

women of the Josiah Edison Chapter for their exemplary service and wish them continued success.

TRICARE FOR GUARD AND RESERVE

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

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, we have a lot to remember on Memorial Day. Today in south Mississippi, four families will be receiving death notices. Every one of those families had a young guardsman over in Iraq who was killed yesterday.

Last Friday, I visited Walter Reed. Five young soldiers were wounded, four of them amputees, every one of them Guardsmen Or Reservists.

Just last week the Committee on Armed Services passed an amendment that would allow Guardsmen and Reservists to buy TRICARE insurance for themselves and their families. Somewhere between the committee, where it passed, and the Committee on Rules, where it failed, it was blocked on a straight party-line vote.

So as we remember Memorial Day, I hope every Guardsman in America will remember the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART), the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS), the gentleman from Florida (Mr. PUTNAM), the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE), the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY), eight of the nine who never served a day in uniform who voted to see that our Nation's Guardsmen and Reservists cannot buy Federal health insurance.

EMBRYONIC RESEARCH

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, this week we have heard people of all types arguing vehemently either for or against embryonic research.

It is hard for lay people to cut through all this scientific mumbo-jumbo, so let me ask a common-sense question: At what point is it not okay for researchers to create life in order to destroy it? Some argue that we should destroy human embryos to try to save an existing life. That is just totally immoral. And it is not the government's place to fund destruction of those embryos with taxpayer money.

What makes America the strongest Nation on earth is that we protect those who cannot protect themselves. I commend the President for his promise to veto H.R. 810.

STRENGTHEN SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Mr. CANTOR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to talk about a serious challenge facing our government. Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare are growing at alarming rates. By 2042, these three programs alone are going to comprise 26 percent of our gross domestic product. This number far exceeds today's entire Federal budget in relative terms, which is roughly 18 percent of GDP.

Our focus now in this House should be to strengthen Social Security and to ensure that it is around for our children and grandchildren. Along with the leadership of President Bush, this House must commit itself and take advantage of an opportunity to enact real reforms to the Social Security system, making this vital program better for all recipients.

We can no longer afford to have partisanship prevail on the other side of the aisle, and instead invite all to join the debate of ideas to ensure progress in this crucial debate.

PASS CAFTA

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

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I have been listening to our colleagues talk about the fact that we are approaching Memorial Day, which we are. It is a very important time to remember the war dead and people who today are continuing to sacrifice.

I have had the privilege of serving here for nearly a quarter century, and I remember very well in the 1980s when U.S. military men and women were struggling side by side with freedom fighters in Central America to ensure that we could see self-determination, the rule of law, and the development of political pluralism and democratic institutions.

Madam Speaker, we are going to, in the coming weeks, be voting on the Central American Free Trade Agreement. Every single president in Central America has made it very clear to us that if we want to maintain the things for which U.S. men and women in uniform gave their lives, along with many Central Americans, we must lock it in by ensuring passage of the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

We need to think about that sacrifice made a decade and a half ago in Central America as we proceed with the prospect of keeping freedom alive.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1815, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Com-

mittee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 293 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 293

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1815) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2006 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2006, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and the amendments made in order by this resolution and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule.

SEC. 2. (a) It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Armed Services now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived.

(b) Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution and amendments en bloc described in section 3 of this resolution.

(c) Each amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules shall be considered only in the order printed in the report (except as specified in section 4 of this resolution), may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. Each amendment printed in the report shall be debatable as specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent and shall not be subject to amendment (except that the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services each may offer one pro forma amendment for the purpose of further debate on any pending amendment).

(d) All points of order against amendments printed in the report of the Committee on Rules or amendments en bloc described in section 3 of this resolution are waived.

SEC. 3. It shall be in order at any time for the chairman of the Committee on Armed Services or his designee to offer amendments en bloc consisting of amendments printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution not earlier disposed of. Amendments en bloc offered pursuant to this section shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for 40 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services or their designees, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. The original proponent of an amendment included in such amendments en bloc may insert a statement in the Congressional Record immediately before the disposition of the amendments en bloc.

SEC. 4. The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may recognize for consideration of

any amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution out of the order printed, but not sooner than one hour after the chairman of the Committee on Armed Services or a designee announces from the floor a request to that effect.

