signed on to this level of funding who said it was more than adequate, and that it will provide the medical care that the veterans of our country need and are owed.

So for that reason, I insist on my point of order.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. As stated by the Chair earlier today, a proposal designating an appropriation as emergency spending within the meaning of budget-enforcement laws constitutes legislation in violation of clause 2 of rule XXI.

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

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

CONSTRUCTION, MAJOR PROJECTS

For constructing, altering, extending and improving any of the facilities 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, 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 $4,000,000 or more or where funds for a project were made available in a previous major project appropriation, $34,700,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That except for advance planning of projects including market-based assessments of health care needs which may or may not lead to capital investments funded through the advance planning fund and the design of projects funded through the design fund, none of these funds shall be used for any project which has not been considered and approved by the Congress in the budgetary process: *Provided further*, That funds provided in this appropriation for fiscal year 2000, for each approved project shall be obligated: (1) by the awarding of a construction documents contract by September 30, 2000; and (2) by the awarding of a construction contract by September 30, 2001: *Provided further*, That the Secretary shall promptly report in writing to the Committees on Appropriations any approved major construction project in which obligations are not incurred within the time limitations established above: *Provided further*, That no funds from any other account except the ''Parking revolving fund'', may be obligated for constructing, altering, extending, or improving a project which was approved in the budget process and funded in this account until one year after substantial completion and beneficial occupancy by the Department of Veterans Affairs of the project or any part thereof with respect to that part only.

CONSTRUCTION, MINOR PROJECTS

For constructing, altering, extending, and improving any of the facilities under the jurisdiction or for the use of the Department of Veterans Affairs, including planning, 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, and 8122 of title 38, United States Code, where the estimated cost of a project is less than $4,000,000, $102,300,000, 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 less than $4,000,000: *Provided*, That funds in this account shall be available 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.

PARKING REVOLVING FUND

For the parking revolving fund as authorized by 38 U.S.C. 8109, income from fees collected, to remain available until expended, which shall be available for all authorized expenses except operations and maintenance costs, which will be funded from ''Medical care''.

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 38 U.S.C. 8131–8137, $80,000,000, to remain available until expended.

GRANTS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF STATE VETERANS CEMETERIES

For grants to aid States in establishing, expanding, or improving State veteran cemeteries as authorized by 38 U.S.C. 2408, $11,000,000, to remain available until expended.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 101. Any appropriation for fiscal year 2000 for ''Compensation and pensions'', ''Readjustment benefits'', and ''Veterans insurance and indemnities'' may be transferred to any other of the mentioned appropriations.

SEC. 102. Appropriations available to the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2000 for salaries and expenses shall be available for services authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109.

SEC. 103. No appropriations in this Act for the Department of Veterans Affairs (except the appropriations for ''Construction, major projects'', ''Construction, minor projects'', and the ''Parking revolving fund'') shall be available for the purchase of any site for or toward the construction of any new hospital or home.

SEC. 104. No appropriations in this Act for the Department of Veterans Affairs 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 5 U.S.C. 7901–7904 or 42 U.S.C. 5141–5204), unless reimbursement of cost is made to the ''Medical care'' account at such rates as may be fixed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

SEC. 105. Appropriations available to the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2000 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 1999.

SEC. 106. Appropriations accounts available to the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2000 shall be available to pay prior year obligations of corresponding prior year appropriations accounts resulting from title X of the Competitive Equality Banking Act, Public Law 100–86, except that if such obligations are from trust fund accounts they shall be payable from ''Compensation and pensions''.

SEC. 107. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, during fiscal year 2000, 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 2000, 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 2000, 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. 108. Beginning in fiscal year 2000 and thereafter, funds available in any Department of Veterans Affairs appropriation or fund for salaries and expenses shall also be available to reimburse the Office of Resolution Management and the Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication for all services provided by such office at rates which will recover actual costs. Payments may be made in advance for services to be furnished based on estimated costs. Amounts received shall be credited to the ''General operating expenses'' account for use by the office that provided the service: *Provided,* That the amounts listed in the House Report accompanying this Act for each office and administration reimbursing the Office of Resolution Management and the Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication for service rendered shall not be exceeded.

SEC. 109. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may carry out a major medical facility project to renovate and construct facilities at the Olin E. Teague Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Temple, Texas, for a joint venture Cardiovascular Institute, in an amount not to exceed $11,500,000. In order to carry out that project, the amount of $11,500,000 appropriated for fiscal year 1998 and programmed for the renovation of Building 9 at the Waco, Texas, Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center is hereby made available for that project.

TITLE II—DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

PUBLIC AND INDIAN HOUSING

HOUSING CERTIFICATE FUND

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For activities and assistance to prevent the involuntary displacement of low-income families, the elderly and the disabled because of the loss of affordable housing stock, expiration of subsidy contracts (other than contracts for which amounts are provided under another heading in this Act), or expiration of use restrictions, or other changes in housing assistance arrangements, and for other purposes, $10,540,135,000 and all amounts that are recaptured in this account, and recaptured under the appropriation for ''Annual contributions for assisted housing'', to remain available until expended: *Provided,* That from the amounts provided, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall use amounts, as needed, for assistance under the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437) in connection with expiring or terminating section 8 subsidy contracts, for amendments to section 8 subsidy contracts, for enhanced vouchers (including amendments and renewals) as described in the Administrative Provisions of this title, for enhanced vouchers (including amendments and renewals) as provided in paragraphs (3) and (4) of section 515(c) of the Multifamily Assisted Housing Reform and Affordability Act of 1997, and for enhanced vouchers (including amendments and renewals) as provided under or pursuant to the ''Preserving Existing Housing Investment'' heading in the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 1997: *Provided further,* That in the case of enhanced vouchers provided under this heading, if the income of the family receiving assistance declines to a significant extent, the percentage of income paid by the family for rent shall not exceed the greater of 30 percent or the percentage of income paid at the time of mortgage prepayment: *Provided further,* That amounts available under this heading may be made available for section 8 rental assistance under the United States Housing Act of 1937 (1) to relocate residents of properties: (A) that are owned by the Secretary and being disposed of, or (B) that are discontinuing section 8 project-based assistance; (2) for relocation and replacement housing for units that are demolished or disposed of: (A) from the public housing inventory (in addition to amounts that may be available for such purposes under this and other headings), or (B) pursuant to section 24 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 or to other authority for the revitalization of severely distressed public housing, as set forth in the Appropriations Acts for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies, for the fiscal years 1993, 1994, 1995, and 1997, and in the Omnibus Consolidated Rescissions and Appropriations Act of 1996; (3) for the conversion of section 23 projects to assistance under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937; (4) for funds to carry out the family unification program; and (5) for the relocation of witnesses in connection with efforts to combat crime in public and assisted housing pursuant to a request from a law enforcement or prosecuting agency: *Provided further,* That of the total amount available under this heading, $25,000,000 may be made available to nonelderly disabled families affected by the designation of a public housing development under section 7 of the United States Housing Act of 1937, the establishment of preferences in accordance with section 651 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992, or the restriction of occupancy to elderly families, or the restrictions on occupancy to elderly families in accordance with section 658 of such Act: *Provided further,* That amounts available under this heading may be made available for administrative fees and other expenses to cover the cost of administering rental assistance programs under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937: *Provided further,* That the fee otherwise authorized under section 8(q) of such Act shall be determined in accordance with section 8(q), as in effect immediately before enactment of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998: *Provided further,* That all balances for the section 8 rental assistance, section 8 counseling, new construction sub-rehabilitation, relocation/replacement/demolition, section 23 conversions, rental and disaster vouchers, loan management set-aside, section 514 technical assistance, and programs previously funded within the ''Annual Contributions'' account shall be transferred to this account, to be available for the purposes for which they were originally appropriated: *Provided further,* That all balances previously recaptured in the ''Section 8 Reserve Preservation'' account shall be transferred to this account, to be available for the purposes for which they were originally appropriated: *Provided further,* That the unexpended amounts previously appropriated for special purpose grants within the ''Annual Contributions for Assisted Housing'' account shall be recaptured and transferred to this account, to be available for assistance under the Act for use in connection with expiring or terminating section 8 subsidy contracts: *Provided further,* That of the amounts previously appropriated for property disposition within the ''Annual Contributions for Assisted Housing'' account, up to $79,000,000 shall be transferred to this account, to be available for assistance under the Act for use in connection with expiring or terminating section 8 subsidy contracts: *Provided further,* That of the unexpended amounts previously appropriated for carrying out the Low-Income Housing Preservation and Resident Homeownership Act of 1990 and the Emergency Low-Income Housing Preservation Act of 1987, other than amounts made available for rental assistance, within the ''Annual Contributions for Assisted Housing'' and ''Preserving Existing Housing Investments'' accounts, shall be recaptured and transferred to this account, to be available for assistance under the Act for use in connection with expiring or terminating section 8 subsidy contracts.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. NADLER

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. NADLER:

Page 17, line 13, after the first dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $200,000,000)''.

Page 22, line 9, after the first dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $105,000,000)''.

Page 79, line 5, after the first dollar amount insert the following: ''(reduced by $305,000,000)''.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, this amendment would add $200 million to provide section 8 vouchers for 32,000 additional families and would further provide an additional $105 million for the Public Housing Operating Fund to help our public housing authorities to maintain the safe, decent housing that is in such short supply.

The underlying bill reneges on our national commitment to provide decent, affordable housing to those families who cannot afford market rents and specifically fails to fulfill the promise that this Congress made to poor families in the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1988. In that act, we authorized 100,000 new section 8 vouchers for fiscal year 2000. But

the bill provides no funding for any of these authorized vouchers.

In addition, the bill provides no increase above last year's funding level, denying the administration's $185 million requested increase for public housing authorities to make necessary repairs that are desperately needed in public housing in this country. Families in need will suffer under this bill for lack of these funds.

The need for housing assistance remains staggering. Over 5 million low-income families pay more than 50 percent of their incomes for rent or live in severely substandard housing. The Federal Government does not do enough to assist these families whose needs are desperate.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt spoke eloquently in 1944 of the fact, and I quote, ''True individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence. Necessitous men are not free men.'' FDR was right. Every family deserves a decent home, or perhaps we no longer believe this to be true.

President Roosevelt's commitment to provide decent, safe, affordable housing to those who could not afford the rents in the private market through no fault of their own continued through both Republican and Democratic administrations. Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, George Bush all to some degree continued that commitment.

Two years ago, the majority in this Congress decided to break that commitment. For the first time since the program began, no money at all was provided for new section 8 vouchers.

I challenge anyone to argue that tenant-based section 8 vouchers and public housing do not achieve their goals. Over a million families receive section 8 vouchers. Section 8 allows families to enter the private housing market and choose where they want to live, helping them to escape from the cycle of poverty and creating better income mixes throughout our communities.

Thanks to section 8, families can afford decent, safe housing, nothing extravagant, and frankly sometimes not very nice at all, but much better than without the section 8.

Millions of Americans reside in public housing. Public housing should not be synonymous with dilapidated housing. This amendment will allow 32,000 additional families to afford safe, decent housing through additional section 8 vouchers. It is not asking for much. I only ask that today we commit to meet less than 1 percent of the need for affordable housing in our Nation.

Second, the $105 million this amendment would provide for housing maintenance will not fix all the physical problems in public housing units, but it is at least a start. This amendment would fund less than a third of the authorized 100,000 new section 8 vouchers, but that, too, is a start.

Mr. Chairman, it is shameful that so many Americans must continue to live in dilapidated and unsafe housing while the country is in the midst of prolonged economic prosperity.

The money for this amendment would be found by reducing the Space Station allocation. But, nonetheless, the Space Station would still receive in this fiscal year over $2 billion. If history is to look back on this Congress as a decent Congress, we must provide for adequately housing our people.

Let us continue the legacy of FDR and of this great Nation. I urge a ''yes'' vote on this amendment.

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

Mr. Chairman, this amendment just shows the difficulty of this bill. Certainly the items that the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) is correct that adequate funds are necessary for section 8 housing and public housing operating funds. But I would remind him that this bill provides almost $1 billion more for section 8 housing vouchers than last year. Let me repeat, we have fully funded section 8 housing renewals for the year 2000.

Would he like more? Sure. Would I like more? Sure. But the fact is we had to cut NASA by $1 billion to fully fund section 8 vouchers. Mr. NADLER proposes a further dramatic reduction in NASA, specifically in the Space Station. We have just rejected an amendment that would basically eliminate the Space Station program.

This $300 million deduction will do a great deal of damage to a program that is already substantially reduced. NASA has sustained the largest cut in this entire bill outside of AmeriCorps and Selective Service.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment. Tough choices were made when we put together this bill. But the subcommittee and the full committee weighed all of the items within the bill EPA, NASA, HUD, VA, National Science Foundation, Federal Emergency Management Agency—and we are spread thin. To take $300 million out of NASA when it has already been cut by $1 billion is a deep and cruel cut that I am not sure that they could handle.

We have done our level best to provide funds for public housing. We have done our level best to fully fund the section 8 program. For that reason, Mr. Chairman, I would urge my colleagues to reject the amendment.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I agree with the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), the subcommittee chairman, that he was given an impossible job, and he did well at the impossible job. But there is a problem. When one is given an impossible job, no matter how well one does, one comes up with an impossible product.

The gentleman from New York is a very diligent and able and conscientious Member, but he is not a magician. What we have is a budget which substantially underfunds housing needs.

I want to be clear. We had a press conference before, and someone said, ''well, are you not getting into the situation where you are defining as cuts a failure to go up by as much.'' No. In this bill, we are talking, as people have acknowledged, about real cuts.

A couple of areas that we are talking about now, we are talking about whether or not we are going to meet a need. Absent this amendment, which authorizes new vouchers, there will be no addition to the number of subsidized housing units available to people in that category. There are no new vouchers.

We know that housing needs will grow. Similarly, we have long lamented public housing. Remember, the bad conditions in public housing are not on the whole the fault of the people who live there. They are the fault of we, the society, that did not build adequately.

We came up with a formula that is needed to run public housing well, and we shortchanged it. This is an amendment about 3, 4, 5 and 6 year olds and whether or not their housing will have adequate maintenance, adequate operations.

I have not liked the Space Station. But even if one does, can one justify morally spending money so a dozen people live in space, and the price of that is hundreds of thousands of people live in squalor? That is what my colleagues are talking about. The Space Station for a few versus a mean and dangerous and unhealthy existence for thousands and thousands of children. It simply is not morally acceptable.

I said before I am going to engage in one of the favorite practices of this body, I am going to quote myself. We had a press conference, and I said, ''I am going to acknowledge that I feel overshadowed.'' We do not like to admit that. We do not like to be overshadowed, but we do not like to admit it.

I will admit that when I had my heart bypass operation over a month ago, I very much appreciate the colleagues on both sides of the aisle who were generous and thoughtful, and they paid a lot of attention to me. But now I have been left behind. I got a heart bypass operation from a couple of doctors. This bill gives a heart bypass operation to America. I pale into insignificance. What is 5 of my arteries compared to tens of thousands of 5 year-olds who are going to live in squalor? What does this mean when we say no new vouchers? We do not care how badly one is housed today.

Let me say to people who talk about in their districts to those in need, ''Oh, I am sorry for you, dear. Yeah, I will try to get you some housing. Oh, I am sorry for you.'' Well, this is the honesty test. Because if this amendment goes down, what my colleagues are saying to people is there will be no new housing. There will be no improvement from public housing. There will be a deterioration.

We have imposed on people in public housing a work requirement. We have tried to change the mix of income.

□ 1630

But how are we going to carry out the policy of changing the mix of income if these places are badly run? We have an acknowledgment that more money is needed to run public housing than this bill provides, and we are sending it to the space station.

Maybe the amendment should have been different. Maybe the gentleman from New York should have sent some public housing tenants into the space program. Maybe we ought to say that instead of living in squalor in some of these places, we will create a kind of public housing unit in the sky. Maybe that is what we should be looking at. HUD housing in the sky would probably do better than public housing on the ground. Because that is where we are. We could not have pie in the sky. Maybe we can get I. M. Pei to be the public architect of public housing and we will have Pei in the sky instead of pie in the sky.

It is distressing. It is sad. And I understand the tough choices the gentleman was presented with. It is not his fault. It is the problem with this budget, and it is why I think we ought to send the whole budget back and redo it so that we do not condemn the poorest of the poor to this.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words, and I rise in opposition to the amendment.

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank my friend and colleague from Florida for yielding to me. The point I wanted to have the opportunity to make is if we look at the budget request of the President, there was enough funding in the bill on paper to increase these programs. But if we look at the bill closely, we can see there is a $4.2 billion advance appropriation in there that some would refer to as a gimmick because it looks like the President has increased HUD's budget when in reality the $4.2 billion is not available to be spent until the year 2001. So if those funds are not available in the year 2000, then without that gimmick the President would have had to show reductions in those same programs. We did it honestly. We presented what we felt was a real budget with real money for real people and real programs.

If we are to compare apples with apples and throw out the $4.2 billion budget gimmick, we have put more money into housing than the President did.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON) have an additional minute so that I might respond and it would not come out of his time.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WELDON of Florida. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me, because I know how important the space station is to him and to his district.

I would say to my friend from New York if he heard somebody mention the President during my speech he must have been listening to the radio. I would agree with him. The President's budget is inadequate. I hold no grief for the President's budget. I think the President has made a grave error. All I am saying is the gentleman has made bad worse.

I do not care whose gimmick was what gimmick. I do not want to go to a bunch of 5-year-old children and tell them the reason they are living in squalor is not so much the 1997 budget did not give us enough money and we gave it to the space station, it is the President's gimmick. I do not care about either one of those. I am talking about inadequacy. And the failure of the President to adequately do the job is no justification for our failure also to adequately do the job.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to the amendment primarily for the source of the gentleman's offset. I understand the passions that some people may feel on the issue of public housing, though I would just assert at this time in the debate that the reasons for poverty extend far beyond a lack of sufficient funding from the Federal Government.

The offset that this gentleman used is coming out of the space station program, which I am very familiar with. All the space station elements are being checked out at Kennedy Space Center. Most of them have been built. The foreign elements are arriving. They are ready to go up on the shuttle. And the budget for the space station is extremely tight. There is not elasticity that we can just come in and make this kind of cut and they will continue to march on. What will happen, if this goes through, is we will slow down the progress on this thing and we will end up adding to more cost overruns for the space station.

Let me just finally add that this bill already has almost a billion dollar cut in NASA, and about $250 million of it comes out of mission support. What is mission support? Well, it funds the salaries of all the people that are working to support programs like this, space station. So we have very, very serious problems with the bill as it is in the NASA account, and to come along at this point and take another offset out of space station I have to very, very strongly oppose.

I think the gentleman from New York has done a very generous job in trying to do his best with HUD, and he should be commended for that, not criticized for that. If anything, he should be criticized for underfunding NASA and not for underfunding HUD.

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

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

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

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I will be very brief. No one claims that public housing or Section 8 solves poverty. What Section 8 does, which is what we are talking about here, is to enable people, working people for the most part who are making minimum wage and who cannot afford decent housing in the open market, to afford decent housing. And that is a very elementary and human thing to do, and it is an obligation of ours to do.

The other part of this amendment is to provide a little more money to enable the public housing authorities to stop the existing public housing from falling apart for lack of maintenance. And that too is at least as important as the space station.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) for his leadership in bringing this very important amendment to the floor. I am very disappointed, and I joined my colleagues earlier in stating that disappointment, at the funding that is in the VA–HUD bill this year, because of the cuts in affordable housing.

The amendment of the gentleman from New York, which funds $305 million for 50,000 new incremental Section 8 housing vouchers is an important one. Affordable housing is scarce and getting scarcer. As one who represents a very high-cost area, in terms of housing, this amendment is essential. The amendment will provide 50,000 individuals and families with affordable, safe and decent housing.