SEC. 5. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 6. During consideration of the bill under this resolution—

(a) after a motion that the Committee rise has been rejected on a legislative day, the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may entertain another such motion on that day only if offered by the chairman of the Committee on Armed Services or the Majority Leader or a designee; and

(b) after a motion to strike out the enacting words of the bill (as described in clause 9 of rule XVIII) has been rejected, the Chairman may not entertain another such motion.

□ 1030

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan). The gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 293.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday the Rules Committee met and reported a rule for consideration of H.R. 1815, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006.

Madam Speaker, the rule is a structured rule providing for 1 hour of debate equally divided and waives all points of order against the rule. It provides that the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Armed Services now printed in the bill shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment and shall be considered as read and waives all points of order against the amendment. It makes in order only those amendments printed in the report of the Committee on Rules and provides that amendments shall be considered only in the order

specified in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, and shall not be subject to amendment. Additionally, it allows the chairman of the Committee on Armed Services to offer an en bloc amendment consisting of amendments printed in the report of the Committee on Rules and provides one motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the rule for H.R. 1815 and the underlying bill. This bill will enhance our security, increase the capabilities of our military, and improve the lives of the brave men and women who defend our country. Since September 11, 2001, our military has proven its mettle and validated its doctrine, plans, and programs during the ongoing war on terror.

Madam Speaker, I genuinely believe that the Committee on Armed Services has presented us with an outstanding bill that addresses many of the challenges our troops face on a daily basis. However, it is important to remember that this yearly authorization is at root an ongoing transformative process that occurs on an annual basis. This year we have taken important steps in the improvement and transformation of our existing forces during an era that is dangerous, demanding, and filled with challenges that our country neither anticipated nor prepared for during the 1990s.

To fully appreciate the significance of H.R. 1815, one must understand the four long-term challenges we seek to address in this legislation. The first long-term challenge stems from the procurement holiday that our government voluntarily took during the 1990s. In those years, neither the President nor the Congress funded the procurement needs of our Armed Forces. As one example, during the 1990s the ammunition accounts of our military were woefully underfunded. As a result, even after radically increasing the productivity of our ammunition plants in the last few years, we are still struggling to keep pace with our current and projected needs.

The same is true of equipment, which was neither acquired nor replaced in sufficient quantities during the years between the collapse of the old Soviet Union and the onset of the war on terror. As a result, our military is still dealing with the shortages of equipment and munitions that were created in the 1990s and that have yet to be fully resolved. This bill helps address these shortages.

Madam Speaker, the second long-term challenge we must address on a continual basis is related to the transformation of our military forces. With the passage of the Goldwater-Nickles reforms of 1986, our military began putting an increased emphasis on jointness. Over the years, increased jointness has generated different requirements for our forces. Those re-

quirements demand procedural, bureaucratic, and technological changes within our Armed Forces. The principle of transformation has affected everything that our military does, from how we fight to how we deliver services to those who serve in our Armed Forces. Properly used, joint planning, procurement, and operations are an effective combat multiplier that creates the critical edge that our forces need to defeat our adversaries. However, transformation comes with a substantial cost. This is an issue we must address on an ongoing basis. H.R. 1815 does just that.

Madam Speaker, the third long-term challenge we face is the need to expand the size of our military. Over the past few years, it has become clear that we went much too far in downsizing our military forces after the end of the Cold War. To begin to address our manpower shortage, the Committee on Armed Services increased end strength by 10,000 soldiers for the Army and 1,000 Marines for the Marine Corps. This is on top of increases made in the last 2 years. It is also in addition to reforms allowing us to use a greater percentage of our military personnel in a combat capacity.

Unfortunately, even these steps are not enough for our long-term needs, but they are at least a start and responsive to the heavy demands we are placing on our military forces. Over the next several years, we will be forced to look more carefully at manpower needs and come up with a more realistic assessment of what is actually required. Still, H.R. 1815 is a good next step and one which we should support and build upon in the coming years.

The fourth long-term challenge faced by the military results from the global war on terror. This is not a conventional war. It is a generational war which will take decades to win. We need to remember this when approaching the needs of the military in the authorization and the appropriations process. Hence, I believe we took a wise and important step in this direction when we added \$49 billion to the defense bill to offset a portion of the costs of this conflict next year. It is something that indicates our understanding of the long-term nature of the challenge we face.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 1815 is not a perfect bill; but it is a very, very good piece of legislation. We must remember that the National Defense Authorization Act moves us in the direction we need to go. For that, all of us should be grateful. Ultimately, this bill is not about programs, weapons, or research and development. It is about our soldiers and their ability to defend the United States.

Today, some may want to discuss issues that, however important, are superfluous to the war on terrorism and the long-term military challenges that we face. We owe it to the sons and daughters of America who are on a global battlefield in the war on terror

to address the real issues and challenges our military will confront today and tomorrow. This legislation is a step in a continuing process of enhancing our military capabilities in a dangerous world.

I would ask Members to support these prudent steps taken in this thoughtful and comprehensive piece of legislation. Madam Speaker, to that end, I urge support for the rule and the underlying bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, we find ourselves here today debating the rule for next year's Defense authorization bill. But while we should be discussing ways to better support our hardworking men and women in uniform, we find ourselves revisiting a debate I had assumed we settled years ago. Buried within H.R. 1815 is section 574, a provision that would severely limit the participation of women in our military. To say that I am disappointed would be an understatement of enormous proportions.

Some will say that section 574 merely codifies existing military policy; but if this provision is passed, we will be sending an entirely different message, not just to the brave women currently serving our Nation throughout the world but to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, those who have been wounded or even killed. We will be telling them and indeed their families, We have seen you at work defending freedom and liberty here at home and abroad and you aren't good enough. I cannot think of a more disgusting message to be sending our troops, especially in a time of war.

This year, the Subcommittee on Military Personnel has not held hearings, commissioned studies, or released reports on this important issue. In fact, we have not seen a shred of evidence that a problem even exists with the integration of women in the Armed Forces. Yet the religious right wing in this country, against the advice of our military leaders, has once again decided to bend the process of government to their political will and force this issue upon America without research, without fact, without debate, and without the benefit of the democratic process.

We are in the middle of a war, in Iraq and on terror. Now is not the time to be telling more than 20,000 women that we do not value their service, especially when you consider that we are having serious problems meeting our recruitment goals. What woman is going to join a military that treats them as if they are second-class citizens not worthy of respect and dignity?

Last night in the Rules Committee we watched as the coalition of members who stand rightly beside our women in uniform were slapped down on a party-line vote by the majority in their attempts to approve the Skelton-Snyder amendment which would remove this ill-conceived provision from the bill. The Secretary of the Army and the Army Vice Chief of Staff wrote the Armed Services Committee voicing their strong opposition to this provision.

Likewise, we can have no real discussion on the future of America's defense without talking about the base realignment and closure process. I share the concern of many experts and many of my colleagues across the political spectrum when I say that we are a Nation at war. Now is not the time to be closing America's military bases.

Many experts are also concerned that we are overconsolidating our resources in too few locations, especially when the greatest threat to our security comes not from a massive invasion but from a sneak attack by a terrorist organization on a target of opportunity. Did we not learn after Pearl Harbor not to put everything in one place? Does it not make more sense to have our resources strategically placed across the country? Moreover, as record numbers of Guard and Reserve troops are dying in combat defending this country, the Defense Secretary's proposed BRAC list would ground a third of the Nation's Air National Guard and Reserve units and shutter hundreds of other armories and readiness centers across the country.

Many local leaders and homeland security specialists, including the National Guard Association of the United States, has said that the consolidation would hamper State responses to local emergencies and domestic terrorist threats.

Unfortunately, the DOD did not adequately take into account a military installation's value to homeland security when developing their criteria. For example, the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station has been recommended for closure despite the fact that it is the closest base to three major United States cities and the two largest cities in Canada. The Guard and Reserves who train there assist the Department of Homeland Security in interrogating suspicious individuals detained at the northern border. Yet the Air Force proposes to reduce the Air Mobility Command by 54 percent in the Northeast, incapacitating homeland defense in a region which comprises 20 percent of the entire United States population. I understand this is also a problem for other major cities and population centers around the country.

That is why I offered an amendment last night that would have required the commission to evaluate bases for their homeland security value, but unfortunately it was voted down.

All of us know that recruitment is another major issue that we are facing

today. We have a recruitment crisis in America and an Armed Forces already stretched way too thin. But the DOD wants to close bases that regularly exceed their recruitment goals for the Guard and military reserves, like Niagara Falls. We do not know what will happen to the large Guard and Reserve units who serve at bases recommended for closure. We know exactly where their equipment is headed, but even the Pentagon admits it does not know what is going to happen to our most valuable assets, and those are the people stationed at the bases.