The maker of the amendment very eloquently laid out the justification for the funding in his amendment, and I would like to join him in that. A previous supporter of the amendment spoke, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK), said he was going to quote himself. And since he took that point of personal privilege, I am going to quote my mother. When my mother was First Lady of Baltimore in the 1950s, her project was affordable housing for working poor families. And she used to say then, and I recall it very well, how can we teach children about love and respect and dignity if we do not even provide them with a decent place to live? It was true then, and it is even truer now in this time of unprecedented economic prosperity for our country.

With the stock market going past 11,000, with unemployment at record lows, with inflation practically nonexistent, it has been demonstrated that a rising tide does not lift all ships.

When we have people who work full time making the minimum wage who cannot afford a decent place to live for their families, then it is important for us to have adequate funding for the Section 8 voucher.

Our budget, Mr. Chairman, as we have said over and over again, our federal budget should be a statement of our national values, and we have to make some important choices as we consider spending. We have to be fiscally responsible. We all agree to that. But we also have to get back to basics. What is more basic than a decent place to live for America's families? Especially those who toil at a wage which I wish would be higher, but it is not, and it creates a need for some public intervention in the form of the Section 8 voucher.

So I believe it is a statement of the values of the American people to prevent homelessness. I think it is a statement of values of the American people that America's children have a decent place to live. I think dignity and respect are important values for the American people and that funding in our Federal budget should reflect that priority that the American people give it. And that dignity is that which comes when a family can have a decent place to live; where children at school can say I am going home now. And home does not mean a homeless shelter or something worse. Home means home, and in many cases homes that would be provided by the Section 8 vouchers.

So I thank and commend personally, politically, civically, officially, and in every way the gentleman for his important amendment and urge my colleagues to support the Nadler amendment.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words, and I rise in opposition to the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I have absolutely no disagreement with the gentleman's objective of adding funds for incremental Section 8 housing assistance vouchers in fiscal year 2000. Quite the contrary. I support this objective and will do all I can to bring it about by the time this bill becomes law.

These vouchers are badly needed. HUD's latest housing needs report tells us that there are more than 5 million very low income families paying more than half their income for rent or living in seriously substandard housing and yet receiving no federal housing assistance. Last year's VA-HUD bill provided funds for 50,000 additional housing vouchers to help make a small dent in this backlog of needs. I think it is unfortunate the bill now before us is unable to provide any funds for new vouchers.

I also support the gentleman's effort to add funds to public housing operating subsidies. I think that there is widespread agreement that additional funding is needed to allow this housing to be maintained in decent conditions. However, I part company with the gentleman and his good intentions when he proposes to cut the appropriation for the space station.

We have already had a lengthy debate about the space station in connection with the Roemer amendment, and I will not repeat all my arguments again now. Let me simply say the station is an important part of a program that will offer valuable scientific and technological benefits. Perhaps even more to the point, Congress has repeatedly voted to proceed with this project; and, if the voice vote we heard today is any indication, is still doing so.

The space station is now coming to fruition, with the first two components on orbit in the next awaiting launch. We should stand by our earlier decisions and let the program proceed, rather than jeopardizing investments already made by the United States and its international partners. The $305 million cut proposed by the gentleman certainly would hamper progress on the space station. It would disrupt the current assembly schedule, raise costs in the long run, of course, and delay the point at which the station is permanently occupied and scientific experiments begin.

But more fundamentally, Mr. Chairman, I reject the notion that we have to choose between science and housing. I think we can and must do an adequate job on both fronts, and on many others as well. The reason that housing is underfunded in this bill is not because the NASA budget is crowding it out. Rather, this bill cuts the NASA budget by $1 billion below the prior year's level. The NASA budget. It is cut by $1 billion in this bill below last year. A cut roughly comparable in dollar terms and larger in percentage terms than the cut in the HUD's budget, as bad as the cut is in the HUD budget. So we must oppose any further cuts to NASA even if done in order to restore some cuts in housing, just as I would oppose any further cuts in housing to restore cuts in NASA.

The proper solution here is not cutting one underfunded program to take care of another, but seeking to ensure that this bill has enough funding available to address needs in all the programs it covers. An unrealistic budget resolution that was passed by a majority of this House, promoted and pushed by the majority leadership, pits advocates for good programs against each other. The budget extremists win when their victims start competing against one another. The real solution here is to openly acknowledge that we need to raise these budget caps, as we have acknowledged de facto by robbing other subcommittees to pump up the funding in the ones that are being brought to the floor so that the subcommittee, particularly Labor-HHS that is left behind, is woefully underfunded.

□ 1645

That is an implicit, de facto acknowledgment that we have raised the caps. The way to solve this problem is to acknowledge it publicly and get about doing it and getting adequate funding in these programs and not to proceed to assume surpluses that do not exist with large tax cuts, as this House passed a month or so ago.

We cannot pit tax cuts against domestic discretionary programs that are woefully underfunded and at the same time allow the budget extremists to allow these programs, these domestic discretionary programs that so desperately need funding that prove themselves that have widespread support, as we hear on the floor, to start trying to cannibalize each other. That is a process that I regret.

Mr. Chairman, I regretfully oppose the amendment but look forward to working with the gentleman to try to get additional funding in this bill so that we can fund adequately the program that he is fighting for so hard and so effectively.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to Mr. NADLER'S amendment.

It's an overused colloquialism, but this amendment is penny-wise and pound-foolish. If you don't like the Space Station and want to set our human spaceflight program back decades, vote to kill the Space Station. the Roemer/Sanford amendment is intellectually honest in making this choice. Sadly, the amendment before us now offers a false choice. It creates the illusion of savings by reducing a program budget, but the amendment will only increase our costs in the future when NASA has to work overtime to make up for near-term budget shortfalls.

Last year, the Committee on Science received testimony from the Chairman of the Cost Assessment and Validation Task Force, which NASA created at the request of Congress. The Chairman of the Task Force, Jay Chabrow, testified that Space Station costs had grown because the Administration underfunded the program. The gentleman from New York's amendment would worsen that problem by cutting $305 million from the space station account. Such a cut promises to increase Station costs in the future.

Mr. Chairman, we all know that the sooner we fix a problem the cheaper it is to fix. The only way to fix problems now and prevent them from growing in the future is to provide NASA with enough resources to do the job we're asking it to do. If you support the Space Station, and the vote margins of the last few years make it clear you do, then you should reject this amendment.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

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

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

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 275, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

PUBLIC HOUSING CAPITAL FUND

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For the Public Housing Capital Fund Program to carry out capital and management activities for public housing agencies, as authorized under section 9 of the United States Housing Act of 1937, as amended (42 U.S.C. 1437), $2,555,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That of the total amount, up to $50,000,000 shall be for carrying out activities under section 9(d) of such Act, and for lease adjustments to section 23 projects, including up to $1,000,000 for related travel: *Provided further*, That all balances for debt service for Public and Indian Housing and Public and Indian Housing Grants previously funded within the ''Annual contributions for assisted housing'' account shall be transferred to this account, to be available for the purposes for which they were originally appropriated.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. WELDON OF FLORIDA

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. WELDON of Florida:

Page 21, line 20, after the dollar amount, insert the following: ''(reduced by $445,000,000)''.

Page 79, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert the following: ''(increased by $92,000,000)''.

Page 79, line 19, after the dollar amount, insert the following: ''(increased by $112,000,000)''.

Page 80, line 14, after the dollar amount, insert the following: ''(increased by $241,000,000)''.

Mr. WELDON of Florida (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 Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order against the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON).

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order against the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON).

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Chairman, my amendment would shift $445 million from the Department of Housing and Urban Development Capital Fund Account to NASA which is funded at a woefully inadequate level in this bill.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment would simply result in bringing the budget for HUD's Capital Fund Account to a level equal to the budget request submitted by the Clinton administration over the past 2 years.

While the funding level of HUD's Capital Fund in the bill before us is equal to the administration's request, it is important to note that last year's Congress provided $445 million more than the request of the administration for this account.

My amendment shifts this $445 million to partially restore NASA's budget. Specifically, my amendment would shift $92 million to human space flight to fully restore this account in the fiscal 1999 level.

My amendment would also fully restore NASA's Mission Support Account to last year's level by increasing the amount in the bill for this account by $241 million.

Finally, my amendment would add $112 million to the Science, Aeronautics, and Technology Account and partially restore this to last year's level.

Mr. Chairman, I am committed to fully restoring NASA's budget; and I look forward to continuing to work with the chairman of the subcommittee in restoring NASA's funding.

Now, I understand the concern of the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), the chairman of the subcommittee, about my amendment; and, for that reason, I understand his point of order and I will withdraw my amendment. But I am looking forward to engaging the gentleman from New York in a colloquy later and working with him in the process of restoring the NASA fund.

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

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Chairman, I have been listening very attentively to the debate today. I want to congratulate the subcommittee, under the leadership of my good friend and colleague the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), for the way that they have been able to balance the priorities within tight budget caps. It is not easy. We all know that. But I will tell my colleagues this, the Walsh product is something that all of us can be proud of.

We have just spent a couple of hours discussing veterans assistance. I am a concerned veteran myself so, obviously, I am very interested in this debate. I want to point out that a large portion of the bill's funding, $44.1 billion, supports the Department of Veterans Affairs' efforts to provide funding for important health, housing, education, and compensatory benefits to military veterans and their dependents.

This is $1.5 billion more than the current fiscal year and $1.6 billion more than the President's request. I think that is very good, and the gentleman from New York (Chairman WALSH) is to be congratulated.

I also am particularly pleased that this bill provides almost $106 million more than the President requested for the Environmental Protection Agency. Much of the increase over the request is devoted to the State revolving funds, and we all know how important they are to all of our governors and all of our communities. They are overseen by the House Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, which I am privileged to chair.

The EPA itself has estimated that about $200 billion, that is ''billion'' with a ''b,'' will be needed over the next 20 years to ensure that our local sewage systems are doing an adequate job of keeping sewage and other pollutants out of our Nation's waters. The Association of Metropolitan Sewage Agencies estimates that need at more than $300 billion.

Yet the President's budget actually cut the funding for these programs which States and localities depend upon to protect the environment and public health.

Now, I am not suggesting that the President is for pollution and is not sympathetic to veterans. That is nonsense. Of course the President is concerned about veterans, and of course he is concerned about the environment.

What I am saying and very emphatically and providing evidence to prove the case is that the Walsh committee examined the President's budget request and in these 2 areas, providing for veterans assistance and providing for the Environmental Protection Agency, did a better job and, therefore, they are to be commended.

So I am proud to support this product. I know how tough it is. I know that in many areas we want more money and we wish that we can wave the magic wand and create those extra dollars instantly. We would do more. But I think we are doing a very good job, and I think the leadership of the gentleman from New York (Chairman WALSH) is to be commended and acknowledged.

Mr. Chairman, I am also pleased that this bill provides almost $106 million more than the President requested for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Much of the increase over the request is devoted to the State Revolving Funds, which are overseen by the House Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, which I chair.

The EPA itself has estimated that about $200 billion will be needed over the next 20 years to ensure that out local sewage systems are doing an adequate job of keeping sewage and other pollutants out of our nation's waters, and the Association of Metropolitan Sewerage Agencies (AMSA) estimates the need at more than $300 billion. Yet the President's budget actually cut the funding for these programs, which states and localities depend upon to protect the environment and public health. This bill restores funding for the revolving funds and begins to make a downpayment on our future needs.

I congratulate the Chairman on putting money where it is most needed. This bill uses its limited allocation wisely. I urge its support.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, my constituents and I have been anxiously awaiting the VA-HUD appropriations to be presented to the entire House. We have been watching and have received some of the preliminary reports in the latest bill with dread.

Just in my district alone, one of the highest housing cost areas in the country, we lose over $12 million and hundreds and hundreds of jobs. We

are appalled with the proposed cuts, all of the proposed cuts.

However, I want to focus very quickly now on what the bill does to our housing programs. As a member of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunities of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, I am acutely aware of the enormous housing needs of this country and of my constituents and of the efforts made by our economy to respond to our national housing crisis.

Housing costs in the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Area are particularly alarming. Housing costs are reaching astronomical heights and are becoming increasingly impossible for moderate wage earners to meet. The working poor and disabled are in greater jeopardy than ever.

In this best of all economic times for some and the worst of times for many, why are the Republicans cutting the bare necessities for keeping the poorest of our working people working and those who absolutely cannot survive without help, why are we cutting their bare bones of housing and the economic opportunities to reach some level of self-sufficiency?

Those who wave the flag of family values yet gut the basic safety net of families should really be exposed. These cuts do not create family stability. They create family dislocation and upheaval. I do not understand the level of meanness in this highest legislative body of the most powerful nation on Earth. These cuts are hypocritical and go against the very core of our creed of liberty and justice for all.

We kick people off of welfare and tell them to be independent, yet we destroy the basic support system that they need for self-sufficiency. What do we suppose will be the outcome?

A New York Times report from this weekend quoted a study. It showed and demonstrated that in the last 2 years the poorest 20 percent of these families lost an average of $577 a year, with incomes falling over $8,000. They had left welfare but had not made up the lost benefits with wages.

The situation was worse for the poorest 10 percent, who lost an average of $814 a year. A clear majority of Americans also do not want tax cuts if it means ignoring our public school system, if it means ignoring reducing crime, protecting Social Security, Medicare, and about protecting our environment.

I ask our colleagues to vote against this VA-HUD appropriations bill that provides no new housing support and which seriously underestimates the cost of housing renewal efforts in our country. I ask my colleagues to vote against this bill, which undercuts by $450 million the maintenance of present public housing stock.

I ask my colleagues to vote against this bill which deletes and reduces homeless programs and funds by over $45 million. I ask my colleagues to vote against this bill because it cuts the Fair Housing program to reduce discrimination by $2.5 million and homeownership partner programs by $20 million.

Racism is alive and well in America. We need to increase, not reduce, our efforts to eliminate discrimination from the face of this country.

I remember the promises of a bipartisan approach earlier this session with the election of the new Speaker. But this is not a bipartisan bill. This is a bill that is meant to be confrontational and to move us to an ever-increasing crisis point.

These proposed cuts are certain to create more homelessness and more hopelessness, which leads to despair. This is wrong. This is immoral in a land of plenty. There are too many unacceptable items in this bill, and I ask my colleagues to reject it.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to engage the subcommittee chairman, my good friend from New York (Mr. WALSH), in a colloquy regarding the NASA provisions in the bill before us.

I acknowledge and respect the fact that my friend from New York was given a very difficult budget allocation. Being fiscally responsible, by definition, is not an easy proposition. Millions of Americans know that they do that every year with their family budget.

Nonetheless, as we attempt to prioritize each title and agency within each bill, we need to take a step back and look at what we have wrought. I remain very concerned about the adverse impact this bill would have on NASA and its ability to lead the world in space exploration and technology development.

The Human Space Fleet account is funded at $92 million below last year's level. Mission Support is at $241,800,000 below last year's level. And the Science, Aeronautics and Technology account is $678,200,000 below last year's level.

These are far-reaching reductions that would have significant impact on the NASA team and the science it does for a long time to come.

I am sure the chairman would conclude, as do I, that NASA's work should be a priority with this Nation because of the huge benefit and payoff we as Americans receive from such an investment. At the core of that investment is man's interaction with space, our need for revelation and new discovery. Human involvement in space is a mere 40 years old, not even a generation. We cannot extinguish this noble quest in a manner that might be questioned by others after us.

While the usual debate over NASA funding includes much technical and scientific discussion, I must stress that NASA has a value that goes beyond the temporal. NASA has a unique ability to inspire our children. Every time I talk with a teacher about space, they always stress to me how much of a motivator space exploration is to their children. I think this is an outstanding tribute of what a value science is to our Nation.

Would the chairman of the subcommittee agree with me that NASA has been and will continue to be a significant national priority and that NASA will continue to be a priority with him and with this Congress, and would he also agree that minimizing NASA's budget reductions as much as possible during conference will be a priority with him?

I would urge and ask the subcommittee chairman to do all that he can between now and conference to address this budget shortfall.

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me for the purpose of this colloquy. I appreciate very much the many discussions that we have had regarding NASA over the past several months. I understand the serious concerns of the gentleman about the level of funding.

Having visited the constituency of the gentleman in Florida and visited the Kennedy Space Center and met with the leadership there, I was deeply impressed by the scope and breadth of knowledge that he has in the NASA area. So I very much respect his point of view on this.

□ 1700

I certainly understand the concerns, and I can assure the gentleman that I will work with him and other leaders in our Nation's space program to see that the NASA budget is further accommodated in conference.

NASA is very important to this Nation, and I appreciate the leadership that the gentleman has shown in addressing our Nation's space issues. I appreciate the gentleman's commitment to continuing to work with me between now and the beginning of the fiscal year on October 1 to improve the budget picture of NASA.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. I appreciate the gentleman's commitment and I look forward to working with him on this matter of critical importance to our Nation and my constituency at Kennedy Space Center.

Mr. WALSH. I also would like to take this opportunity to thank the gentleman and his colleague, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MCCOLLUM), for their leadership with the East-Central Florida veterans inpatient pilot program. When I visited Brevard County earlier this year, I was briefed on the successes of the pilot program and the possibility it holds for improving veterans health care in other parts of the country.

The committee looks forward to the continued success of the program and a report from the Veterans Administration about the aspects and benefits of

the East-Central Florida patient pilot program.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. I thank the gentleman for his comments and his support for this pilot program. I have received very positive feedback from veterans, my constituents who have been served under this program, and I look forward to the continued delivery of services in this way, and I thank the subcommittee chairman.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

PUBLIC HOUSING OPERATING FUND

For payments to public housing agencies for the operation and management of public housing, as authorized by section 9(e) of the United States Housing Act of 1937, as amended (42 U.S.C. 1437g), $2,818,000,000, to remain available until expended.

DRUG ELIMINATION GRANTS FOR LOW-INCOME HOUSING

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For grants to public housing agencies and Indian tribes and their tribally designated housing entities for use in eliminating crime in public housing projects authorized by 42 U.S.C. 11901–11908, for grants for federally assisted low-income housing authorized by 42 U.S.C. 11909, and for drug information clearinghouse services authorized by 42 U.S.C. 11921–11925, $290,000,000, to remain available until expended, of which up to $4,500,000 shall be for grants, technical assistance, contracts and other assistance, training, and program assessment and execution for or on behalf of public housing agencies, resident organizations, and Indian tribes and their tribally designated housing entities (including up to $150,000 for the cost of necessary travel for participants in such training); $10,000,000 shall be used in connection with efforts to combat violent crime in public and assisted housing under the Operation Safe Home Program administered by the Inspector General of the Department of Housing and Urban Development; and $10,000,000 shall be provided to the Office of Inspector General for Operation Safe Home.

REVITALIZATION OF SEVERELY DISTRESSED PUBLIC HOUSING (HOPE VI)

For grants to public housing agencies for demolition, site revitalization, replacement housing, and tenant-based assistance grants to projects as authorized by section 24 of the United States Housing Act of 1937, $575,000,000 to remain available until expended of which the Secretary may use up to $10,000,000 for technical assistance and contract expertise, to be provided directly or indirectly by grants, contracts or cooperative agreements, including training and cost of necessary travel for participants in such training, by or to officials and employees of the Department and of public housing agencies and to residents: *Provided*, That for purposes of environmental review pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, a grant under this heading or under prior appropriations Acts for use for the purposes under this heading shall be treated as assistance under title I of the United States Housing Act of 1937 and shall be subject to the regulations issued by the Secretary to implement section 26 of such Act: *Provided further*, That none of such funds shall be used directly or indirectly by granting competitive advantage in awards to settle litigation or pay judgments, unless expressly permitted herein.

NATIVE AMERICAN HOUSING BLOCK GRANTS

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the Native American Housing Block Grants program, as authorized under title I of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (NAHASDA) (Public Law 104–330), $620,000,000, to remain available until expended, of which $6,000,000 shall be used to support the inspection of Indian housing units, contract expertise, training, and technical assistance in the oversight and management of Indian housing and tenant-based assistance, including up to $100,000 for related travel: *Provided*, That of the amount provided under this heading, $6,000,000 shall be made available for the cost of guaranteed notes and other obligations, as authorized by title VI of NAHASDA: *Provided further*, That such costs, including the costs of modifying such notes and other obligations, shall be as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as amended: *Provided further*, That these funds are available to subsidize the total principal amount of any notes and other obligations, any part of which is to be guaranteed, not to exceed $54,600,000: *Provided further*, That for administrative expenses to carry out the guaranteed loan program, up to $200,000 from amounts in the first proviso, which shall be transferred to and merged with the appropriation for ''Salaries and expenses'', to be used only for the administrative costs of these guarantees.

INDIAN HOUSING LOAN GUARANTEE FUND PROGRAM ACCOUNT

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the cost of guaranteed loans, as authorized by section 184 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992 (106 Stat. 3739), $6,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such costs, including the costs of modifying such loans, shall be as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as amended: *Provided further*, That these funds are available to subsidize total loan principal, any part of which is to be guaranteed, not to exceed $71,956,000.

In addition, for administrative expenses to carry out the guaranteed loan program, up to $150,000 from amounts in the first paragraph, which shall be transferred to and merged with the appropriation for ''Salaries and expenses'', to be used only for the administrative costs of these guarantees.

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH AIDS

For carrying out the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS program, as authorized by the AIDS Housing Opportunity Act (42 U.S.C. 12901), $215,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That the Secretary may use up to .5 percent of the funds under this heading for technical assistance.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. NADLER

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. NADLER:

Page 26, line 6, after the first dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $10,000,000)''.

Page 82, line 23, after the first dollar amount insert the following: ''(reduced by $10,000,000)''.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, before I begin, I would like to thank my colleague, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS), and my colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY), for joining me in offering this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment would restore $10 million to the housing opportunities for persons with AIDS, or HOPWA program. This does not represent new funding but seeks merely to maintain last year's funding level. The HOPWA program, which enjoys wide bipartisan support, is the only federal housing program that provides cities and States with the resources to address specifically the housing crisis facing people with AIDS.

Currently, HOPWA is helping nearly 75,000 people in over 41,000 housing units. These people live in over 100 communities across 37 States, plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Mr. Chairman, individuals with AIDS are living longer and more productive lives. According to a new report, AIDS deaths have fallen dramatically in recent years from roughly 50,000 4 years ago to 17,000 last year. We owe these encouraging statistics to new and effective drug therapies. We have made great strides in the treatment but most of these therapies require a stable living environment. They usually involve a strict regime built around regular meals and a regular schedule. Medication must be refrigerated and often must be taken on a rigid time stable. HOPWA provides a stable housing situation in which individuals can get the treatment they need and can have the regularity in their lives and their schedules that they need. To deny this to people living with AIDS would be an unacceptable cruelty.

As the success of HOPWA grows, so too does the need for funding. Nine new communities joined HOPWA in 1999. At least five more are expected to do so in 2000. Add to these figures the 40,000 new AIDS cases each year and available funding will be spread even thinner. As I said, funding for this program ought to be increased but at the very least it should not be cut below existing levels.

As for the offset, this amendment would cut $10 million from the $246 million appropriation for the National Science Foundation's Polar and Antarctic Research Fund, a very small reduction. I should note that there are 12 other agencies that also support antarctic research so we would not be greatly hindering this research.

With this amendment, we would do minimal damage to long-term research goals while significantly improving the lives of individuals with AIDS who desperately need our help now. I urge the adoption of this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS).

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Chairman, I rise to support the amendment of the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) and am happy to be a part of it. This very modest $10 million increase is vital. It will allow thousands of people living with HIV/AIDS to live longer and healthier lives. It is crucial that the Federal Government continue to address the AIDS epidemic by investing in this program, and I sincerely believe cutting the funds to HOPWA would be a mistake.

Between one-third and half of all people living with HIV/AIDS are currently homeless or in imminent danger of becoming so. Sixty percent of all people living with AIDS will face a housing crisis at some point in their lives. While there is reason for hope with new AIDS treatment and research, the battle against HIV/AIDS is far from over. The World Health Organization announced in May that AIDS is now the world's most deadly infectious disease.

The good news is people living with AIDS are living longer and more productive lives, but this means care-giving services are needed now more than ever. Given the 57,000 new cases of AIDS in the period between March of 1997 and March of 1998, the already long waiting lists in the new jurisdictions competing for these much needed funds, it's essential that we add this $10 million.

Daily costs for persons with AIDS in acute care facilities are $1,085, while the daily cost to HOPWA community housing ranges from only $40 to $100. Providing services in acute care facilities equals more than 10 times the cost of providing housing and services in residential settings. It is a mistake to do that. We should provide this $10 million for HOPWA. It's cost-effective and it's compassionate.

Again, I thank my colleagues for offering this amendment.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) for his support. I simply want to add again that the funding in the offset is $246 million plus 12 other agencies doing Antarctic research. This is taking $10 million from that for keeping the existing level of funding for HOPWA in the face of the greatly increased need. With more and more communities coming into the program, and seeking funds from the Federal Government, I would hope we can have bipartisan support, thorough bipartisan support, for voting for the amendment as we do for the sponsorship of the amendment.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I rise in reluctant opposition to the amendment.

Obviously this is a well-intended amendment to provide resources to a population that is sorely in need of those resources. It is a very popular program in the Congress. I think most Members support it. The difficulty once again is striking a balance, and what we did when we drew up this appropriation bill was we provided the same level of funding that we provided in 1999, basically level funding. We did not want to cut it, and we did not cut it.

What happened was in the omnibus bill that concluded after the appropriations bill passed the House, the conference put in an additional $10 million, which brought it from $215 million up to $225 million. We appropriated the same level as last year, $215 million and the Crowley-Nadler amendment would put that $10 million back in, which would make it back even with the omnibus level.

The difficulty is where do they find the money? And they went all the way to Antarctica to find it. It seems like a good place to go to find money for Americans who are in need, but it does do harm to our scientific work in Antarctica.

We have reduced funding for the National Science Foundation by over $200 million. That is the last thing that I wanted to do in this bill but, again, the balance that we had to strike was very, very fragile, very, very difficult. We literally are borrowing from Peter to pay Paul here.

What does this do to Antarctica? The National Science Foundation's Antarctic program is this Nation's way of exercising a peaceful, scientifically productive and critically important year-round influential presence on this continent.

As in every other part of the world, there are political considerations. There are territorial claims to this land that if the United States does not play its important role as honest broker, we could conceivably have some political difficulty there in that remotest of all parts of the world.

We have also made commitments to our foreign partners in continuing this research, and the work that is being done there is very important to our overall earth science effort. Lord knows we have affected our Earth science in the NASA budget also.

So I would again reluctantly oppose this amendment. I understand the goodwill of all involved, but it really does do damage to our scientific effort. And by level funding HOPWA from the 1999 level and providing level funding in disabled housing, I think we have done the best that we can.

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

Mr. Chairman, I have a great deal of respect for my colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), but I rise today in support of the Nadler-Crowley-Shays amendment to increase funding for the housing opportunities for persons with AIDS by $10 million, to restore the program to its fiscal year 1999 level.

While seemingly small, this increase is vital to HOPWA programs and will greatly help the individuals and families who suffer from AIDS by providing them with desperately needed housing.

The housing provided by HOPWA allows people to improve the quality of their lives and access life-extending care.

In 1998, the Center for Disease Control reported that 665,000 were living with AIDS and the AIDS virus; and CDC estimates that between 650,000 and 900,000 Americans live with the HIV virus. In New York and in my district particularly the AIDS crisis is particularly acute. In 1998, there were approximately 130,000 reported AIDS cases in the State of New York.

Once diagnosed, individuals with the HIV virus must take on an aggressive treatment regime that requires strict timetables and strict diets. Over the past 3 years, CDC has reported a steep decline in AIDS. A decrease in deaths and the longer life spans of individuals with AIDS is a positive step resulting from nonstop research and advances in medications. Research and funding needs to be continued to effectively combat this deadly disease.

Now that we have had the breakthroughs in the treatment of HIV and delaying the onset of full-blown AIDS, we must concentrate more of our efforts on preservation, treatments and assistance programs. With the longer life span comes the need for more assistance, both in medical care and in housing.

Lifesaving drugs are costly, forcing many people to decide between essential medicines and other necessities, such as food and housing.

No person should have to choose between extending their life or keeping a roof over their head, and the fact is without adequate housing and nutrition it is extremely difficult for individuals to benefit from these new treatments.

Sadly, we here in Congress are now considering cutting funds from a program that actually saves lives. HOPWA programs provide rental assistance, mortgage assistance, utility payment assistance, information on low income housing opportunities and technical support and assistance with planning and operating community residences. These important services assist individuals and families financially, not forcing them to choose between housing and medicine.

Currently, HOPWA benefits 75,000 people and 41,000 housing units. HOPWA is the only federal housing program addressing the housing crisis facing people with AIDS.

Another problem is that many people with AIDS can no longer afford their homes and must look for new living accommodations. Oftentimes they face discrimination because of their illness. This was brought to my attention by an organization within my district, Steinway House, who run a Scattered Site Housing Program which locates dwellings in Queens for homeless persons with AIDS and their families. It is currently the largest program of this type in the country.

Steinway House and other similar programs benefit from HOPWA, and I find it unconscionable to decrease their funds.

□ 1715

Individuals with AIDS are living longer than ever and while we have made progress in awareness of how the virus is transmitted, recent studies show that rates of infection are decreasing at a slower rate than in years past. To remove funds from a program with increasing participation is wrong, and to take funds away from patients whose lives literally depend on it is irresponsible.

To allow for this increase, my colleagues and I have proposed a $10 million offset from the National Science Foundation's Polar and Antarctic Research Program. I want to make it perfectly clear that I am not opposed to science research and understand the value it can have on our lives and the future of all human kind. However, the Polar and Antarctic Research Program is coordinated by the NSF but has 12 other federal agencies also contributing funds and participating. In sum, I believe that $10 million is a small sum to transfer to prevent individuals with AIDS and their families from ending up on the street.

We ought to be farsighted in looking at problems in our global atmosphere and scientific research, but we must not be shortsighted, that we harm the citizens of this country in our efforts. I am not saying that NSF's programs are not worthwhile, but we need to have compassion for those people who struggle to live each day with AIDS. They need our assistance, and we cannot leave them out in the cold.

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment. Cutting research funding for the National Science Foundation on top of cuts already proposed in this appropriation I think is shortsighted no matter how noble the cause.

The amendment would cut $10 million from the NSF, not from the Antarctic money in the NSF, but from the general fund of the NSF. It is an agency already facing a $25 million budget reduction. To continue the cuts further would jeopardize our commitment to scientific discovery and innovation, a commitment that has been crucial to maintaining and increasing our current prosperity and quality of life. As Chairman of the Subcommittee on Basic Research of the Committee on Science, I have been able to learn firsthand of the benefits and the commitment to research that this country needs to make. I would like to share some examples with my colleagues.

Working with NSF, a particular grant, researchers at Rice University have developed a new process for creating ultra porous ceramic materials. These materials could make membranes with pores measuring 1 to 2 nanometers, one one billionth of a meter, small enough to help medical researchers filter viruses or help chemical workers with new techniques to clean up hazardous waste. NSF funded researchers at Washington University in St. Louis have created nano-sized synthetic particles that could some day be the carriers of drugs or genes to help fight the battle against many diseases including cancer.

So again, taking the money from NSF I think is not justified in this case. NSF funded-researchers at Yale University are using powerful computers to develop drugs that bind more strongly to target proteins making them more effective at lower dosages and reducing unwanted side effects. These drugs show promise in preventing transplanted organs from being rejected, keeping HIV infections in check, even stimulating nerve regrowth in spinal cord injuries.

Researchers at my alma mater, Michigan State University, funded, in part, by NSF have identified a gene that helps control a plant's tolerance to cold weather. Using this knowledge, farmers, of course, can accomplish the growing of crops in many areas that we cannot grow crops today. Since the defense against cold is similar to the defense against drought, the potential is real in helping to feed a starving world in the years ahead.

These are just a few examples of the types of projects that could be jeopardized by these cuts, so I ask the authors of this amendment to please consider other areas that they might argue that these funds are reasonable to transfer into the projects that they suggest. While I sympathize with the plight of those suffering from AIDS and admire my colleagues for their efforts to help, I believe this amendment is not the right solution. In fact, cutting funding at NSF will in the long run only hurt the very people we are trying to help.

I hope my colleagues will join me in opposing this amendment.

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the Nadler-Shays-Crowley amendment, and I commend the gentlemen for their leadership in bringing it to the floor in a strong bipartisan way. This is a very important amendment, Mr. Chairman, because what this bill does is cut by $10 million the funds available for the HOPWA program. That means that 6,500 people who now receive this funding who are housed under the HOPWA program will be put out on the street. This is a cut. It is not additional money that we would like to see in the bill. That does not seem to have a market with the Republican leadership but merely attempts to maintain the funding from last year.

I rise in support of this amendment and commend the makers of it with some pride of authorship of the underlying authorization bill, the HOPWA bill that was passed in the Congress years ago. The cosponsors were the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT) and Congressman SCHUMER of New York as well as the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI),—me—of San Francisco. All three of us saw the need in our communities for this special program. We worked with the religious community which was ministering to the needs of the poor, homeless, and especially people with AIDS and came up with this legislation, and what it does, HOPWA funds assists low-income persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families by providing rental assistance, utility payments to prevent homelessness, assistance in short-term facilities. These funds also help construct, rehabilitate, acquire, and operate housing and provide supportive services. Those supportive services are a very important part of it. Evidence shows that the capacity of HOPWA programs to deliver services is growing and should not be undermined. The housing provided by HOPWA dollars provides the quality of lives, improves the quality of lives and the access to life-extending care.

What is important to note about the HOPWA funds, Mr. Chairman, is that they are a good investment. Because of the HOPWA program, we save $47,000 per year in reducing unnecessary hospitalization and use of emergency health care per person, $47,000 per person per year. So in cutting this funding we are increasing the cost to the taxpayer.

Now we all care about, and as an appropriator myself, I know we are all responsible for our own bills, but we also have a responsibility to the taxpayer in general and in cutting in our own bill it is foolish to think that there is any saving to the taxpayer when this would increase, per person, $47,000 per year times 6,500 people who would be literally put out on the street, and this all takes place within the context of a bill, a VA–HUD bill, with despite the excellent efforts of the distinguished chairman from New York whom we all respect and the distinguished ranking member whom we hold in high esteem, despite their best efforts this bill has problems, and they translate into putting people on the street.

I said before that our budget should be a statement of our national values. I ask my colleagues is it a statement of their national values to give a tax break to the wealthiest Americans while putting those most vulnerable people with AIDS and HIV out on the street where stress contributes to their condition instead of saving money by reducing dependency on emergency rooms and hospital care and keeping people at home, also including families of people with HIV/AIDS.

So again I commend the makers of the amendment, the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER), the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS), and the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) for their leadership and urge our colleagues to support this important amendment, and I hope that the distinguished leadership of the subcommittee will find a way to have this money, at least this $10 million, at the end of the appropriations day for us.

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

Mr. Chairman, I did not want to use the yielded time to compliment my colleague from New York since it was a bit shorter, but I sincerely have tremendous respect for what he is trying to do, and I know that he has respect for what we are trying to do. This is a modest amendment. We are talking about $10 million. We are not talking about $100 million, we are not talking about a billion.

HOPWA is housing opportunities for persons with AIDS, and when we provide that opportunity, we are spending $40 to $100 a day. But let us take the high end. It's not usually up to $100 a day; it's less than that. But if people living with HIV/AIDS are not in the kind of housing environment provided by HOPWA, they are receiving acute care at over $1,000 a day. So even taking the high end of the HOPWA cost—at $100 a day—we are talking of spending a total of $36,000 per year as opposed to $365,000 per year in acute care facilities. We really believe this is an amendment that has tremendous benefit because it will save a great deal of money as well as provide the kind of compassion that all of us want to provide.

I have particular interest in standing up because my predecessor Stewart McKinney died of AIDS, and his wife, Lucie McKinney, did not walk away. She decided she would devote the rest of her life to helping people living with HIV/AIDS have housing opportunities, and she has given me endless opportunity to see this challenge through her eyes. When her husband died, she went around the country to see how people with HIV/AIDS were living, and it was not a pretty sight, and it continues to not be a pretty sight. So Lucie McKinney, a real hero of mine, who was not a public person has become a public person, and she has made a tremendous difference in the lives of so many.

So I think when we stand up in support of HOPWA, we are standing up with the sense that at the least, at the least we should not go back from where we were in funding levels. In this budget year, Mr. Chairman, we are spending $225 million, and this budget will be $215 million, so we are asking that this Chamber restore this crucial $10 million.

Mr. Chairman, with that I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding this time to me.

Mr. Chairman, I want to make two brief points.

One, we are not talking about level funding. It may be level with the House vote last year, but the omnibus bill this House voted for and the President signed provided $10 million more than this bill would do this year. So we are being asked to decrease funding by $10 million from the current level. Cities and States will get less than last year, and that makes no provision for the increasing, not level, number of people with AIDS who need this help and for the additional communities supplying to the program every year.

The second point is, of course, we must continue our Antarctic research, but this bill does not reduce this program. The bill increases this program for Antarctic research by $1 million. The amendment would reduce the recommended appropriation by $10 million or $9 million less than last year, a reduction from last year of 3.6 percent, and do not forget there are 12 other Federal pots of money for antarctic research.

The choice before the House therefore is this. Should we reduce the funding for housing for people with AIDS by $10 million from last year, or should we reduce by $9 million from last year, 3.6 percent, one of the 13 Federal Antarctic research programs? That is the choice. I hope the choice is obvious.

Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

Before I begin, I would like to thank my colleague from Connecticut, Mr. SHAYS, and my colleague from New York, Mr. CROWLEY, for joining me in offering this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment restores $10 million to the Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS, or HOPWA, program. This does not represent new funding, but seeks merely to maintain the FY 99 funding level.

The HOPWA program, which enjoys wide bipartisan support, is the only federal housing program that provides cities and states with the resources to address specifically the housing crisis facing people living with AIDS. Among the services that HOPWA delivers are rental assistance, mortgage assistance, help with utility payments, information on low-income housing opportunities, as well as technical support and assistance in acquiring, constructing, rehabilitating, and operating community residences.

It is a locally controlled program that provides maximum flexibility to states and communities to design and implement the strategies that best respond to local housing needs. Its administrative costs are capped by law to ensure that the maximum amount of funding goes directly to the people who need it. Currently, HOPWA is helping nearly 75,000 people in over 41,000 housing units. These people live in over 100 communities across 37 states, plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. This is a well-run, far-reaching, and successful program.

Mr. Chairman, individuals with AIDS are living longer and more productive lives. According to a new report, AIDS deaths have fallen dramatically in recent years, from roughly 50,000 in 1995 to 17,000 in 1998. We owe these encouraging statistics to new and effective drug therapies. We have made great strides in the treatment of HIV/AIDS, but most of these therapies require a stable living environment. They usually involve a strict regimen built around regular meals and a regular schedule. Often, medication must be refrigerated and taken on a rigid time schedule. HOPWA provides a stable housing situation in which individuals can get the treatment they need. To deny this to people living with AIDS, would be an unacceptable cruelty.

Inadequate housing is not only a barrier to treatment, it puts people with HIV/AIDS at risk of premature death from exposure to other diseases, poor nutrition, and stress. The majority of AIDS patients are at or below 20 percent of the median income and at any given time, one-third to one-half of all Americans with AIDS are either homeless or in imminent danger of losing their housing. HOPWA answers this need, successfully providing suitable, reasonably priced housing for thousands of Americans fighting AIDS.