But perhaps what is most troubling about the BRAC list that was submitted to the commission is that according to an Air Force BRAC spokesman, the extensive criteria used to evaluate the strategic military value of each base was not even adhered to by the Pentagon when compiling their closure list.

□ 1045

Instead, they used a collective judgment. I do not even know what "collective judgment" is supposed to mean, but I know that in Niagara, thousands of people are losing their jobs and are at risk at a base that is highly ranked in performing its duties, and one that has always been evaluated highly that is on the chopping block. This is unacceptable to me, and it should be unacceptable to this body.

This BRAC constitutes a complete reorganization of our military resources during a time of war with very little thought, doing untold damage to the National Guard and military Reserves, and does not consider the homeland security role.

But there are a lot of concerns about the Pentagon that we have that we will not talk about today because we did not get enough amendments approved.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), the chairman of the Committee on Rules.

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

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this very fair and balanced rule that will allow us to deal with what is clearly the single most important issue that we address as a Federal Government and as a Congress.

I want to begin by complimenting my very good friend, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE), for his great service to the United States of America, his superb management of this rule, and his commitment to our Nation's security. I also want to compliment the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Armed Services, as well as the ranking member, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), for their fine work and the

fact that they have worked together so well on a wide range of very important issues.

Madam Speaker, I also want to extend my congratulations to our commander in chief, George W. Bush, and our great Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld.

It is very clear that the United States of America over the past few years has gone through challenges the likes of which we have never in our Nation's history seen. Frankly, I believe that we are doing extraordinarily well.

The Defense Authorization bill that we are going to be considering today will create an opportunity for a free-flowing debate, a wide-ranging discussion on important issues that we face. Eighty-nine amendments were submitted to the Committee on Rules for consideration by 10 o'clock yesterday morning, and I am happy to say that of those 89 amendments, we have been able to take 29 of them and make them in order. Of those 29, 16 amendments were offered by Democrats that will be made in order, 13 will be offered by Republicans, and they will deal with the tough issues that we have faced.

Now, the issue that my friend, the gentlewoman from Rochester, New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), just raised is one which has been contentious, and I believe we have been able to come to a consensus on the issue. There was a great deal of stir over this question of women in combat and what exactly we were going to do.

The manager's amendment, Madam Speaker, throws out the provisions that the committee had, and it put into place a requirement that over a 60 legislative day period, the United States Congress will be involved in any kind of change in the policy of women in combat that will be on the horizon. Secretary Rumsfeld has made it very clear publicly that he does not support any kind of change, and I believe that the action that we will see in the passage of the manager's amendment will help to ensure that that will take place.

I also have to say, Madam Speaker, that we are in a position today where we have just gotten the report issued from the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, and we know that there are concerns that have come to the forefront from a number of our Members on the recommendations of the BRAC Commission. As we begin debate on this bill, we will allow for a wide-ranging discussion on the issue of base realignment and closure.

The gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. BRADLEY) and the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS), have a BRAC amendment that is made in order, so that we will be able to discuss that here.

Madam Speaker, the five most important words in the preamble of the U.S. Constitution are "provide for the common defense." There is nothing that we do that is more important than providing for the common defense. Vir-

tually every issue that we address can be handled by some other level of government, but local governments and State governments cannot provide for the common defense. That is why it is so important that we step up to the plate, have bipartisan support for this rule which will allow for free-flowing debate, and do everything that we can to ensure that we get a great Defense Authorization bill to the President of the United States.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON).

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New York for yielding me this time, and I rise in strong opposition to the rule. To start with, the Committee on Rules made in order almost no amendments that were of importance to the Democrats, including my amendment on women in the military.

Madam Speaker, in my opinion, the Committee on Rules has a duty to this institution and to each of us to create circumstances that will permit orderly consideration of legislation that is important to our country and also structured to the debate, so that we will have the opportunity to work our will on these important issues. Sadly, that is not the case.

Let me start with the most important issue, women in the military. Not only did the Committee on Rules not make my amendment in order, which would have stricken horrendous language and established a study; and by the way, my amendment was bipartisan in nature, along with my colleague, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. SNYDER), the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Military Personnel of the Committee on Armed Services; the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON), and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) from the other side of the aisle.