As the success of HOPWA grows, so too does the need for funding. Nine new communities joined HOPWA in 1999 and at least five more are expected to join in the year 2000. Add to these figures the 40,000 new AIDS cases report each year and available funding will be spread even thinner. As I said, funding for this program ought to be increased, but at the very least, it should not be cut below existing levels.

As for the offset, this amendment would cut $10 million from the $246 million appropriation for the National Science Foundation's Polar and Antarctic Research Fund—a small reduction. I should note that there are 12 other agencies that support Antarctic research, so we would not be greatly hindering this research. I am a great supporter of scientific research, and it is not easy for me to suggest scaling back any work in this area. However, under our budget rules, there must be an offset, and it comes down to a matter of priorities. With this amendment, we would do minimal damage to long-term research goals, while significantly improving the lives of individuals who need our help now. I urge the adoption of this amendment.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SHAYS. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Staff tells me that it comes out of the NSF research that has already been cut $25 million. It does not come out of the Antarctic money.

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

Mr. SHAYS. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. NADLER. Yes, but the NSF research at $246 million allocated for this, earmarked for this program, so it comes from this earmark and from nowhere else, and therefore the figures that I just gave, which is that this earmark out of that total appropriation is an earmark of $1 million greater than last year; what we are proposing here is to reduce that by $10 million, a reduction of $9 million from last year, 3.6 percent of one of the 13 Federal Antarctic programs in order to provide level funding from last year for people, for housing for people with AIDS so we do not throw people out on the street, and I think the choice should be clear, and I thank the gentleman again for yielding.

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the Nadler-Shays-Crowley amendment, but I am going to direct my comments on the housing provisions of this bill that I strongly propose. Let me be clear about what is at stake and what message is being sent to this Nation's working poor.

□ 1730

What is at stake is dignity and fairness to this Nation's millions of Americans who live in public housing. It is outrageous that at a time when this economy is posing record gains, we are now experiencing the greatest income

disparity between the wealthiest Americans and the poorest Americans.

By cutting half a billion dollars in public housing capital that should go to repairing our Nation's crumbling public housing stock, the Republican majority is telling this Nation's poor that everyone but them should benefit from the current economic boon.

Is it too much to ask that we give our sick and poor a little compassion? I guess that the ''compassionate conservatism'' that so many Republican presidential candidates talk about has not made it to this body, because there is no compassion in forcing 600,000 Americans to go without a bed. In New York State alone, that is almost 8,000 families with children who must sleep in the streets, and then you try to lecture us on family values?

Worst of all, HUD recently reported that there are 5.3 million households who are in need of affordable housing. Despite this alarming information, this bill fails to fund any Section 8 vouchers for families in need.

I urge all my colleagues to support the Nadler amendment, but even if we adopt the Nadler amendment, it is still not enough to fix this flawed legislation, and I suggest we go back to the drawing board and bring forward a proposal that ensures that all Americans benefit from this Nation's prosperity.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Nadler-Crowley-Shays amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I guess this could be called many things, Sophie's Choice, a rock and a hard place, and many others.

First of all, I certainly want to acknowledge the hard work, as I have indicated before, of the ranking member and chairman of this subcommittee. These are always difficult choices. I stand here in a difficult position, some would say. I am a member of the Committee on Science and have always supported the National Science Foundation on the good work they do. But that is why I come to support this particular amendment, because I am making a choice, and I think this bill in its response to housing for Americans has made some bad choices. One of them has to do with the great need that we have for HOPWA funding.

In particular, I think it is important to note we have made some enormous scientific advances as it relates to the treatment of HIV-AIDS. I am gratified for those constituents that I represent, that they now have a better chance of living. As they have a better chance of living, Mr. Chairman, difficulties arise. Where do they live? What kind of support systems do they have? Can they live a normal life and have a place to live and a job and still have the kind of medical care they need?

In most instances, without HOPWA dollars, homes for people living with AIDS, that is not the case. First of all, even in spite of ourselves, today people living with AIDS and their families are discriminated against. People find out that they are living there or that there is housing coming in their area or that they might be living next door to someone with HIV-AIDS, and, tragically enough, there is a rejection syndrome.

So the HOPWA funds provide in many instances not only rental assistance and mortgage assistance, help with utility payments, information on low income housing opportunities, but provides technical support and assistance in designing, acquiring, constructing, rehabilitating, and operating community residences. I know of some in my community, and they give a certain peace of mind to those suffering from AIDS. HOPWA benefits some 75,000 people in 41,000 housing units in 100 communities, and this $10 million is a mere figure that would add to the peace and comfort of those individuals that are suffering from a deadly disease.

Frankly, I think we have made some bad choices on housing with respect to this appropriations bill, because the $1.6 billion in cuts we are talking about in housing takes $220 million from the community development block grant monies. Those are monies that my City of Houston and the other cities have used effectively and efficiently and used promisingly. They are flexible dollars. They give cities, mayors and county commissioners and others, the independence to do what is right for their community.

In addition, we are cutting $20 million from the home program, affordable housing. It was noted a couple of months ago that the City of Houston has one of the fewest numbers of units of affordable housing. I am delighted that Mayor Lee P. Brown is committed to cutting down the numbers of those waiting for affordable housing and increasing the percentage of affordable housing in the City of Houston in the 21st Century to 50,000 units.

Mr. Chairman, we cannot do it with these kinds of cuts. Right now in my own district I have 21,000 people waiting for public housing and 8,000 people waiting for Section 8 certificates. Now we are looking at a housing bill that cuts all of that. What do we say to these hard working people who simply want to go to work every day? They pay their taxes, and yet we cannot provide them with a decent place to live?

I think the Nadler-Crowley-Shays amendment adds to the other concern we would have, and those are those individuals most often discriminated against who live with AIDS. I think it is time for us to make the right Sophie's Choice, if you will, and make some of the sacrifices that all of us are asked to do; and although we support different projects and have different commitments, like I do as a member of the Committee on Science, we have to make the hard choices, and I am going to err on the side, positively, I know, on those living with AIDS and on those needing affordable housing. Let us do something to fix the $1.6 billion cut for HUD, but as well I would like to support this amendment and provide additional resources for people living with and struggling to survive with HIV-AIDS.

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

Mr. Chairman, I certainly want to thank my colleagues from New York and Connecticut for proposing this amendment to restore the funding for this very important program, the housing opportunities for people with AIDS, to its 1999 level of $225 million. I hope that all my colleagues will help and support this Nadler-Crowley-Shays amendment, which will shift $10 million from the National Science Foundation's $3.7 billion to HOPWA, where it is so sorely needed.

To me it is a matter of people versus science. I do not like it, but it is my only choice. HOPWA is a program where every single dollar counts. 75,000 people across the Nation currently depend on HOPWA for their housing. This program provides essential assistance with rental and mortgage payments, utility bills, obtaining information about affordable housing opportunities, and also provides technical support for the community residences for people with AIDS.

Any cut in HOPWA funding will kick, literally kick sick people onto our streets. We have enough of those people already in our streets. We do not need additional ill people.

Survival with AIDS requires taking expensive medication and following a very special diet. When someone is already faced with a daunting challenge of coping with AIDS, the last thing they need is to worry about their housing. That is one of the stresses they face, and that is one of the things we can help with. If we cannot provide people with AIDS with stable housing, many of them will surely die prematurely, because it is almost impossible to provide AIDS patients with the health services they require if they lack a stable place to live.

Let us not turn our backs on our fellow Americans who are afflicted with AIDS. Let us not throw them out on the streets like used rugs. We must vote ''yes'' on the Nadler-Crowley-Shays amendment.

I ask my colleagues, please, please, support this amendment.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to the amendment offered by the gentlemen from New York, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. CROWLEY. This amendment would cut $10 million dollars from the National Science Foundation's (NSF) polar research and Antarctic logistics programs, which are part of the Research and Related Activities account. The Science Committee and this House have affirmed the importance of an active U.S.

presence in Antarctica. Stable funding for these programs is necessary because of the long lead time required for polar operations. If this amendment passes, funding will have to be shifted from other NSF basic research programs to support polar operations already in the pipeline.

Mr. Chairman, we can all sympathize with the plight for those who have contracted AIDS, but I do not think that it is in the best interests of AIDS patients to cut funding for basic science programs that may one day provide a cure for this and other debilitating diseases. The types of basic research NSF funds in the biological and other sciences is a vitally important part of a balanced federal research portfolio.

The basic research being conducted through NSF adds to our store of knowledge in valuable, and often unpredictable, ways. We cannot foresee where the next AIDS breakthrough will come, but I think it is safe to say that basic research funded by NSF will be shown to have contributed greatly in the effort.

I do not believe it is their intention, but the amendment offered by the gentlemen from New York potentially could prolong the time needed to develop an effective treatment for this insidious disease, harming the people it is intended to help. NSF-funded research is an important weapon in the battle against AIDS and other serious diseases. If this House really wants to help AIDS patients, it will vote a resounding ''no'' on this amendment.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Chairman, I strongly support the Nadler-Crowley amendment and oppose any measure that would reduce HOPWA funding from last years level. When is this Congress going to come to its senses and start thinking about individuals and families living with AIDS?

Today, due to the success of effective drugs, the number of people and families living with AIDS has tremendously increased—so too have their needs.

The good news is that new medications are proving effective to combat this deadly virus. On the other hand, the bad news is that people living with AIDS are homeless and moving from shelter to shelter.

To conquer the most tragic epidemic of our generation, we must provide the 240,000 people infected by AIDS in our communities with the basic necessities, particularly shelter. The reality is, as this epidemic grows, so does the need for housing.

If we neglect the housing needs of those living with AIDS, our children and grandchildren will bear the brunt of our folly.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support the Nadler-Crowley amendment and restore necessary funding to HOPWA. We all know someone suffering from this dreadful disease. We must demonstrate basic human compassion and provide them with a decent place to live.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

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

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 275, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For grants to States and units of general local government and for related expenses, not otherwise provided for, to carry out a community development grants program as authorized by title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended (the ''Act'' herein) (42 U.S.C. 5301), $4,500,200,000, to remain available until September 30, 2002: *Provided*, That $67,000,000 shall be for grants to Indian tribes notwithstanding section 106(a)(1) of such Act, $3,000,000 shall be available as a grant to the Housing Assistance Council, $3,000,000 shall be available as a grant to the National American Indian Housing Council, and $30,000,000 shall be for grants pursuant to section 107 of the Act: *Provided further*, That $15,000,000 shall be for grants pursuant to the Self Help Housing Opportunity program: *Provided further*, That not to exceed 20 percent of any grant made with funds appropriated herein (other than a grant made available in this paragraph to the Housing Assistance Council or the National American Indian Housing Council, or a grant using funds under section 107(b)(3) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended) shall be expended for ''Planning and Management Development'' and ''Administration'' as defined in regulations promulgated by the Department. *Provided further*, That all balances for the Economic Development Initiative grants program, the John Heinz Neighborhood Development program, grants to Self Help Housing Opportunity program, and the Moving to Work Demonstration program previously funded within the ''Annual contributions for assisted housing'' account shall be transferred to this account, to be available for the purposes for which they were originally appropriated.

Of the amount made available under this heading, $15,000,000 shall be made available for ''Capacity Building for Community Development and Affordable Housing,'' for LISC and the Enterprise Foundation for activities as authorized by section 4 of the HUD Demonstration Act of 1993 (Public Law 103–120), as in effect immediately before June 12, 1997, with not less than $3,000,000 of the funding to be used in rural areas, including tribal areas, and $3,750,000 for Habitat for Humanity International.

Of the amount provided under this heading, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development may use up to $45,000,000 for supportive services for public housing residents, as authorized by section 34 of the United States Housing Act of 1937, and not less than $10,000,000 for grants for service coordinators and congregate services for the elderly and disabled residents of public and assisted housing.

Of the amount made available under this heading, notwithstanding any other provision of law, $42,500,000 shall be available for YouthBuild program activities authorized by subtitle D of title IV of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act, as amended, and such activities shall be an eligible activity with respect to any funds made available under this heading. Of the amount provided under this paragraph, not less than $2,500,000 shall be set aside and made available for a grant to Youthbuild USA for capacity building for community development and affordable housing activities as specified in section 4 of the HUD Demonstration Act of 1993, as amended.

Of the amount made available under this heading, $20,000,000 shall be available for the Economic Development Initiative (EDI) to finance a variety of efforts.

Of the amount made available under this heading, $20,000,000 shall be available for neighborhood initiatives.

For the cost of guaranteed loans, $25,000,000, as authorized by section 108 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974: *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, as amended: *Provided further*, That these funds are available to subsidize total loan principal, any part of which is to be guaranteed, not to exceed $1,087,000,000, notwithstanding any aggregate limitation on outstanding obligations guaranteed in section 108(k) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974: *Provided further*, That in addition, for administrative expenses to carry out the guaranteed loan program, $1,000,000, which shall be transferred to and merged with the appropriation for ''Salaries and expenses''.

BROWNFIELDS REDEVELOPMENT

For Economic Development Grants, as authorized by section 108(q) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, for Brownfields redevelopment projects, $20,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall make these grants available on a competitive basis as specified in section 102 of the Department of Housing and Urban Development Reform Act of 1989.

HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the HOME investment partnerships program, as authorized under title II of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act (Public Law 101–625), as amended, $1,580,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That up to $5,000,000 of these funds shall be available for the development and operation of integrated community development management information systems: *Provided further*, That up to $7,500,000 of these funds shall be available for Housing Counseling under section 106 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968: *Provided further*, That all Housing Counseling program balances previously appropriated in the ''Housing counseling assistance'' account shall be transferred to this account, to be available for the purposes for which they were originally appropriated.

HOMELESS ASSISTANCE GRANTS

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the emergency shelter grants program (as authorized under subtitle B of title IV of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, as amended); the supportive housing program (as authorized under subtitle C of title IV of such Act); the section 8 moderate rehabilitation single room occupancy program (as authorized under the United States Housing Act of 1937, as amended) to assist homeless individuals pursuant to section 441 of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act; and the shelter plus care program (as authorized under subtitle F of title IV of such Act), $970,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That up to 1 percent of the funds appropriated under this heading may be used for technical assistance and systems support: *Provided further*, That all balances previously appropriated in the ''Emergency Shelter Grants,'' ''Supportive Housing,'' ''Supplemental Assistance for Facilities to Assist the Homeless,'' ''Shelter Plus Care,'' ''Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation Single Room Occupancy,'' and ''Innovative Homeless Initiatives Demonstration'' accounts shall be

transferred to and merged with this account, to be available for any authorized purpose under this heading.

HOUSING PROGRAMS

HOUSING FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS

For assistance for the purchase, construction, acquisition, or development of additional public and subsidized housing units for low income families not otherwise provided for, $854,000,000, to remain available until expended; of which $660,000,000 shall be for capital advances, including amendments to capital advance contracts, for housing for the elderly, as authorized by section 202 of the Housing Act of 1959, as amended, and for project rental assistance, and amendments to contracts for project rental assistance, for the elderly under such section 202(c)(2), of the Housing Act of 1959, and for supportive services associated with the housing; and of which $194,000,000 shall be for capital advances, including amendments to capital advance contracts, for supportive housing for persons with disabilities, as authorized by section 811 of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act, for project rental assistance, for amendments to contracts for project rental assistance, and supportive services associated with the housing for persons with disabilities as authorized by section 811 of such Act: *Provided further*, That the Secretary may designate up to 25 percent of the amounts earmarked under this paragraph for section 811 of such Act for tenant-based assistance, as authorized under that section, including such authority as may be waived under the next proviso, which assistance is five years in duration: *Provided further*, That the Secretary may waive any provision of section 202 of the Housing Act of 1959 and section 811 of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act (including the provisions governing the terms and conditions of project rental assistance and tenant-based assistance) that the Secretary determines is not necessary to achieve the objectives of these programs, or that otherwise impedes the ability to develop, operate or administer projects assisted under these programs, and may make provision for alternative conditions or terms where appropriate.

FLEXIBLE SUBSIDY FUND

(TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

From the Rental Housing Assistance Fund, all uncommitted balances of excess rental charges as of September 30, 1999, and any collections made during fiscal year 2000, shall be transferred to the Flexible Subsidy Fund, as authorized by section 236(g) of the National Housing Act, as amended.

FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION

FHA—MUTUAL MORTGAGE INSURANCE PROGRAM ACCOUNT

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

During fiscal year 2000, commitments to guarantee loans to carry out the purposes of section 203(b) of the National Housing Act, as amended, shall not exceed a loan principal of $140,000,000,000.

During fiscal year 2000, obligations to make direct loans to carry out the purposes of section 204(g) of the National Housing Act, as amended, shall not exceed $50,000,000: *Provided*, That the foregoing amount shall be for loans to nonprofit and governmental entities in connection with sales of single family real properties owned by the Secretary and formerly insured under the Mutual Mortgage Insurance Fund.

For administrative expenses necessary to carry out the guaranteed and direct loan program, $328,888,000, of which not to exceed $324,866,000 shall be transferred to the appropriation for ''Salaries and expenses''; and of which not to exceed $4,022,000 shall be transferred to the appropriation for the ''Office of Inspector General''.

FHA—GENERAL AND SPECIAL RISK PROGRAM ACCOUNT

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For the cost of guaranteed loans, as authorized by sections 238 and 519 of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. 1715z–3 and 1735c), including the cost of loan guarantee modifications (as that term is defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as amended) $153,000,000, including not to exceed $153,000,000 from unobligated balances previously appropriated under this heading, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That these funds are available to subsidize total loan principal, any part of which is to be guaranteed, of up to $18,100,000,000.

Gross obligations for the principal amount of direct loans, as authorized by sections 204(g), 207(l), 238, and 519(a) of the National Housing Act, shall not exceed $50,000,000; of which not to exceed $30,000,000 shall be for bridge financing in connection with the sale of multifamily real properties owned by the Secretary and formerly insured under such Act; and of which not to exceed $20,000,000 shall be for loans to nonprofit and governmental entities in connection with the sale of single-family real properties owned by the Secretary and formerly insured under such Act.

In addition, for administrative expenses necessary to carry out the guaranteed and direct loan programs, $211,455,000 (including not to exceed $147,000,000 from unobligated balances previously appropriated under this heading), of which $193,134,000, shall be transferred to the appropriation for ''Salaries and expenses'' and of which $18,321,000 shall be transferred to the appropriation for the ''Office of Inspector General''.

GOVERNMENT NATIONAL MORTGAGE ASSOCIATION

GUARANTEES OF MORTGAGE-BACKED SECURITIES LOAN GUARANTEE PROGRAM ACCOUNT

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

During fiscal year 2000, new commitments to issue guarantees to carry out the purposes of section 306 of the National Housing Act, as amended (12 U.S.C. 1721(g)), shall not exceed $200,000,000,000.

For administrative expenses necessary to carry out the guaranteed mortgage-backed securities program, $9,383,000, to be derived from the GNMA-guarantees of mortgage-backed securities guaranteed loan receipt account, of which not to exceed $9,383,000 shall be transferred to the appropriation for departmental ''Salaries and expenses''.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH

RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY

For contracts, grants, and necessary expenses of programs of research and studies relating to housing and urban problems, not otherwise provided for, as authorized by title V of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1970, as amended (12 U.S.C. 1701z–1 et seq.), including carrying out the functions of the Secretary under section 1(a)(1)(i) of Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1968, $42,500,000, to remain available until September 30, 2001.

FAIR HOUSING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

FAIR HOUSING ACTIVITIES

For contracts, grants, and other assistance, not otherwise provided for, as authorized by title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, as amended by the Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988, and section 561 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1987, as amended, $37,500,000, to remain available until September 30, 2001, of which $18,750,000 shall be to carry out activities pursuant to such section 561: *Provided*, That no funds made available under this heading shall be used to lobby the executive or legislative branches of the Federal Government in connection with a specific contract, grant or loan.