It was not only not made in order, but a brand-new amendment by our colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), was filed, not in a very timely fashion, and which we did not see for the first time until last evening. His amendment, which creates a time mechanism wherein any MOS or specialty changes for women will be notified to the Congress, also establishes a study. Should that amendment pass, that wipes out the onerous language that is presently in the bill.

This amendment, though, that the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) is offering, is camouflaged with other amendments, including a memorial to the USS *Oklahoma* and a veterans' preference amendment and one amendment dealing with missile defense. Further, it allows only 10 minutes of debate.

I think that is wrong. It is not an overstatement to say that the action by the Committee on Rules is not living up to its responsibility.

Let me give a bit of a history of the women in military. All of a sudden,

with only hours' or a day's notice, an amendment was passed in the Subcommittee on Military Personnel of the House Committee on Armed Services. That amendment related to women in the military, and the military stated in a letter signed by Lieutenant General Campbell, and I will place it in the RECORD, that over 21,900 positions would have to be closed to women. To say it was wrong is an understatement.

That was wiped out by a second amendment in full committee. The second amendment was one that froze the specialties and did not allow full expansion of specialties or MOS's for the women and, furthermore, it was an attempt to codify 1994 language from Secretary Les Aspin, but it did not include all of the elements. That is the bill right now.

The new Hunter language, which I described a few moments ago, fortunately wipes that out. If the Hunter language passes, which is not necessarily artfully written, but if that passes, the women in the military can breathe easier. It is a victory for the women in the military and victory for national security.

Every person that wears the uniform of the United States of America has the respect of every one of us in this body. We thank them for their service. The women are putting their hearts, their souls, their professionalism, their careers on the line every time they put the uniform on every day, and I think it is wrong to have come up and challenged these women in what they do for our country in this fashion.

I would also like to mention that the rule failed to mention the Taylor amendment regarding TRICARE for Reservists.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY,
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF,
Washington, DC, May 17, 2005.

Hon. IKE SKELTON,
Committee on Armed Services,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE SKELTON: Sir, if the amendment to H.R. 1815, proposing to prohibit the assignment of female Soldiers to Forward Support Companies (FSC) addressed only FSCs in Heavy and Infantry Brigade Combat Teams and equivalent elements of Stryker Brigades, a total of 21, 925 spaces currently open for assignment to female Soldiers would be closed.

We appreciate your interest in and support of our Soldiers as we continue to fight the Global War on Terrorism.

Sincerely,
JAMES L. CAMPBELL,
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army,
Director of the Army Staff.

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HAYES).

Mr. HAYES. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I rise today in support of the rule to provide consideration for the National Defense Authorization bill. This legislation focuses on force protection and personnel benefits for the soldiers and

airmen in my district at Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base. The ability to adequately execute the mission for which they are called and care for their families are the two issues that are second to none. I believe this legislation makes significant progress in these areas and will enable our men and women in uniform to continue to successfully win the war on terrorism.

My trip to Iraq just a few weeks ago, the third I have made, did nothing but reinforce my pride and confidence in our Nation's warfighters. These brave men and women serve with honor and distinction as they liberate a nation. Troops from the Eighth District of North Carolina have been at the tip of the spear that ended the dark reign of Saddam Hussein and continue to lead the way in post-conflict resolution in Iraq and Afghanistan.

This legislation, first and foremost, takes care of our most vital asset of our military: our people. It provides every serviceman with an across-the-board 3.1 percent pay raise and increases the force structure of the Army and the Marine Corps. It boosts the maximum amount of hardship-duty pay and increases the amounts paid for active duty and Reserve enlistments and reenlistments.

I am particularly happy that we are expanding the capacity of the military health care system to provide health care to service members and their families by requiring the reimbursement for services of mental health counselors without a referral from a primary care manager.

Additionally, I would like to mention the direct effects this legislation will have for the men and women at Fort Bragg. There is over \$200 million for infrastructure and housing improvement, including \$11.4 million more than was in the President's request for the Third Brigade Combat Team barracks complex. I worked hard to secure this funding because it will help improve the living conditions for our soldiers and support the Army's transformation to modularity.

Additionally, I am happy to support the funding for a new junior high school at Fort Bragg.

The National Defense Act also addresses another critical issue, that of fortifying the defense industrial base, ensuring that the Department of Defense purchases textiles that are made in America. My top two priorities are national security and economic security. There is seldom, if ever, a reason that these two goals should be considered mutually exclusive. I have vowed to always work and support and promote the U.S. manufacturing industry, but we must develop transparency within DOD to ensure that our troops are wearing uniforms made in America. I am hopeful that our colleagues in the other body will recognize the need to safeguard U.S. textile jobs and work with us through the conference process.

Madam Speaker, it is a gross injustice and misfortune that it took the

tragedy of 9/11 to focus the public eye on the need for a more robust defense budget, but I feel that the legislation in front of us today will help our troops accomplish their mission. We are establishing a clear and strong course of support for our troops. I encourage my colleagues to send a message loud and clear to our soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coasties, that we will strongly support you and give you the resources necessary to perform the mission.

Madam Speaker, I urge a vote in favor of the rule, as well as the national defense bill.

The campaign began with shock and awe. At this point, it should be awe, admiration and appreciation for what these men and women are doing. Having been here for 7 years, the trend and support for our men and women in uniform has trended ever upward. That is where it should be.

As we look at this bill today, the way we can best thank our troops, show our love and appreciation for them, is to pass this bill and continue the upward trend that shows that we not only talk about our troops, but we do things that will make their lives better and show our appreciation.

I urge support for the rule and the underlying bill.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI).

(Ms. MATSUI asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New York for yielding me this time.

Our men and women in uniform are honorably serving this Nation on the ground in Iraq, Afghanistan, and many other locations. But because of our commitments, our Armed Forces are relying even more heavily than usual on our National Guard and Reserves.

It is estimated that National Guard forces make up about half of the U.S. force on the ground in Iraq. With this in mind, it is truly disappointing that an excellent amendment by the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) was not made in order under this rule.

The Taylor amendment would give our Reserve and National Guard members full access to TRICARE, the health care insurance provided to those in our Armed Forces.

□ 1100

It is simply irresponsible for us to allow the families of 20 percent of Reservists and National Guardsmen to go without health care benefits.

Our National Guard and Reserves know that they can be called up for more than the usual 1 weekend a month, but they never would have expected their 1-year tours of duty to be extended well beyond that time frame. I am concerned that the civilian leadership of the military has forced us to lean so heavily on the Reserve and National Guard personnel.

These men and women serving in the National Guard and Reserves are responding to the unexpected; and now we, their government, need to respond in kind and not with a lot of platitudes. For all that these men and women are doing, we should be able to find the \$1 billion necessary to provide them and their families with health care.

Offering every member of the National Guard and Reserves the ability to access health care coverage is a moral issue. Our treatment of our Reserve and Guard members is unacceptable. The Taylor amendment began to address it. I am truly saddened that at a time of great service and dedication on their part, we are quibbling about fully providing for our servicemen and -women.

The line between active and reserve personnel has already been blurred. Our Guard and Reservists need to be focused on fulfilling their missions. They should not have worries in the back of their mind about whether their spouse or their child is getting health care back home.

This provision, passed in full committee, deserves debate on the House floor. I encourage my colleagues to oppose this rule which will allow this amendment to be made in order. We should honor our servicemembers and give them the health care coverage they not only deserve, but are entitled to.

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY). The gentleman from Oklahoma has 16 minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from New York has 17½ minutes.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR).

(Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material.)

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, in South Mississippi this morning, four families of National Guardsmen will be notified that their loved ones died yesterday in Iraq.

Last Friday, as I visited Walter Reed, I had the opportunity to visit five Mississippians, three of whom are amputees, all of whom are National Guardsmen or Reservists.

As the gentlewoman from California just mentioned, over 40 percent of all the people serving in Iraq right now are Guardsmen and Reservists, and a disproportionately high percentage of the deaths and wounds have been received by them.

One way we tried to make it up to them for their supreme sacrifice to our Nation was to see to that those Guardsmen and Reservists who choose to can buy into the TRICARE health care coverage provided by our Nation to every

other member of the Armed Forces, the regular soldier to their right, the regular Marine to their left.

It was brought up in committee, and by a majority vote the Armed Services Committee voted to allow National Guardsmen and Reservists to buy into TRICARE. But somewhere between the committee and the Rules Committee, someone decided that there was mandatory spending involved. So the same Congress that has brought 21 bills to this floor that waived all budgetary rules, no matter how much it ran up the deficit, the same Congress that has added \$2.2 trillion to the National debt in just 4 years, that decided Paris Hilton can inherit hundreds of millions of dollars without paying a penny in taxes, decided because there was \$5 million mandatory spending, these National Guardsmen could no longer buy into that policy.