OFFICE OF LEAD HAZARD CONTROL

LEAD HAZARD REDUCTION

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the Lead Hazard Reduction Program, as authorized by sections 1011 and 1053 of the Residential Lead-Based Hazard Reduction Act of 1992, $70,000,000 to remain available until expended, of which $1,000,000 shall be for CLEARCorps and $7,500,000 shall be for a Healthy Homes Initiative, which shall be a program pursuant to sections 501 and 502 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1970 that shall include research, studies, testing, and demonstration efforts, including education and outreach concerning lead-based paint poisoning and other housing-related environmental diseases and hazards: *Provided*, That all balances for the Lead Hazard Reduction Programs previously funded in the ''Annual contributions for assisted housing'' and ''Community development block grants'' accounts shall be transferred to this account, to be available for the purposes for which they were originally appropriated.

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For necessary administrative and non-administrative expenses of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, not otherwise provided for, including not to exceed $7,000 for official reception and representation expenses, $985,576,000, of which $518,000,000 shall be provided from the various funds of the Federal Housing Administration, $9,383,000 shall be provided from funds of the Government National Mortgage Association, $1,000,000 shall be provided from the appropriation for ''Community development block grants'' $150,000 shall be provided by transfer from the ''Title VI Indian Federal Guarantees Program'' account, and $200,000 shall be provided by transfer from the appropriation for ''Indian housing loan guarantee fund program account''. Of the amount provided in this paragraph, $2,000,000 shall be for a Millenial Housing Commission.

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses of the Office of Inspector General in carrying out the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, $72,343,000, of which $22,343,000 shall be provided from the various funds of the Federal Housing Administration and $10,000,000 shall be provided from the amount earmarked for Operation Safe Home in the appropriation for ''Drug elimination grants for low-income housing'': *Provided*, That the Inspector General shall have independent authority over all personnel issues within the Office of Inspector General.

OFFICE OF FEDERAL HOUSING ENTERPRISE OVERSIGHT

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For carrying out the Federal Housing Enterprise Financial Safety and Soundness Act of 1992, including not to exceed $1,000 for official reception and representation expenses, $19,493,000, to remain available until expended, to be derived from the Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight Fund: *Provided*, That not to exceed such amount shall be available from the General Fund of the Treasury to the extent necessary to incur

obligations and make expenditures pending the receipt of collections to the Fund: *Provided further*, That the General Fund amount shall be reduced as collections are received during the fiscal year so as to result in a final appropriation from the General Fund estimated at not more than $0.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

FINANCING ADJUSTMENT FACTORS

SEC. 201. Fifty percent of the amounts of budget authority, or in lieu thereof 50 percent of the cash amounts associated with such budget authority, that are recaptured from projects described in section 1012(a) of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Amendments Act of 1988 (Public Law 100–628, 102 Stat. 3224, 3268) shall be rescinded, or in the case of cash, shall be remitted to the Treasury, and such amounts of budget authority or cash recaptured and not rescinded or remitted to the Treasury shall be used by State housing finance agencies or local governments or local housing agencies with projects approved by the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development for which settlement occurred after January 1, 1992, in accordance with such section. Notwithstanding the previous sentence, the Secretary may award up to 15 percent of the budget authority or cash recaptured and not rescinded or remitted to the Treasury to provide project owners with incentives to refinance their project at a lower interest rate.

FAIR HOUSING AND FREE SPEECH

SEC. 202. None of the amounts made available under this Act may be used during fiscal year 2000 to investigate or prosecute under the Fair Housing Act any otherwise lawful activity engaged in by one or more persons, including the filing or maintaining of a nonfrivolous legal action, that is engaged in solely for the purpose of achieving or preventing action by a government official or entity, or a court of competent jurisdiction.

ENHANCED DISPOSITION AUTHORITY

SEC. 203. Section 204 of the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 1997, is amended by striking ''fiscal years 1997, 1998, and 1999'' and inserting ''fiscal years 1997, 1998, 1999, and 2000''.

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH AIDS GRANTS

SEC. 204. Section 207 of the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999, is amended by striking wherever it occurs ''fiscal year 1999'' and inserting in lieu thereof ''fiscal years 1999 and 2000''.

FHA MULTIFAMILY MORTGAGE CREDIT DEMONSTRATIONS

SEC. 205. Section 542 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992 is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(5) by striking ''during fiscal year 1999'', and inserting ''in each of fiscal years 1999 and 2000'', and

(2) in the first sentence of subsection (c)(4) by striking ''during fiscal year 1999'' and inserting ''in each of fiscal years 1999 and 2000''.

REPROGRAMMING

SEC. 206. Of the amounts made available under the 6th undesignated paragraph under the heading ''COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT—COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS'' in title II of the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105–276; 112 Stat. 2477) for the Economic Development Initiative (EDI) for grants for targeted economic investments, the $1,000,000 to be made available (pursuant to the related provisions of the joint explanatory statement in the conference report to accompany such Act (Report 105–769, 105th Congress, 2d Session)) to the City of Redlands, California, for the redevelopment initiatives near the historic Fox Theater shall, notwithstanding such provisions, be made available to such City for the following purposes:

(1) $700,000 shall be for renovation of the City of Redlands Fire Station No. 1;

(2) $200,000 shall be for renovation of the Mission Gables House at the Redlands Bowl historic outdoor amphitheater; and

(3) $100,000 shall be for the preservation of historic Hillside Cemetery.

INCOME ELIGIBILITY ADJUSTMENTS FOR UNUSUALLY HIGH OR LOW FAMILY INCOMES

SEC. 207. Section 16 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2)(A), by inserting before the period the following:
''; except that the Secretary may establish income ceilings higher or lower than 30 percent of the area median income on the basis of the Secretary's findings that such variations are necessary because of unusually high or low family incomes''; and

(2) in subsection (c)(3), by inserting before the period the following:
''; except that the Secretary may establish income ceilings higher or lower than 30 percent of the area median income on the basis of the Secretary's findings that such variations are necessary because of unusually high or low family incomes''.

MILLENIAL HOUSING COMMISSION

SEC. 208. (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is hereby established a commission to be known as the Millenial Housing Commission (in this section referred to as the ''Commission''.

(b) STUDY.—The duty of the Commission shall be to conduct a study that examines, analyzes, and explores—

(1) the importance of housing, particularly affordable housing which includes housing for the elderly, to the infrastructure of the United States;

(2) the various possible methods for increasing the role of the private sector in providing affordable housing in the United States, including the effectiveness and efficiency of such methods; and

(3) whether the existing programs of the Department of Housing and Urban Development work in conjunction with one another to provide better housing opportunities for families, neighborhoods, and communities, and how such programs can be improved with respect to such purpose.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.—The Commission shall be composed of 22 members, appointed not later than January 1, 2000, as follows:

(A) 2 co-chairpersons appointed by—

(i) 1 co-chairperson appointed by a committee consisting of the chairmen of the Subcommittees on the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies of the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and the chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunities of the House of Representatives and the chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing and Transportation of the Senate; and

(ii) 1 co-chairperson appointed by a committee consisting of the ranking minority members of the Subcommittees on the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies of the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and the ranking minority member of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunities of the House of Representatives and the ranking minority member of the Subcommittee on Housing and Transportation of the Senate.

(B) 10 members appointed by the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services of the House of Representatives.

(C) 10 members appointed by the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate.

(2) QUALIFICATIONS.—Appointees should have proven expertise in directing, assemblying, or applying capital resources from a variety of sources to the successful development of affordable housing or the revitalization of communities, including economic and job development.

(3) VACANCIES.—Any vacancy on the Commission shall not affect its powers and shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

(4) CHAIRPERSONS.—The members appointed pursuant to paragraph (1)(A) shall serve as co-chairpersons of the Commission.

(5) PROHIBITION OF PAY.—Members of the Commission shall serve without pay.

(6) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Each member of the Commission shall receive travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with sections 5702 and 5703 of title 5, United States Code.

(7) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum but a lesser number may hold hearings.

(8) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet at the call of the Chairpersons.

(d) DIRECTOR AND STAFF.—

(1) DIRECTOR.—The Commission shall have a Director who shall be appointed by the Chairperson. The Director shall be paid at a rate not to exceed the rate of basic pay payable for level V of the Executive Schedule.

(2) STAFF.—The Commission may appoint personnel as appropriate. The staff of the Commission shall be appointed subject to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service, and shall be paid in accordance with the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of that title relating to classification and General Schedule pay rates.

(3) EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.—The Commission may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, but at rates for individuals not to exceed the daily equivalent of the maximum annual rate of basic pay payable for the General Schedule.

(4) STAFF OF FEDERAL AGENCIES.—Upon request of the Commission, the head of any Federal department or agency may detail, on a reimbursable basis, any of the personnel of that department or agency to the Commission to assist it in carrying out its duties under this Act.

(e) POWERS.—

(1) HEARINGS AND SESSIONS.—The Commission may, for the purpose of carrying out this section, hold hearings, sit and act at times and places, take testimony, and receive evidence as the Commission considers appropriate.

(2) POWERS OF MEMBERS AND AGENTS.—Any member or agent of the Commission may, if authorized by the Commission, take any action which the Commission is authorized to take by this section.

(3) OBTAINING OFFICIAL DATA.—The Commission may secure directly from any department or agency of the United States information necessary to enable it to carry out this Act. Upon request of the Chairpersons of the Commission, the head of that department or agency shall furnish that information to the Commission.

(4) GIFTS, BEQUESTS, AND DEVISES.—The Commission may accept, use, and dispose of gifts, bequests, or devises of services or property, both real and personal, for the purpose of aiding or facilitating the work of the Commission. Gifts, bequests, or devises of money and proceeds from sales of other property received as gifts, bequests, or devises shall be deposited in the Treasury and shall be available for disbursement upon order of the Commission.

(5) MAILS.—The Commission may use the United States mails in the same manner and under the same conditions as other departments and agencies of the United States.

(6) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES.—Upon the request of the Commission, the Administrator of General Services shall provide to the Commission, on a reimbursable basis, the administrative support services necessary for the Commission to carry out its responsibilities under this section.

(7) CONTRACT AUTHORITY.—The Commission may contract with and compensate government and private agencies or persons for services, without regard to section 3709 of the Revised Statutes (41 U.S.C. 5).

(f) REPORT.—The Commission shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations and Banking and Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committees on Appropriations and Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate a final report not later than March 1, 2002. The report shall contain a detailed statement of the findings and conclusions of the Commission with respect to the study conducted under subsection (b), together with its recommendations for legislation, administrative actions, and any other actions the Commission considers appropriate.

(g) TERMINATION.—The Commission shall terminate on June 30, 2002. Section 14(a)(2)(B) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.; relating to the termination of advisory committees) shall not apply to the Commission.

FHA TECHNICAL CORRECTION

SEC. 209. Section 203(b)(2)(A)(ii) of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. 1709(b)(2)(A)(ii)) is amended by adding before ''48 percent'' the following: ''the greater of the dollar amount limitation in effect under this section for the area on the date of enactment of the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 1999 or''.

REUSE OF CERTAIN BUDGET AUTHORITY

SEC. 210. Section 8(z) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by inserting after ''on account of'' the following: ''expiration or''; and

(B) by striking the parenthetical phrase; and

(2) by striking paragraph (3).

ENHANCED VOUCHERS

SEC. 211. (a) ENHANCED VOUCHERS UPON CONTRACT EXPIRATION.—In the case of contracts for project-based assistance under section 8 that are not renewed, the following provisions shall apply:

(1) IN GENERAL.—To the extent that amounts for assistance under this section are provided in advance in appropriations Acts, after the date of the expiration or termination of the contract for project-based assistance for a covered project, the Secretary shall make enhanced voucher assistance under this section available on behalf of each family in an assisted dwelling unit whose rent, as a result of a rent increase occurring after the date of such expiration or termination, exceeds 30 percent of adjusted income.

(2) ENHANCED ASSISTANCE.—Enhanced voucher assistance under this section shall be voucher assistance under section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937, except that under such enhanced voucher assistance—

(A) if the assisted family elects to remain in the covered project in which the family was residing on the date of the expiration of such contract and the rent for any year for such unit exceeds the normally applicable payment standard established by the public housing agency pursuant to section 8(o), the amount of rental assistance provided on behalf of the family shall be determined using a payment standard that is equal to the rent for the dwelling unit: *Provided*, That the rent is reasonable in comparison to the rent charged for comparable dwelling units in the private, unassisted local market; and

(B) if the assisted family elects to move from such covered project, subparagraph (A) shall not apply and the payment standard for the dwelling unit occupied by the family shall be determined in accordance with section 8(o).

(3) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

(A) ASSISTED DWELLING UNIT.—The term ''assisted dwelling unit'' means a dwelling unit that—

(i) is in a covered project; and

(ii) is covered by rental assistance provided under the contract for project-based assistance for the covered project.

(B) COVERED PROJECT.—The term ''covered project'' means any housing that—

(i) consists of more than 4 dwelling units;

(ii) is covered in whole or in part by a contract for project-based assistance under—

(I) the new construction or substantial rehabilitation program under section 8(b)(2) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (as in effect before October 1, 1983);

(II) the property disposition program under section 8(b) of the United States Housing Act of 1937;

(III) the moderate rehabilitation program under section 8(e)(2) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (as in effect before October 1, 1991);

(IV) the loan management assistance program under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937;

(V) section 23 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (as in effect before January 1, 1975);

(VI) the rent supplement program under section 101 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1965; or

(VII) section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937, following conversion from assistance under section 101 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1965;

(iii) is covered by a contract which under its own terms expires on or after October 1, 2000, but before October 1, 2004;

(iv) is not housing for which residents are eligible for enhanced voucher assistance as provided under the heading ''Preserving Existing Housing Investment'' in the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 1997 (Public Law 104–204; 110 Stat. 2884), pursuant to such provision or any other subsequently enacted provision of law; and

(v) is not housing for which residents are eligible for enhanced voucher assistance as provided in paragraphs (3) and (4) of section 515(c) of the Multifamily Assisted Housing Reform and Affordability Act of 1997.

(b) EFFECT OF RENTAL INCREASES ON OTHER ENHANCED VOUCHERS.—To the extent that amounts are provided in advance in appropriations Acts for enhanced vouchers (including amendments and renewals) pursuant to the authority under the heading ''Preserving existing housing investment'' in the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 1997 (Public Law 104–204; 110 Stat. 2884), each family receiving such enhanced voucher assistance after the date of prepayment or voluntary termination which continues to reside in the housing occupied on the date of prepayment or voluntary termination and the rent of which, absent enhanced voucher assistance, would exceed the greater of 30 percent of adjusted income or the rent paid by the family on such date, may continue to receive such enhanced voucher assistance indefinitely, subject to other requirements of that authority, as amended: *Provided*, That rent resulting from rent increases occurring later than one year after the date of prepayment or voluntary termination may be used to increase the applicable payment standard: *Provided further*, That the rent for the dwelling unit is reasonable in comparison to the rent charged for comparable dwelling units in the private, unassisted local market.

RESCISSIONS

SEC. 212. Of the balances remaining from funds appropriated to the Department of Housing and Urban Development in Public Law 105–65 and prior appropriations Acts, $74,400,000 is rescinded: *Provided*, That the amount rescinded shall be comprised of—

(1) $30,552,000 of the amounts that were appropriated for the modernization of public housing unit; under the heading ''Annual contributions for assisted housing'', including an amount equal to the amount transferred from such account to, and merged with amounts under the heading ''Public housing capital fund'';

(2) $3,048,000 of the amounts from which no disbursements have been made within five successive fiscal years beginning after September 30, 1993, that were appropriated under the heading ''Annual contributions for assisted housing'', including an amount equal to the amount transferred from such account to the account under the heading ''Housing certificate fund'';

(3) $22,975,000 of amounts appropriated for homeownership assistance under section 235(r) of the National Housing Act, including $6,875,000 appropriated in Public Law 103–327 (approved September 28, 1994, 104 Stat. 2305) for such purposes;

(4) $11,400,000 of the amounts appropriated for the Homeownership and Opportunity for People Everywhere programs (HOPE programs), as authorized by the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act; and

(5) $6,400,000 of the balances remaining in the account under the heading ''Nonprofit Sponsor Assistance Account''.

GRANT FOR NATIONAL CITIES IN SCHOOLS

SEC. 213. For a grant to the National Cities in Schools Community Development program under section 930 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992, $5,000,000.

MOVING TO WORK DEMONSTRATION

SEC. 214. For the Moving to Work Demonstration program as set forth in Public Law 104–204 (110 Stat. 2888), $5,000,000.

REPEALER

SEC. 215. Section 218 of Public Law 104–204 is repealed.

□ 1745

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

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Are there any amendments to that portion of the bill?

If not, the Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

TITLE III—INDEPENDENT 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 replacement only) and hire of passenger motor vehicles; and insurance of official motor vehicles in foreign countries, when required by law of such countries, $28,467,000, to remain available until expended.

CHEMICAL SAFETY AND HAZARD INVESTIGATION BOARD

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses in carrying out activities pursuant to section 112(r)(6) of the Clean Air Act, including hire of passenger vehicles, and for services authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109, but at rates for individuals not to exceed the per diem equivalent to the maximum rate payable for senior level positions under 5 U.S.C. 5376, $9,000,000: *Provided*, That the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board shall have not more than three career Senior Executive Service positions.

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

FUND PROGRAM ACCOUNT

To carry out the Community Development Banking and Financial Institutions Act of 1994 and to establish and carry out a micro-enterprise technical assistance and capacity building grant program, including services authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109, but at rates for individuals not to exceed the per diem rate equivalent to the rate for ES–3, $70,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2001, of which up to $7,860,000 may be used for administrative expenses, up to $16,500,000 may be used for the cost of direct loans, and up to $1,000,000 may be used for administrative expenses to carry out the direct loan program: *Provided*, That the cost of direct loans, including the cost of modifying such loans, shall be as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974: *Provided further*, That these funds are available to subsidize gross obligations for the principal amount of direct loans not to exceed $53,140,000: *Provided further*, That not more than $30,000,000 of the funds made available under this heading may be used to carry out section 114 of the Community Development Banking and Financial Institutions Act of 1994: *Provided further*, That costs associated with the training program under section 109 and the technical assistance program under section 108 shall not be considered to be administrative expenses.

CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, including hire of passenger motor vehicles, services as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109, but at rates for individuals not to exceed the per diem rate equivalent to the maximum rate payable under 5 U.S.C. 5376, purchase of nominal awards to recognize non-Federal officials' contributions to Commission activities, and not to exceed $500 for official reception and representation expenses, $47,000,000.

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS

OPERATING EXPENSES

Of the funds appropriated under this heading in Public Law 105–276, the Corporation for National and Community Service shall use such amounts of such funds as may be necessary to carry out the orderly termination of the programs, activities, and initiatives under the National Community Service Act of 1990 (Public Law 103–82) and the Corporation: *Provided*, That such sums shall be utilized to resolve all responsibilities and obligations in connection with said Corporation.

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

Mr. Chairman, I do not intend to offer an amendment and will not take the whole 5 minutes, but I just want to express a tremendous reservation I have about the lack of funding for the Corporation for National and Community Service and particularly the AmeriCorps program.

The bottom line is this program has done extraordinary things to help our country in so many different community services. It provides a stipend to countless numbers of young people and older people who choose to serve our country in a program which allows the States to design two-thirds of the programs; in fact, even more than that. Approximately one-third is a nationally-funded program, and two-thirds are State-designed.

Young people and older people provide services in health care, in housing, in education, in public safety. They receive a basic minimum wage, plus an education stipend of $4,750 for each year served.

Mr. Chairman, this is a program that Republicans should love and not try to eliminate, because it simply encourages people to serve in our communities and receive an educational grant for some of that service. Mr. Chairman, in many cases it is helping those individuals that have the greatest need for this type of financial support.

I weep mentally that my party has not recognized the value of a program of national service in our country. It was something we used to advocate before there was a President Clinton and before it became his program. It was a program we used to think made sense because it was not a hand-out. Young people worked for a minimum wage. They provided service to so many different individuals and organizations and then receive a stipend to educate themselves and improve their lives.