So we went to the Rules Committee. We showed the Rules Committee where the National Guard Association, the Military Officers Association of America, the Enlisted Association of the National Guard, the Adjutant Generals of every single State voted unanimously for this amendment. The Reserve Officers Association and the Fleet Reserve Association all endorsed this amendment. And yet the Rules Committee, in a straight party line vote, decided that National Guardsmen and Reservists cannot buy their health care.

The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), the Speaker of the House, ignored the call of the adjutant general of Illinois and the 12,500 National Guardsmen in his State.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) ignored the call of his adjutant general and the 20,000 National Guardsmen in Texas.

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) ignored the call of his adjutant general and the 10,000 National Guardsmen from Missouri.

The gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) ignored the call of his adjutant general and 20,400 National Guardsmen.

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. PUTNAM) ignored the call of 12,000 National Guardsmen. The list goes on.

The bottom line is, if these people are good enough to serve our Nation in Iraq, if they are going to die in disproportionately high numbers, if they are going to lose their limbs in disproportionately high numbers, do you not think this Congress could find the time to debate an amendment that has already passed the Armed Services Committee, and let every Member of this body decide whether or not those Americans who are serving our country in the Guard deserve the opportunity to buy health insurance for themselves and their families?

Mr. Speaker, I urge a "no" vote on the rule.

COMMITTEE ON RULES

David Dreier, CA—Chairman; Lincoln Diaz-Balart, FL; Doc Hastings, WA; Pete Sessions, TX; Adam Putnam, FL; Shelley Moore Capito, WV; Tom Cole,

OK; Rob Bishop, UT; and Phil Gingrey, GA.

Louise McIntosh Slaughter, NY—Ranking Minority Member; James P. McGovern, MA; Alcee Hastings, FL; and Doris Matsui.

Hastert, IL—12,594.
DeLay, TX—20,124.
Blount, MO—10,751.
McHugh, NY—16,010.
Dreier/Hunter, CA—20,459.
Putnam, FL—12,088.
Doc Hastings, WA—8,495.
Sessions, TX—20,124.
Capito, WV—6,270.
Cole, OK—9,407.
Rob Bishop, UT—6,497.
Gingrey, GA—12,594.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT).

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

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, the well of this House ought to be a free market of ideas. It ought to be a great national forum where we dissect legislation and debate the big issues both.

And particularly today, as we take up the Defense authorization bill, with thousands of troops deployed all over the globe in harm's way, suffering casualties daily, we are spending \$440 billion a year on national defense, plus the \$80 billion in supplementals, over a half trillion dollars, today particularly we should have a full, vigorous, and complete debate.

In the 1980s, it was this way. At the height of the Cold War, when this bill came to the floor, 100, 200 amendments were offered; and most of them, many of them were made in order. It sometimes took us 2, 3 weeks to get this bill off the floor. We had a full, free, and open debate.

Today the debate will be circumscribed, carefully controlled to bar the issues that our Republican colleagues want to avoid or fear losing if the House were allowed to weigh the issues and work its will. This is not the way this institution should treat something so important.

In addition, in years past, when we ran the House, there was something called comity. And senior members of the committee in particular were allowed to have the deference at least of a few amendments that would be offered on the House floor. Their experience was valued.

Today, the gentleman from Missouri's (Mr. SKELTON) amendment, shut out. My amendment on nonproliferation, well crafted, carefully considered, at least I wanted the opportunity to present that choice to the people of the House, shut out. I will go down the list with senior members on the committee, senior Members in the House, offering thoughtful amendments that at least this House should consider, weigh and work its will upon, all have been shut out. This is no way to run a debate on something of such gravity and importance.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS).

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend and colleague for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to speak for peace. I can no longer keep silent. Mr. Speaker, the time for silence is long past. As we debate the rule on the Defense Authorization Act of 2006, I believe that somebody, someplace, sometime, must stand up and speak up for the cause of peace.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for us to bring the conflict in Iraq to an end; 12,000 of our young men and women, the sons and daughters of America, have been wounded, and more than 1,600 of our soldiers have died. Tens of thousands of Iraqi citizens are dead, wounded, living in fear and chaos, uncertain about tomorrow.