Mr. Chairman, I hope and pray if this bill ultimately gets my support before it is then sent to the Senate that in conference the funding for the Corporation for National Service will be restored. I am certain I will vote against any legislation in final passage that does not provide for this very sensible program.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SHAYS. I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Connecticut for yielding to me.

Apparently the fact that the gentleman is from Connecticut, I am from Texas, States that are very far apart, each can stand up and acknowledge the good work we have seen from those young people in AmeriCorps.

The pleasure of being home is hearing from our constituents and hearing about all the exciting things that are happening. In the course of being home in Houston I was able to see some of the kinds of projects AmeriCorps is involved in and some of the appreciation and compliments coming from our school district, saying, we did not have a preschool teacher or aide, but we have one now because the AmeriCorps young person is involved.

With all the shortages in the teaching profession, shortages of teachers, AmeriCorps is most helpful in our educational system. Those young people are close to our children's age. They are understanding. They are committed to their own education. They are good role models.

So I would hope, too, that whatever happens on this bill, that we see the value of AmeriCorps, and we be able to support an increase of funding of that particular part of this legislation.

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

Mr. SHAYS. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Connecticut, my good friend, for yielding to me.

I will be very brief. No one is more aware of the fact that in order for this bill to gain the President's signature, the President's favorite program within this bill will have to be funded at some level. I would be happy to communicate with the gentleman from Connecticut as we go down the road on this program that we both see some value to.

Mr. SHAYS. I thank the gentleman.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

For necessary expenses of the Office of Inspector General in carrying out the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, $3,000,000.

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 38 U.S.C. 7251–

7298, $11,450,000, of which $910,000 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, $12,473,000, to remain available until expended.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For science and technology, including research and development activities, which shall include research and development activities under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA), as amended; necessary expenses for personnel and related costs and travel expenses, including uniforms, or allowances therefore, as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 5901–5902; services as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109, but at rates for individuals not to exceed the per diem rate equivalent to the maximum rate payable for senior level positions under 5 U.S.C. 5376; procurement of laboratory equipment and supplies; other operating expenses in support of research and development; construction, alteration, repair, rehabilitation, and renovation of facilities, not to exceed $75,000 per project, $645,000,000, which shall remain available until September 30, 2001: *Provided*, That the obligated balance of sums available in this account shall remain available through September 30, 2008 for liquidating obligations made in fiscal years 2000 and 2001: *Provided further*, That the obligated balance of funds transferred to this account in Public Law 105–276 shall remain available through September 30, 2007 for liquidating obligations made in fiscal years 1999 and 2000.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. ROGAN

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. ROGAN:

Page 63, line 5, insert ''(reduced by $7,000,000)'' after the dollar amount.

Page 64, line 4, insert ''(reduced by $58,000,000)'' after the dollar amount.

Page 66, line 11, insert ''(reduced by $1,000,000)'' after the dollar amount.

Page 66, line 20, insert ''(reduced by $15,000,000)'' after the dollar amount.

Page 66, line 24, insert ''(reduced by $15,000,000)'' after the dollar amount.

Page 68, line 3, insert ''(reduced by $1,000,000)'' after the dollar amount.

Page 68, line 16, insert ''(reduced by $31,000,000)'' after the dollar amount.

Page 79, line 19, insert ''(increased by $105,000,000)'' after the dollar amount.

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Chairman, today the House is poised to cut more than $1 billion from NASA's space science budget. Sixty percent of these funds go directly to NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. This cut is a step backward for our Nation, which to date has led the world in pioneering the exploration of space.

This is wrong and I urge my colleagues to join my friend, the gentleman from Virginia, and me to reverse this trend by voting for the Rogan-Bateman amendment. The Rogan-Bateman amendment will restore $105 million to NASA's aeronautics, science and technology programs. These funds will go for investments that are science fact and not science fiction.

These programs are not only important to local economies around the country, they are the root of a new economy for our Nation where high-tech programs from years past become the commercial products of today.

In just the last decade, technologies developed by NASA, JPL, and their affiliated programs have yielded products and services that have dramatically changed our way of life. For instance, it was these scientific experts that produced laser technology that now gives surgeons the ability to perform less invasive laser angioplasty surgery, which is helping thousands of Americans conquer heart disease.

Also, NASA-JPL technology has provided engineers with powerful telecommunications components, making it easier for us to complete wireless telephone calls. In addition, JPL experts produced the infrared technology that led to the development of the inner ear thermometers we now use on a daily basis for our children.

These are just a few examples, and they are just the tip of the iceberg. Our investment in NASA and JPL high-tech development has made all of this possible. The proposed cuts will deeply hurt our national scientific advantages in the future. A large portion of the proposed cuts to NASA are sent to research institutions, and these institutions, colleges large and small, provide the training ground for tomorrow's experts. Those who today wish to turn their backs on science are the heirs of those who scoffed at Columbus because they were sure that the Earth was flat.

The Congress must look to tomorrow. Supporting NASA and JPL is an investment in our children's future. I urge my colleagues to vote for the Rogan-Bateman amendment and join us in battling for full funding for JPL and other crucial NASA space science programs.

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

Mr. Chairman, I fully understand the concerns of my colleagues from California and Virginia. We have had, as the chairman has heard himself, a number of discussions about the reduction of $1 billion in NASA funding.

This is a major reduction, there is no question about it. However, at the committee level we had a $1.4 billion reduction in NASA and were able to restore $400 million, taking it from the AmeriCorps program and putting it into NASA. Those decisions are very difficult to make.

We are being asked to make another difficult decision today, take these funds away from EPA and give them to NASA. I have stated in the discussion that as we go down the road in this process, I will work with all Members to try to find a way, including with the administration and the Senate, to try to find a way to provide those needed funds for NASA to provide the research and development and the technology products they have worked on for so many years and that have provided so many benefits to humanity.

□ 1800

However, to take these funds out of an EPA budget, especially from this area, which ultimately are categorical grants, these funds would normally go to the States for clean water projects, for sewer projects, for environmental clean up projects in all 50 States.

Now, as all colleagues know, many of our communities, our hometown communities, are under court order or under Federal mandate by EPA to clean up their water, to clean up their air, and to take care of the Superfund sites that are around the Nation. These funds would come out of that pool of available funds. I think it is a bad decision to take EPA funds, provide them to NASA when there may be some opportunity down the road to support the needs of the NASA program.

So I would strongly urge my colleagues to resist the temptation to take the money from NASA and take the money from EPA and provide it to NASA because these funds are sorely needed for our environmental projects right here on Earth.

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Rogan-Bateman amendment because I think it is critical to the Nation's future. There is no question that we have to make difficult choices. I am in no way unsympathetic to the difficult choices the subcommittee and the full Committee on Appropriations have had to make. I think they have made choices that were not in the Nation's interest and which they would prefer not to have made. But we do have to make choices.

One choice that I find not too difficult is to take from the EPA budget 1.55 percent of what is appropriated under the bill, leaving them with 99.9 percent of the full entire Presidential request for EPA, and transfer it to the NASA science, aeronautics, and technology accounts which have been desparately hit through an era where we have moved from a NASA budget that started at the end of the Bush administration at something like $14.55 billion and which, under the committee version of the bill, will have shrunk to $12.65 billion. Much of that has been taken out of the NASA aeronautics

budget which has declined by $400 million in the past 2 years.

Today we are faced with a situation where aeronautical research in the United States is being starved to death, and we cannot permit it to continue. Our military aircraft are the best of the world because of the research performed by NASA. The Air Force F–15, F–16, B–2, F–22, C–17 and C–130 J would not be as effective as they are today except for the research at NASA. The same can be said of the Navy and Marine Corps' F–14, F/A–18, the AV–8, and the EA–6B.

If the NASA budget is allowed to decline further, the Nation will lose a decisive edge in military might. It will lose its edge in commercial aviation. It will lose its edge in the export of the largest producer toward a balance of payments in our favor in the country next to, if not including, agriculture.

These are things we should not permit to happen, and the way to prevent doing it is to support the Rogan-Bateman amendment allowing EPA to get 99.9 percent of its budget request while NASA is not reduced by the 1 billion or more dollars that this would contemplate. I ask my colleagues' support for the Rogan-Bateman amendment.

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment. Let me first say that I recognize the good intentions of the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BATEMAN). I would agree with him that NASA science, aeronautics and technology account is seriously underfunded and will need a major influx of resources between now and the time it is sent to the White House.

As I have said previously, I believe we should be increasing NASA's budget, not determining where it should be cut. Nevertheless, I must oppose the gentleman's amendment for the same reasons that I am opposing most of the NASA and NSF related amendments.

First, this kind of amendment, if passed, could give the false impression that this part of the NASA budget is now fixed. Mr. Chairman, nothing could be further from the truth. The science, aeronautics, and technology allocation in this bill is $678 million below the current year appropriation. This amendment is something of a drop in the bucket.

Secondly, Mr. Chairman, I must oppose this amendment due to the nature of the offsets which the gentleman has identified. Even without this amendment, the reductions to EPA already recommended by the Committee on Appropriations will reduce by $194 million the agency's operating programs which are the backbone of its environmental protection efforts, result in 246 fewer communities receiving grants under the Clean Air Partnership Fund to help them determine the best ways to clean their air and improve the health of their citizens, and lead to 25 fewer communities receiving funds to ensure safe and pure water.

If those cuts that are already in the bill that I just enumerated are not enough, the gentleman's amendment would require an additional $100 million reduction to EPA programs.

The proposed amendment, if adopted, would lead to further reductions in Superfund to $15 million, which would mean the completion of fewer Superfund toxic waste sites.

It would result in a further reduction to the clean water efforts, meaning that the 180 million Americans who visit the coast every year may experience more beach closures from sewage spills and pollution runoff.

Twenty-eight million Americans whose jobs are supported by coastal waters could be impacted by increased fish contamination and low dissolved oxygen levels. A further reduction to air programs, which would mean that additional tons of air toxics will adversely affect the health of our most vulnerable populations.

The gentleman's amendment would mean a further reduction to environmental enforcement meaning that fewer inspections and investigations would be conducted.

The gentleman's amendment would result in cuts in funding for the agency's 9 compliance assistance centers, jeopardizing the support that thousands of facilities now receive.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, a reduction to the agency's important work would be affected if the gentleman's amendment were adopted, important work on pesticides safety, when that would mean that the agency could not complete the work Congress instructed it to do in the recent Food Safety Act. Hundreds of pesticide tolerances would not be reassessed. Foods with unacceptable levels of pesticide would go undetected and potentially put thousands of Americans at risk for cancer and birth defects.

Mr. Chairman, for these reasons, I would oppose the gentleman's amendment and would ask that my colleagues join me in defeating it.

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

Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BATEMAN), from the home of Thomas Jefferson and William and Mary, which he attended.

Mr. BATEMAN. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate very much the gentleman yielding to me. Thomas Jefferson did, indeed, reside in my district when he attended the college of William and Mary.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to point out that, under the terms of the Rogan-Bateman amendment, the Environmental Protection Agency accounts are not being ravaged or savaged. They are 99.9 percent of what the President requested for the Environmental Protection Agency.

It does not come from any one single EPA account. The amendment is structured to take 1.1 percent from an account, 3.1 from an account that is a $1,815,000,000 account. This is not egregious to EPA.

But believe me, to say that one of the defects of my amendment is that it is only a drop in the bucket of what NASA needs I think is turning sound argument upside down. I think it certainly behooves us to at least do that much and do it now when there is a clear way to do it, making a rational public policy choice.

I urge my colleagues to make that choice by supporting the Rogan-Bateman amendment.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROGAN) where Thomas Jefferson did not go to college.

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me. I can assure him Thomas Jefferson wishes he had gone to California, particularly UC Berkeley, my alma mater.

Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to follow up on the comments from the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BATEMAN) and respectfully respond to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN).

The largest cut to EPA is a 3 percent cut that the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BATEMAN) just identified, and I want to read just briefly the type of things that we are seeking this minor reduction in: travel expenses, including uniforms or allowances thereof; hire of passenger motor vehicles; higher maintenance and operation of aircraft; purchase of reprints; library memberships in societies or associations which issue publications to members only or at a price to members lower than subscribers.

Mr. Chairman, this is hardly the gloom and doom scenario that has been outlined. This is a minor cut to a less than national security related program; and in exchange, we can fund science. I think clearly that our priorities ought to be in that regard rather than to library memberships and associations for EPA bureaucrats.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON), our famous doctor.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. Chairman, I believe there are some powerful arguments on both sides of this issue. I recognize that the subcommittee chairman has a significant challenge. I rise in support of the amendment. This is a tough decision, I will agree to that.

EPA does a lot of important work. But I remember reading a quote from John Kennedy once where he said one of the things that amazed him about the Presidency was that the decisions that percolated up to his level were all the tough decisions.

This is a tough decision. But I think the gentleman's offsets are reasonable. I encourage all of my colleagues to vote for the amendment of the gentleman from California (Mr. ROGAN).

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Rogan-Bateman amendment and in opposition to the severe cuts in the NASA budget. The bill before us today has a cut of $1 billion to NASA, an agency which has already seen its budget decline year after year for the past 4 years.

I am especially concerned about the impact these cuts will have on future funding of aeronautics research and development programs. This research and development is crucial to preserve our Nation's long-standing lead in the aviation market, to maintain continued advancements in aviation safety, and to continue to provide our military aircraft with technological advantages.

We already know that aeronautics R&D funding will be $150 million less in 1999 and further cuts will be made in research in the fiscal year 2000 budget if this $1 billion cut to NASA is sustained.

Previous cuts have already resulted in loss of valuable research. For example, one program has already been suspended. That successful program had already started significantly reducing noise of airplane engines. That program has been terminated before it can complete all it needed to do, and that is at a time when we are spending millions of dollars to insulate homes around Chicago's O'Hare's airport because of noise. It makes more sense to continue noise reduction research so houses around all airports could benefit.

If the budget cuts remain, other valuable research will also be in jeopardy. We know, for example, Mr. Chairman, that investments in aeronautics research pays off. The aviation industry is the number one positive contributor to the United States balance of trade, now even surpassing agriculture with a net contribution to our economy of more than $41 billion in 1998. This economic advantage is directly attributable to our past investments and research.

Every aircraft worldwide uses NASA-developed research. Principles developed from this research have contributed to overall aircraft safety and efficiency, including things like wing design, noise abatement, structural integrity, and fuel efficiency.

It is important to remember that research was conducted over 5, 10, or even 20 years before the improvements were actually put on an airplane. So we are talking about long-term, sustained basic research that is necessary.

Mr. Chairman, it is also important to note that continued and increased investments in aeronautic research are crucial for advancements in aviation safety and improvements in airport capacity.

We know that air traffic is expected to triple in the next decade. New concepts, design, and technologies have to evolve if costs are to be contained and safety and efficiency of aircraft are to be improved.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, we also know that funding for aeronautics research is important to the national defense. This research is critical to maintain our military aircraft technological advantage. So any cuts in aeronautics research will raise troubling national security issues.

□ 1815

We simply cannot afford to go down the short-sighted road of funding cuts to NASA. Our aeronautic balance of trade, our future airline safety, our military superiority all depend on investments to NASA research. For those reasons, I support this amendment.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Rogan amendment to increase funding by $105 million for National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) Science, Aeronautics, and Technology account. The appropriators made a good faith effort to restore cuts to the Space Science budget during the bill's consideration by the full committee, but they did not go far enough. More needs to be done, now and in conference.

Space Science has been the bright spot in NASA's research program. The space science community recognized the coming budget crunch years ago and enthusiastically embraced the ''faster, cheaper, better'' philosophy by doing business in a new way. The scientists and engineers who lead our space exploration efforts took on new technical challenges, applied more creative management techniques, and dramatically increased their productivity. This community is squeezing increased scientific and technical productivity out of every nickel. Who can forget Mars Pathfinder, which deposited a rover on the surface of Mars for one-fifth of the cost of previous Mars missions? In just the last few years, the space science community has cut the cost of spacecraft development by over 60 percent, reduced development time by 25 percent, and increased flight rate by 300 percent.

Mr. Chairman, space science is an example of good government and good science. It's also the kind of good government that we need to encourage by showing NASA's other enterprises and the rest of the federal bureaucracy that success is rewarded, not punished. As passed by Committee, the appropriations bill sends the wrong signal and makes the wrong kinds of cuts. The amendment corrects that oversight by transferring funds from a poorly-performing agency to a well-run scientific enterprise. It's an amendment we should all embrace.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Rogan amendment to restore funding for NASA's aeronautics, science and technology accounts. While I compliment the Members of the Appropriations Committee for their determination to make the tough choices needed to ensure that the projected budget surplus becomes reality, I believe that H.R. 2684 underfunds NASA's important work. The Rogan amendment will help ensure that NASA has the resources it needs to complete its scientifically-rewarding unmanned research on-time and under-budget.

H.R. 2684 provides for a reduction in NASA's budget of $925 million from the administration request. It is worth noting that this represents an increase of $400 million from the funding level initially approved by the VA–HUD subcommittee, and I thank Mr. WALSH and the members of the Committee for restoring these funds. Nevertheless, reducing NASA's budget by nearly $1 billion will threaten NASA's ability to move forward on a number of important projects. It would reduce the number of Space Shuttle missions that NASA can conduct in a given year, cancel comet exploration missions such as Deep Impact, and delay probes of Pluto and the Sun, as well as the international space station.

NASA's budget has been reduced in each year since 1992 and NASA has done an admirable job in showing other federal departments how to do more with less. The Jet Propulsion Laboratory, for example, completed the memorable Mars Sojourner/Pathfinder mission for less than it costs to produce some Hollywood blockbusters. However, the reduction proposed in H.R. 2684 could do real damage to NASA's long-term mission. Given our great interest in developing a better understanding of the Solar System and the universe, I believe Congress must ensure NASA an appropriate level of funding. Furthermore, besides the benefits we derive from learning more about the universe, the space program has helped to produce myriad commercial spinoffs that benefit the lives of average Americans every day—from compact computers to CD players to the global positioning system.

Mr. Chairman, while I differ with Members of the Appropriations Committee on some of their spending priorities, I want to compliment them for their commitment to spending restraint. When Congress agreed two years ago to limit future growth in federal spending, we knew that it would require fiscal discipline, but it was necessary to bring us the first balanced federal budget in a generation. Now, while Congress is making the tough choices, the President is pretending that we can increase spending on everything and still have a balanced budget. Through their willingness to support spending bills that are sometimes unpopular, Members of Congress are protecting Social Security and reducing the debt burden that we leave for the next generation.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROGAN).

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

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

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 275, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROGAN) will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS AND MANAGEMENT

For environmental programs and management, including necessary expenses, not otherwise provided for, for personnel and related costs and travel expenses, including uniforms, or allowances therefore, as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 5901–5902; services as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109, but at rates for individuals not to exceed the per diem rate equivalent to the maximum rate payable for senior level positions under 5 U.S.C. 5376; hire of passenger motor vehicles; hire, maintenance, and operation of aircraft; purchase of reprints; library memberships in societies or

associations which issue publications to members only or at a price to members lower than to subscribers who are not members; construction, alteration, repair, rehabilitation, and renovation of facilities, not to exceed $75,000 per project; and not to exceed $6,000 for official reception and representation expenses, $1,850,000,000, which shall remain available until September 30, 2001: *Provided*, That the obligated balance of such sums shall remain available through September 30, 2008 for liquidating obligations made in fiscal years 2000 and 2001: *Provided further*, That none of the funds appropriated by this Act shall be used to propose or issue rules, regulations, decrees, or orders for the purpose of implementation, or in preparation for implementation, of the Kyoto Protocol which was adopted on December 11, 1997, in Kyoto, Japan at the Third Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which has not been submitted to the Senate for advice and consent to ratification pursuant to article II, section 2, clause 2, of the United States Constitution, and which has not entered into force pursuant to article 25 of the Protocol: *Provided further*, That none of the funds made available in this Act may be used to implement or administer the interim guidance issued on February 5, 1998, by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and designated as the ''Interim Guidance for Investigating Title VI Administrative Complaints Challenging Permits'' with respect to complaints filed under such title after October 21, 1998, and until guidance is finalized. Nothing in this proviso may be construed to restrict the Environmental Protection Agency from developing or issuing final guidance relating to title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964: *Provided further*, That of the funds provided in this appropriation, $6,000,000 shall be made available to the states under the section 103 grants program for developing regional haze programs under title I, part C of the Clean Air Act, as amended: *Provided further*, That notwithstanding 7 U.S.C. 136r and 15 U.S.C. 2609, beginning in fiscal year 2000 and thereafter, grants awarded under section 20 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, as amended, and section 10 of the Toxic Substances Control Act, as amended, shall be available for research, development, monitoring, public education, training, demonstrations, and studies.

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, as amended, and for construction, alteration, repair, rehabilitation, and renovation of facilities, not to exceed $75,000 per project, $30,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2001: *Provided*, That the sums available in this account shall remain available through September 30, 2008 for liquidating obligations made in fiscal years 2000 and 2001: *Provided further*, That the obligated balance of funds transferred to this account in Public Law 105–276 shall remain available through September 30, 2007 for liquidating obligations made in fiscal years 1999 and 2000.

BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

For construction, repair, improvement, extension, alteration, and purchase of fixed equipment or facilities of, or for use by, the Environmental Protection Agency, $62,600,000, to remain available until expended.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE SUPERFUND

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses to carry out the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA), as amended, including sections 111(c)(3), (c)(5), (c)(6), and (e)(4) (42 U.S.C. 9611), and for construction, alteration, repair, rehabilitation, and renovation of facilities, not to exceed $75,000 per project; not to exceed $1,450,000,000, to remain available until expended, consisting of $725,000,000, as authorized by section 517(a) of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA), as amended by Public Law 101–508, and $725,000,000 as a payment from general revenues to the Hazardous Substance Superfund for purposes as authorized by section 517(b) of SARA, as amended by Public Law 101–508: *Provided*, That funds appropriated under this heading may be allocated to other Federal agencies in accordance with section 111(a) of CERCLA: *Provided further*, That $11,000,000 of the funds appropriated under this heading shall be transferred to the ''Office of inspector general'' appropriation to remain available until September 30, 2001: *Provided further*, That notwithstanding section 111(m) of CERCLA or any other provision of law, $70,000,000 of the funds appropriated under this heading shall be available to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry to carry out activities described in sections 104(i), 111(c)(4), and 111(c)(14) of CERCLA and section 118(f) of SARA: *Provided further*, That $35,000,000 of the funds appropriated under this heading shall be transferred to the ''Science and technology'' appropriation to remain available until September 30, 2001: *Provided further*, That none of the funds appropriated under this heading shall be available for the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry to issue in excess of 40 toxicological profiles pursuant to section 104(i) of CERCLA during fiscal year 2000.

LEAKING UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK TRUST FUND

For necessary expenses to carry out leaking underground storage tank cleanup activities authorized by section 205 of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986, and for construction, alteration, repair, rehabilitation, and renovation of facilities, not to exceed $75,000 per project, $60,000,000, to remain available until expended.

OIL SPILL RESPONSE

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For expenses necessary to carry out the Environmental Protection Agency's responsibilities under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, $15,000,000, to be derived from the Oil Spill Liability trust fund, to remain available until expended.

STATE AND TRIBAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS

For environmental programs and infrastructure assistance, including capitalization grants for State revolving funds and performance partnership grants, $3,199,957,000, to remain available until expended, of which $1,175,000,000 shall be for making capitalization grants for the Clean Water State Revolving Funds under title VI of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, as amended, and $775,000,000 shall be for capitalization grants for the Drinking Water State Revolving Funds under section 1452 of the Safe Drinking Water Act, as amended, except that, notwithstanding section 1452(n) of the Safe Drinking Water Act, as amended, none of the funds made available under this heading in this Act, or in previous appropriations acts, shall be reserved by the Administrator for health effects studies on drinking water contaminants; $36,500,000 for a clean air partnership fund demonstration program under section 103 of the Clean Air Act to support programs to achieve early, integrated reductions in emissions of air pollutants, including local revolving funds and other mechanisms for leveraging non-Federal resources; $50,000,000 for architectural, engineering, planning, design, construction and related activities in connection with the construction of high priority water and wastewater facilities in the area of the United States-Mexico Border, after consultation with the appropriate border commission; $15,000,000 for grants to the State of Alaska to address drinking water and wastewater infrastructure needs of rural and Alaska Native Villages; $263,500,000 for making grants for the construction of wastewater and water treatment facilities and groundwater protection infrastructure in accordance with the terms and conditions specified for such grants in the report accompanying this Act (H.R. 2684); and $884,957,000 for grants, including associated program support costs, to States, federally recognized tribes, interstate agencies, tribal consortia, and air pollution control agencies for multi-media or single media pollution prevention, control and abatement and related activities, including activities pursuant to the provisions set forth under this heading in Public Law 104–134, and for making grants under section 103 of the Clean Air Act for particulate matter monitoring and data collection activities: *Provided*, That, notwithstanding section 603(d)(7) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, as amended, the limitation on the amounts in a State water pollution control revolving fund that may be used by a State to administer the fund shall not apply to amounts included as principal in loans made by such fund in fiscal year 2000 and prior years where such amounts represent costs of administering or capitalizing the fund, to the extent that such amounts are or were deemed reasonable by the Administrator, accounted for separately from other assets in the fund, and used for eligible purposes of the fund, including administration or for capitalization of the fund: *Provided further*, That beginning in fiscal year 2000 and thereafter, notwithstanding section 518(f) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, as amended, the Administrator is authorized to use the amounts appropriated for any fiscal year under section 319 of that Act to make grants to Indian Tribes pursuant to section 319(h) and 518(e) of that Act: *Provided further*, That notwithstanding any other provision of law, all claims for principal and interest registered through grant dispute AA–91–A34 or any other such dispute hereafter filed by the Environmental Protection Agency relative to water pollution control center and sewer system improvement grants numbers C–390996–01, C–390996–2, and C–390996–3 made in 1976 and 1977 are hereby resolved in favor of the grantee.

The Environmental Protection Agency and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation are authorized to award, from construction grant reallotments to the State of New York of previously appropriated funds, supplemental grant assistance to Nassau County, New York, for additional odor control at the Bay Park and Cedar Creek wastewater treatment plants, notwithstanding initiation of construction or prior State Revolving Fund funding. Nassau County may elect to accept a combined lump-sum of $15,000,000, paid in advance of construction, in lieu of a 75 percent entitlement, to minimize grant and project administration.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY

For necessary expenses of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, in carrying out the purposes of the National Science and Technology Policy, Organization, and Priorities Act of 1976 (42 U.S.C. 6601 and 6671), hire

of passenger motor vehicles, and services as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109, not to exceed $2,500 for official reception and representation expenses, and rental of conference rooms in the District of Columbia, $5,108,000.

COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

For necessary expenses to continue functions assigned to the Council on Environmental Quality and Office of Environmental Quality pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the Environmental Quality Improvement Act of 1970, and Reorganization Plan No. 1 of 1977, $2,827,000: *Provided*, That notwithstanding section 202 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1970, the Council shall consist of one member, appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, serving as chairman and exercising all powers, functions, and duties of the Council.

Mr. BATEMAN. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Chairman. Have we reached page 70?

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. We have passed page 70 in the reading, and the Clerk currently has read through page 72, line 16.

Mr. BATEMAN. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to raise a point of order against a provision on page 70, line 15 through page 70, line 22?

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

Mr. WALSH. Reserving the right to object, Mr. Chairman.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. BATEMAN. Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the chairman of the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I raise an objection that the provision that I referred to, regarding nonpoint source grant funding for Indian tribes, is legislation on an appropriations bill in violation of clause 2 of rule XXI of the rules of the House. I have been asked to object on behalf of the chairman of the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The gentleman from New York has reserved a right to object. Does the gentleman from New York wish to be heard?

Mr. WALSH. I do, Mr. Chairman. It is our understanding that this legislation was protected under the rule and thereby in order, and I would await the Chair's ruling.

Mr. Chairman, in further discussion with staff, it is my understanding that this is not protected under the rule.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The gentleman is correct.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, for that reason I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The gentleman withdraws his reservation of objection.

Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Does the gentleman from Virginia insist on his point of order?

Mr. BATEMAN. Yes, on behalf of the chairman of the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, who has now appeared.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia makes a point of order against the proviso beginning on line 15, page 70 through ''Act:'' on line 22. The proviso waives the Federal Water Pollution Control Act. Waiving provisions of existing law constitutes legislation on an appropriations bill. Accordingly, the point of order is sustained and the proviso is stricken.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses of the Office of Inspector General in carrying out the provisions of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, $33,666,000, to be derived from the Bank Insurance Fund, the Savings Association Insurance Fund, and the FSLIC Resolution Fund.

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

DISASTER RELIEF

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses in carrying out the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.), $300,000,000, and, notwithstanding 42 U.S.C. 5203, to remain available until expended, of which not to exceed $3,000,000 may be transferred to ''Emergency management planning and assistance'' for the consolidated emergency management performance grant program.

DISASTER ASSISTANCE DIRECT LOAN PROGRAM ACCOUNT

For the cost of direct loans, $1,295,000, as authorized by section 319 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act: *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, as amended: *Provided further*, That these funds are available to subsidize gross obligations for the principal amount of direct loans not to exceed $25,000,000.

In addition, for administrative expenses to carry out the direct loan program, $420,000.

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses, not otherwise provided for, including hire and purchase of motor vehicles as authorized by 31 U.S.C. 1343; uniforms, or allowances therefor, as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 5901–5902; services as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109, but at rates for individuals not to exceed the per diem rate equivalent to the maximum rate payable for senior level positions under 5 U.S.C. 5376; expenses of attendance of cooperating officials and individuals at meetings concerned with the work of emergency preparedness; transportation in connection with the continuity of Government programs to the same extent and in the same manner as permitted the Secretary of a Military Department under 10 U.S.C. 2632; and not to exceed $2,500 for official reception and representation expenses, $177,720,000.

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

For necessary expenses of the Office of Inspector General in carrying out the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, $6,515,000.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING AND ASSISTANCE

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses, not otherwise provided for, to carry out activities under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as amended, and the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.), the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.), the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977, as amended (42 U.S.C. 7701 et seq.), the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974, as amended (15 U.S.C. 2201 et seq.), the Defense Production Act of 1950, as amended (50 U.S.C. App. 2061 et seq.), sections 107 and 303 of the National Security Act of 1947, as amended (50 U.S.C. 404–405), and Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1978, $280,787,000: *Provided*, That for purposes of pre-disaster mitigation pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 5131 (b) and (c) and 42 U.S.C. 5196 (e) and (i), $25,000,000 of the funds made available under this heading shall be available until expended for project grants: *Provided further*, That beginning in fiscal year 2000 and each fiscal year thereafter, and notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Director of FEMA is authorized to provide assistance from funds appropriated under this heading, subject to terms and conditions as the Director of FEMA shall establish, to any State for multi-hazard preparedness and mitigation through consolidated emergency management performance grants.

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:

Page 75, line 5, insert ''(reduced by $12,000,000)'' after the dollar amount.

Page 75, line 5, insert ''(reduced by $10,000,000)'' after the dollar amount.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, my colleagues have heard me acknowledge to both the ranking member and the chairman on what is becoming some very difficult decisions.

Mr. Chairman, I have lived with NASA and the commitment that NASA has given to the American people to be fiscally responsible for some 4 years now as a Member of Congress and a member of the House Committee on Science. At the beginning of my tenure in Congress, one of the things that NASA was charged with was to be efficient, effective, and to downscale some of its operations. In doing so, Dan Goldin, almost at the start of my first term, had to cut various jobs in all of the centers, whether it was in Florida, or whether it was in Alabama or the Johnson Space Center.

Particularly in the State of Texas, let me say, Mr. Chairman, that the Johnson Space Center has a special place in our heart. It was there, of course, that many of the heroes of the space movement had their launch or had the cooperation and collaboration with those at Johnson. We are well aware of the famous words, ''Houston we have a problem.'' But one thing about Houston and the Johnson Space Center, they solve the problems.

So, Mr. Chairman, I am asking my colleagues to join me in moving $10 million to the Human Space Flight program, the program that saw Commander Eileen Collins be the first woman to command one of our shuttles; the program, Mr. Chairman, that

saw John Glenn test the ultimate strength of human beings and test the aging process by being the oldest person to go into space.

Mr. Chairman, this is a terrible plight that we find ourselves in, but this program, the Human Space Flight program, deals in a variety of needs that we have. What it deals with is the ability to conduct and support human space flight research and development activities, including research, development operations, services, maintenance, construction of facilities, including repair; rehabilitation, and modification of real and personal property. It has to do with spacecraft control and communication activities. These dollars wil help us stay on track with the Human Space Flight program.

On the other hand, I am not cutting the disaster aid that goes to our respective communities. I am not cutting the dollars that would help us in flood control. I am not cutting the dollars that would help us after terrible tornadoes or hurricanes. None of that is being cut. But, Mr. Chairman, there are certain predisaster mitigation grants, which I think with the increase in the ability of local governments to focus on their own needs, this is an area where they can help us, which is helping their communities be focused on mitigating potential disasters. None of these dollars I am speaking of in any way would interfere with any of the needs our communities would have, such as the tragedy of Hurricane Dennis on the Carolinas.

So I would ask my colleagues to recognize that the Johnson Space Center in Houston covers some 15,000 people. We have a number of contract employees. Dan Goldin has downsized to the extent that he has privatized. He predicts a 3-week furlough for NASA employees with these ultimate cuts. I would say if we keep these kind of cuts, Mr. Chairman, that we will be going down a slippery path, one from which we cannot return.

Earlier today on the floor of the House I said that the cuts in NASA and the cuts in the Human Space Flight program are similar to building or rebuilding the San Francisco Bridge. Imagine midway over the waters in California we simply stopped building it. Or maybe we should say the Brooklyn Bridge. We always use the phrase ''Can I sell you the Brooklyn Bridge?'' Imagine in the middle of rebuilding it, we just immediately stopped. What would happen to America and, as well, to those communities? They would simply drop off.

Cutting the Human Space Flight program, one of the marks of space exploration, one of the responses to President Kennedy's challenges to America that we too could go into space, is a tragedy. I would hope my colleagues would join me in this very sensible and reasonable amendment that would add $10 million to the Human Space Flight program.

Mr. Chairman. I rise to offer this amendment that would add $10 million to NASA's Human Space Flight program.

This cut to the Human Space Flight program untenable. Jobs are at stake. As a Representative for the City of Houston, I cannot stand by and watch my Houstonians lose their jobs because of these cuts. the Johnson Space Center in Houston provides work for over 15,000 people. The workforce consists of approximately 3,000 NASA Federal civil service employees. In addition to these employees are over 12,000 contractor employees. These employees represent both big and small businesses, and their very livelihoods are at stake—especially those in small business.

Dan Goldin, head of NASA, has already anticipated the devastating effects of the NASA cuts. He predicts a 3 week furlough for all NASA employees. This would create program interruptions and would result in greater costs. Ladies and gentleman, we are falling, if not tumbling, down a slippery slope. This bill would reduce jobs for engineers and would increase NASA's costs, a result that will only result in more layoffs as costs exceed NASA's fiscal abilities.

By providing money for human space flight, we ensure that NASA will continue to fund its projects such as ISS and the space shuttle, and in doing so, NASA will continue to require our American workers.

We are at a dangerous crossroads. This bill gives our engineers and our science academics a vote of no confidence. It tells them that we will not reward Americans who spend their lifetimes studying and researching on behalf of space exploration. I urge my colleagues to join me in my effort to stop the bleeding.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word, and I would like to comment on the NASA portion of this bill, and specifically about an amendment this was discussed a few minutes ago.

Let me say that I appreciate the predicament my friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), is in. In February, President Clinton submitted another in a string of budgets that cuts NASA. And even that small cut that we are talking about depended on billions of dollars of phony taxes and other gimmicks that the President knew would never become part of the law, thus putting the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) in a very bad situation. And while they pretend to honor the spending caps from the 1997 budget agreement, the administration ends up bashing the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) for cutting NASA while the administration itself is being irresponsible in the way they propose their budget.

Let us remember this. Three years ago the President submitted a NASA budget that predicted a billion dollars less for fiscal year 2000 than the amount for NASA contained in this fiscal year 2000 appropriation bill. So I do not think that President Clinton has much of a position to attack the gentleman from New York on the effort he has made in trying to make some sense out of this appropriation bill.

The total funding level for NASA in this bill should be higher. I believe it should be higher. Unfortunately, it is not. I am sure the gentleman from New York would like it to be higher if it could be. In May, the House passed a 3-year NASA authorization bill which gave NASA a slight increase for 2000. In that context, I support many of the priorities for NASA within this bill.

I note that funding for space transportation technology was actually increased, and one of the few areas in NASA to receive an increase, I might add. I am happy that the chairman was able to add back $400 million for NASA's excellent space science programs in full committee. I appreciate the plus-up for space solar power, for example, which is an important research area. And I strongly agree with the committee's report language on space station commercialization, which supports the Committee on Science's long-standing attempts to push NASA in this direction.

While I am sure the gentleman from New York and his colleagues will work hard to improve NASA's funding in conference, I will have to support the efforts of the gentleman from California (Mr. ROGAN) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BATEMAN) to restore funding for research and technology as far as the space science and aeronautics part of this budget.

□ 1830

The amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BATEMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ROGAN) restores funding for the scientific analysis of data that we have gotten back from programs like Mars Pathfinder and Lunar Prospector. I think that is very admirable.

Where do they get this money from that they are trying to restore this? They get it from the bloated budget, what I consider to be a bloated budget, of the Environmental Protection Agency by eliminating that or by reducing it by just over 1 percent. And I think that is a very reasonable, reasonable change, and what they are trying to do for space science and aeronautics is a very positive step.

Speaking as former chairman of the authorizing subcommittee that oversees EPA, I know that under this administration EPA has become somewhat of a rogue agency. For example, EPA has published regulations based on phony science and helped negotiate the Kyoto Protocol even after the Senate unanimously advised the administration not to do so. So I would think taking one percent from the EPA and putting it into space, science, and aeronautics, as the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BATEMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ROGAN) are suggesting, is a very reasonable thing to do, and I strongly support that amendment.

While understanding that the gentleman from New York (Chairman WALSH) has to oppose this amendment in order to defend his bill, I do congratulate the chairman for the good

job that he has done. I also know that we would not be in this predicament if it would not have been for the fact that the President of the United States has acted irresponsibly in developing this part of the budget.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word and rise in opposition to the Jackson-Lee amendment.

I will be brief, Mr. Chairman. There is another dilemma presented by another amendment, and the dilemma is that what the gentlewoman from Texas has asked us to do is take funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the agency that is responsible for responding to emergencies all over the country, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, floods, droughts, and so forth, and put that money into human space flight. It is a difficult choice because we have, as has been noted, reduced NASA fairly dramatically. But I would urge my colleagues not to support the amendment.

This is the number one priority of Director Witt of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. His number one priority is to provide pre-disaster mitigation so that we can begin to reduce the cost of disasters as they occur around the country. This is money up front to try to bring down the cost of disaster relief in the long-run and it is a priority of this subcommittee also, and I would urge my colleagues to reject this amendment.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WALSH. I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I know the chairman and I are going to continue to work on this issue and I know that the chairman has heard us, and he may hear me again, talk about the devastation of the $1 billion cut to NASA and Sophie's choices.

I would certainly like to inquire of the chair the opportunity to work together on this issue and to help resolve the point of somewhat of a crisis of dealing with the important research that NASA does and particularly space exploration and particularly the International Space Station as we move this legislation along.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, I absolutely pledge to work with the gentlewoman. We have had this discussion a number of times with a number of Members who are deeply concerned about NASA. We know there is not enough money in there right now with NASA. We are not complete with this process.

As we go forward, my colleague, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN), and I have talked about this. We would like to see what we can do to resolve some of these issues, and I would be happy to work with my colleague on that.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

The amendment was rejected.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ) be permitted to offer an amendment which is at the desk.

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

There was no objection.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GUTIERREZ

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. GUTIERREZ:

Page 29, line 26, after the first dollar amount insert the following: ''(increased by $5,000,000)''.

Page 79, line 5, after the first dollar amount insert the following: ''(reduced by $5,000,000)''.

Page 30, line 11, after the first dollar amount, insert the following: (''increased by $20,000,000)''.

Page 79, line 19, after the first dollar amount, insert the following: ''(reduced by $20,000,000)''.

Page 31, line 9, after the first dollar amount, insert the following: ''(increased by $5,000,000)''.

Page 80, line 14, after the first dollar amount, insert the following: ''(reduced by $5,000,000)''.

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

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Chairman, this amendment restores Brownfields appropriations to the current $25 million level by transferring $5 million from NASA's Human Space Flight account into HUD's Brownfields Redevelopment account.

In fiscal year 2000, the very least we should do is maintain this year's spending levels for programs that generate jobs and help neighborhoods in other important ways. Instead, H.R. 2684 gouges appropriations, including over half a billion dollars for public housing funds in order to meet Congress's self-imposed budget caps and to fund an enormous tax cut.

My amendment seeks to reprioritize our budget by putting people first. In other words, we should cut the least from programs that directly help people.

This initiative is one that will deliver the kinds of jobs and development needed desperately by these distressed towns and urban neighborhoods; and it is called the Brownfields Redevelopment, a small, modest, cost-effective program that should not be made smaller.

Brownfields' goal is to return contaminated sites to productive, employment-generating uses. The program emphasizes job creation for lower income people and economically distressed neighborhoods. Nearly 450 sites across our country qualify as Brownfields sites.

In my own congressional district, a contaminated parcel that used to be the former Hammond Refrigerated Warehouse site at 4555 South Racine. When re-habbed, this currently vacant parcel will return to commercial use with a new 190,000 square foot industrial building and 200 new jobs for low- and moderate-income Chicago residents and adds handsomely to the tax base.

The amendment also restores HOME Investments Partnership funding to its fiscal year 1999 level by transferring $20 million from NASA's Science, Aeronautics, and Technology Account to HUD's HOME account. I am offering this amendment for one clear reason. There is a serious shortage of affordable housing in the United States.

Currently, rents are increasing faster than wages almost everywhere and nowhere in the country can a household with one full-time minimum wage earner afford basic housing costs.

As a result, a record 5.3 million low-income households are spending more than half their incomes on rent, leaving precious little money for food, clothing, day care, insurance, transportation, education, and all of the other costs associated with raising a family. Funds must come from some source to help cities and towns expand housing for low- and moderate-income working class families. Why? Because it is the right thing to do for our constituents who earn too little and pay too much for rent, often falling into homelessness.

The HOME Investment Partnership program is one of the few Federal initiatives for encouraging the development of affordable housing. It is a success story.

Since 1990, HOME has financed some 350,000 units of housing for low- and moderate-income families. Every American hurts when families cannot find safe, decent, warm, affordable housing in communities where they work.

Again I ask we prioritize families first.

The amendment also restores Homeless Assistance Grants to the FY 1999 level by transferring $5 million. Homeless Assistance Grants provide shelter and services to people without homes.

This $5 million amendment may seem small considering the VA–HUD appropriation bill deals with almost $90 billion dollars. And a $5 million cut to HUD's Homeless Assistance program from FY 1999 levels may seem small. After all, H.R. 2684 slashes funding to important public housing programs by more than half a billion dollars as it reduces community development block grants by 250.

However, the Homeless Assistance cuts, as well as those to Brownfields and HOME, are significant. Our priorities are wrong when we retreat from a commitment to helping the most vulnerable people in our country when there are 750 people who are homeless in America on any given night. During

a year, as many as 2 million people experience homelessness for a short period of time.

If we reduce Homeless Assistance Grants, we reduce our compassion and our intelligence. When we refuse adequate Federal assistance to individuals and families on the street, we increase the potential for emergency room visits, crime, deaths, and the stunting of homeless children's educational and emotional development.

Our Nation is richer than ever before. Shame on us if we cut assistance to people living on streets and sidewalks during a period of historic Dow Jones Industrial Average record-breaking corporate profits, an increasing tax revenue.

I ask all my colleagues to support this amendment.

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

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the amendment of the gentleman and the sentiments in the amendment. These are issues that are of concern to all of us who represent urban areas, Brownfield sites, homeless grants.

What this amendment does is it restores funding to the 1999 level of funding for these programs. These are very difficult programs to reduce funding in.

What we tried to do when we made these decisions was to reduce across the board as much as we could different programs. We did not want to gut these programs because we felt they were good programs, so we made slight reductions in order to get to the budget number that we were allocated.

By taking money out of NASA and putting it into these programs, we further got an agency that has suffered huge cuts. And what that translates to is the Gutierrez amendment would restore $25, $30 million to these programs, but what he would do is take them from the three areas of NASA where they have already suffered $900 million in cuts. So, basically, it adds insult to injury to the NASA budget.

I would urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment because NASA cannot take any more reductions and these programs, while important, are funded at a much higher percentage of what they were funded compared to the NASA program. So I would urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Gutierrez amendment to increase HUD Brownfields Redevelopment activities, to increase HUD's HOME program, and to increase funding for HUD's Homeless Assistance Grants.

Many of our inner-city communities throughout the country are replete with industrial wasteland in need of reclamation and redevelopment. There is tremendous need for homeless assistance, need to increase affordable housing for low- and moderate-income families.

Each and every day, thousands of citizens throughout the country go out looking for affordable housing only to be told that there is none available.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. I yield to the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank my colleague from Illinois, and from Chicago specifically, for yielding.

I guess I understand the arguments made by the chairman of the committee. I would just like to say that as the House considers this amendment that, as we continue space exploration, I would like to simply suggest to America tonight that we look at our own homes, we look at our own neighborhoods, we look at our own Nation, we look at our own planet Earth.

I want people to understand what Brownfields means. It means contaminated, polluted areas, over hundreds of thousands of them that have already been sighted across our Nation. It seems ironic to me that we are going to continue to spend money.

The chairman is absolutely correct when he suggests that the NASA program has been cut by $9 million but HUD has been cut by a billion dollars.

□ 1845

So in the parlance of congressional discourse, they may seem equal. So I guess then the question is, what are our priorities? Are we going to take care of our own contaminated neighborhoods and sites across our own Nation, as we venture into space, and lose our own planet Earth, which I think we quickly need to reclaim first before we ever pretend to claim outerspace.

Secondly, I would just like everybody to think for a moment. It seems interesting that I know that the astronauts as they look back on Earth, they cannot see the 750,000 people that are homeless at that given night in our country, but I assure my colleagues that it is a cold and a mean and a very desperate situation that 750,000 people and up to 2 million in any year see.

So as they look out into the stars, I wish we would give them some hope also, so as we explore space we take care of our own.

Third, let us not create homelessness by inaction of this Congress. The home program works and it forms those wonderful partnerships between the public and private sector and, as I said, created over 350,000 units of housing since 1990. It is a success story. Let us continue on those success stories.

Mr. Chairman, last, I would just like to add, let us remember that we are dealing within the confines of this budget. We really do not need to. We have hundreds of billions of dollars in our surplus. I think we can find $30 million to reduce homelessness, to clean up contaminated waste sites across our Nation and to make sure that families who are out there in the cold can come in and feel the warmth and the humanity which this Congress can give them by allowing this modest increase of $30 million.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, I too agree with the chairman that space exploration is important, but so is it important that people in our communities have affordable places to live, to work, to grow and develop so that they too can help explore space.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the Gutierrez amendment. The measure will nickel and dime NASA to death.

This amendment cuts $5 million out of NASA's Human Spaceflight programs to fund the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Brownfields Redevelopment program. In addition, Mr. GUTIERREZ cuts $20 million out of Science, Aeronautics and Technology and $5 million out of Mission Support to fund other HUD programs.

When taken together, these amendments would cut NASA's budget by $30 million. These amendments take money out of our investments in science and technology, which will benefit future generations, and put that money into current consumption. In short, the amendments are akin to eating our seed corn.

The bill already underfunds NASA. These amendments will worsen NASA's ends-means mismatch since they do not reduce any of NASA's programmatic responsibilities.

Mr. Chairman, the country's elected officials can't keep asking the space program to do more with less. That makes no sense. I urge my colleagues to oppose the Gutierrez amendments.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ).

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

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

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 275, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ) will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. FILNER

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. FILNER:

In title I, in the item relating to ''VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION—MEDICAL CARE'', insert at the end the following:

In addition, for ''Medical Care'', $1,100,000,000: *Provided,* That the Congress hereby designates the entire such amount as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further,* That such amount shall be available only to the extent of a specific dollar amount for such purpose that is included in an official budget request transmitted by the President to the Congress and that is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to such section 251(b)(2)(A).

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

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. 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 gentleman's amendment.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, we have been talking all afternoon on this bill, and I think we have all agreed that veterans programs are vastly underfunded. Everybody would like to try to find a way to change that. I am offering a way to do that.

In my amendment, an additional $1.1 billion is added to veterans health care by declaring an emergency with regard to the health care of our veterans.

This figure was not arrived at arbitrarily. All of our Nation's veterans got together during this budget process and came up with a budget, a responsible budget and a professional budget, what they called an independent budget, which said what would be needed at the absolute minimum to keep our commitment to our Nation's veterans after almost 5 years of straightline budgeting, which resulted basically in a real cut in services; what would be needed to keep our commitment to our veterans.

They decided that about a $3 billion increase would be necessary, and they pointed out the programs and the areas that would be funded with that $3 billion.

The committee plussed-up that account by $1.7 billion. I would like to add the $1.1 billion that these veterans requested.

We have a true emergency here, Mr. Chairman. Keeping the promise we made to our veterans is an emergency. Providing health care is an emergency. The VA health care is drastically underfunded and in danger of collapse, and we must change that.

What are we going to get for that $1.1 billion that we do not get now? We get care for veterans who are involved in radiation risk activities and subsequently develop cancer. We get funding for new health care initiatives for veterans suffering from hepatitis C-related illnesses.

These are often fatal, Mr. Chairman. Earlier in the debate I said something to the effect that thousands of our veterans had hepatitis C. I made a mistake. The figure is closer to 2 million of our veterans, Mr. Chairman, and we have no provision for funding to help those veterans.

This billion would go to increase programs for long-term care for our aging veterans. They would restore beds in psychiatric wards and increase mental illness research education. They would allow veterans to stay in hospitals if they have Alzheimer's and would help our Persian Gulf War illness veterans who are suffering today.

Now when I offered these amendments earlier in the day, I was told by my good friend, the chairman of the committee, that well, we plussed it up from the President's request.

Yes, we will stipulate the President made an inadequate request. He underfunded by $3 billion, but this is our budget now, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this is a congressional budget. Let us do the right thing.

When I brought this up earlier, it was said that we had the biggest increase in this bill ever for veterans health care. That may be so in the short run but that comes on top of 5 years of real cuts, real dollar cuts, and presupposes, Mr. Chairman, a $3 billion deficit over the next 10 years, which this is building on.

Finally, the chairman says, well, this is legislating in an appropriations bill.

Well, we legislate all the time in an appropriations bill. Let us legislate for our veterans. Let us put in this $1.1 billion, and I hope that my colleagues will allow us to take this emergency action today.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I insist on a point of order against the amendment, if I could explain further.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) may state his point of order.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, we have had this debate, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) and I, for the better part of the afternoon.

The issue here is the offset that he provides under the rule, and he is asking for an emergency declaration. We considered that process and ultimately rejected it.

What we did was we found real dollars within the budget to allocate for veterans health, and what we did was provide a $1.7 billion increase over the President's request.

As the gentleman has stipulated to and agreed to, and I think it is a unanimous agreement now, the President's request for veterans medical health was not only inadequate, it was embarrassing. They later came back and they suggested that, yes, they thought that the $1.7 billion level was the right level and supported it. We received a letter from the Vice President on that.

We also received letters from the American Legion and from the Veterans of Foreign Wars who agreed that $1.7 billion was the right amount to fund veterans health care.

I looked back at the budgets of the last 5 years, including this budget. We have gone from $15.7 billion in the 1996 enacted level to $19 billion this year. That is a $3.5 billion increase in funding for veterans. So we have striven mightily, in spite of the lack of support there seems to be in the executive branch for the veterans medical care budget.

The Congress, both parties, have supported plussing up this budget, and we made hard choices, as we have heard in the debate today. NASA was cut a billion dollars. There are programs in HUD operating subsidies, modernization funds in public housing where we had to go to help to fund the veterans health care. People want more money for Section 8 vouchers, but the choices were difficult.

We cannot appropriate these funds because they are not available to us, Mr. Chairman. For that reason, I would restate and insist on the point of order against the amendment because it proposes to change existing law, constitutes legislation in an appropriations bill; therefore, violates clause 2, rule XXI and because it violates section 306 of the Budget Act that deals with matters in the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Budget.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Does the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) seek to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, speaking on the point of order, Mr. Chairman, I say to my friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), I want to legislate on this appropriations bill. We were not allowed to do any legislation in our authorizing committee. The Chair just refused to allow motions from the minority side.

The gentleman says we have real dollars for our $1.7 billion. I am asking for real dollars here. We have it in our command. It is being given to people, special interests, in the utility industry. It is being given to special interests for multinational corporations. It is being given to those who make $200,000 or more a year. Why not give a billion to the veterans who made our country as great as it is?

So we have the real dollars, Mr. Chairman, and we should legislate on this appropriations bill, and I hope the Chair would find in our favor.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The Chair finds that a proposal to designate an appropriation as ''emergency spending'' within the meaning of the budget-enforcement laws is fundamentally legislative in character. It does not merely make the appropriation. Instead, it characterizes the appropriation otherwise made. The resulting emergency designation alters the application of existing law with respect to that appropriation. Thus, the proposal is one to change existing law. On these premises and based on previous rulings of the Chair earlier today, the Chair holds that the amendment offered by the gentleman from California, by including a proposal to designate an appropriation as ''emergency spending'' within the meaning of the budget-enforcement laws, constitutes legislation in violation of clause 2(b) of rule XXI 1.

The Chair also finds that a proposal to designate an appropriation as ''emergency spending'' within the meaning of the budget-enforcement laws is a matter within the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Budget under clause 1(e) of rule X.

On that premise the Chair holds that the amendment offered by the gentleman from California, because it relates to such a matter on a bill that was not referred to that committee, also violates section 306 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

The point of order is sustained on each of the grounds stated. The amendment is not in order.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Chairman, with deep personal respect, on behalf of our

Nation's veterans, I appeal the ruling of the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The question is, Shall the decision of the Chair stand as the judgment of the Committee.

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. This is a 15-minute vote. Immediately following this vote, the Chair announces that proceedings will resume on the amendments postponed earlier today, and those votes will be reduced to not less than 5 minutes each.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 219, nays 198, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 390]

YEAS—219

Aderholt
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baker
Ballenger
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bateman
Bereuter
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bliley
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bono
Brady (TX)
Bryant
Burr
Burton
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cannon
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Coble
Coburn
Collins
Combest
Cook
Cooksey
Cox
Crane
Cubin
Cunningham
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeLay
DeMint
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Doggett
Doolittle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
English
Everett
Ewing
Fletcher
Foley
Fossella
Fowler
Frank (MA)
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Ganske
Gekas
Gephardt
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Goodlatte
Goodling
Goss
Graham
Granger
Green (WI)
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hansen
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill (IN)
Hill (MT)
Hilleary
Hobson
Hoekstra
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Isakson
Istook
Jenkins
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Kasich
Kelly
King (NY)
Kingston
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kuykendall
LaHood
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas (OK)
Manzullo
McCollum
McCrery
McInnis
McKeon
Metcalf
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Morella
Myrick
Nethercutt
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Ose
Oxley
Packard
Paul
Pease
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Quinn
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Reynolds
Riley
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roukema
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Salmon
Sanford
Saxton
Schaffer
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Skeen
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Spence
Stearns
Stump
Sweeney
Talent
Tancredo
Tauzin
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thornberry
Thune
Tiahrt
Toomey
Upton
Vitter
Walden
Walsh
Wamp
Watkins
Watts (OK)
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson
Wolf
Young (FL)

NAYS—198

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baird
Baldacci
Baldwin
Barcia
Barrett (WI)
Becerra
Bentsen
Berkley
Berman
Bishop
Blagojevich
Blumenauer
Bonior
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Carson
Clay
Clayton
Clement
Clyburn
Condit
Conyers
Costello
Coyne
Cramer
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Deutsch
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Dooley
Doyle
Edwards
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Forbes
Ford
Frost
Gejdenson
Gonzalez
Goode
Gordon
Green (TX)
Gutierrez
Hall (OH)
Hall (TX)
Hastings (FL)
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hoeffel
Holden
Holt
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
John
Johnson, E.B.
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
Kleczka
Klink
Kucinich
LaFalce
Lampson
Larson
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas (KY)
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Menendez
Millender-McDonald
Miller, George
Minge
Mink
Moakley
Mollohan
Moore
Moran (VA)
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Phelps
Pickett
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Reyes
Rivers
Rodriguez
Roemer
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sabo
Sanchez
Sanders
Sawyer
Schakowsky
Scott
Sherman
Shows
Sisisky
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Spratt
Stabenow
Stark
Stenholm
Strickland
Stupak
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thurman
Tierney
Traficant
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Velazquez
Vento
Visclosky
Waters
Watt (NC)
Waxman
Weiner
Wexler
Weygand
Wise
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn

NOT VOTING—16

Berry
Buyer
Danner
Davis (FL)
Jefferson
Lantos
McCarthy (MO)
McHugh
McIntosh
Pryce (OH)
Rangel
Sandlin
Scarborough
Sununu
Towns
Young (AK)

□ 1911

Mr. STARK, Mr. CONDIT and Ms. McKINNEY changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Messrs. MICA, SMITH of Texas, ARCHER, SCHAFFER, BACHUS and FOLEY and Mrs. CHENOWETH changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the decision of the Chair stands as the judgment of the Committee.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Chairman, during rollcall vote No. 390, sustaining the Chair's point of order of Filner Amendment, I was unavoidably detained due to mechanical delays with U.S. Air flight No. 348. Had I been present, I would have voted ''no.''

SEQUENTIAL VOTES POSTPONED IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Pursuant to House Resolution 275, proceedings will now resume on those amendments on which further proceedings were postponed in the following order:

The amendment printed in the Committee on Rules report offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM); the amendment offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER); the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER); the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROGAN); and the amendment offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ).

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for each electronic vote in this series.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. CUNNINGHAM

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The pending business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM) 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 pro tempore. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 187, noes 232, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 391]

AYES—187

Abercrombie
Aderholt
Andrews
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baldacci
Ballenger
Barr
Bartlett
Bass
Bateman
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop
Blagojevich
Bliley
Bonilla
Bono
Boswell
Boyd
Bryant
Burr
Burton
Callahan
Calvert
Canady
Cannon
Castle
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Clement
Coburn
Collins
Combest
Cooksey
Cramer
Cunningham
Davis (FL)
Deal
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Edwards
Emerson
Etheridge
Everett
Ewing
Fletcher
Foley
Forbes
Fossella
Fowler
Frelinghuysen
Frost
Gallegly
Ganske
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Goode
Gordon
Goss
Graham
Granger
Green (WI)
Greenwood
Gutierrez
Hall (TX)
Hansen
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Herger
Hilleary
Hinojosa
Holden
Hooley
Hostettler
Houghton