How many more of our young men and women will we have to lose in a car bombing, a kidnapping or armed conflict before we understand that this war was unnecessary?

I have said it before, and I say it again today: war is vicious. It is evil. It is bloody. It is messy. It destroys the hopes, the dreams, the longing and aspirations of a people. It leaves little children without fathers and mothers. The war in Iraq is tampering with the very soul of our Nation.

In these Chambers we have struggled with many human problems. We have made decisions that have changed the course of history. Today I ask of my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, to search their souls and ask themselves, is it possible for a great Nation to come to a point where we decide to lay down the burden of war? Is it possible for a great Nation, a powerful Nation with a proud people to evolve to that level where we study war no more; where we decide we are going to destroy the tools and instruments of violence and war and devote all of our intelligence and all of the resources of this great Nation to lay the foundation for peace?

The way of peace is a better way, a more excellent way. We cannot and must not continue to move down the road that leads to a more bloody war, more violence, more death. If we fail to take heed, if we fail to listen and be guided by the spirit of history, the future will not be kind to us.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TAUSCHER).

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to this partisan rule.

The Rules Committee has once again failed to promote debate and instead rubber-stamped the majority and the administration's policies.

As a senior member of the Armed Services Committee, I do not offer so-called political amendments. I offer

substantive amendments to real solutions to real problems.

Prisoner abuse is a real problem.

Nuclear proliferation is a real problem.

But the Rules Committee apparently does not think so.

I offered three simple amendments that would have improved the bill in these areas. They were all rejected.

My first amendment would have mandated that the Pentagon share International Committee of the Red Cross reports on treatment of detainees with Congress that we would hold confidential so that we could be informed and be part of the solution.

The Rules Committee clearly does not worry about fixing our dismal image in the Muslim world or preventing human rights abuse or upholding our end of the bargain in over-seeing the military.

I submitted an amendment that would have created an office of non-proliferation in the White House to better coordinate our nonproliferation efforts.

But the Rules Committee is not worried about nuclear proliferation.

And, finally, over the last 2 weeks the majority has sought to limit the opportunities for women in the military over the objections of the Secretary of Defense, the service chiefs and Democrats.

The Rules Committee seems to agree with the majority on the Armed Services Committee that when men volunteer for the Army, they become soldiers. But when women volunteer for the Army, they become women soldiers.

Mr. Speaker, this rule is a travesty and should be soundly rejected. Vote "no" on the rule.

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, to my good friends on the other side, I would simply point out that most of the speakers are actually members of the authorizing committee and passed out this bill 61 to 1, had opportunities to offer those amendments at the committee level, presumably did so, and if they did so, were not successful, and still felt the bill was worthy of being sent on to the floor for further consideration.

In addition, the Rules Committee actually considered and has allowed 29 amendments, a majority of which are Democratic amendments. There is always going to be a judgment debate as to what should or should not be considered and how much time should be devoted in a process to any particular piece of legislation. So I respect the gentlewoman from California's opinion, but obviously we have a difference on this.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR).

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

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) for allowing me time to speak.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise in opposition of Rule H.R. 1815. Last night the Rules Committee rejected an amendment that I offered to help our military families who have lost loved ones in the defense of our freedom. My amendment would eliminate the survivors benefit pension dependency and indemnity compensation offset.

Under current law, survivors are prohibited from receiving payments from both programs at the same time. This is unfair and an unjust provision that hurts the families of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice to defend our freedom and democracy.

If a soldier was enrolled in a survivor benefit plan when they died of service connected causes, the spouse's SBP benefit is reduced dollar for dollar by the amount of the DIC, a \$933 a month deduction. The remaining SBP is barely enough for a spouse with a family to survive or pay the basic needs such as food, clothing, and rent. We should be taking care of these families, not abandoning them in this time of need.

□ 1115

I am a proud cosponsor of H.R. 808, which would correct the gross injustice for the families of all military personnel and retirees who died of a service-connected cause.

We must keep our promise that we made to the brave men and women who have given their lives for our freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question, so that we can have the opportunity to debate my amendment and to vote on this important issue. If this effort fails, I would ask that you vote "no" on the rule for H.R. 1815, and give our soldiers and their families the respect that they deserve.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. MARSHALL).

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, most Americans do not know that this country taxes disabled veterans. We take from military retirees, who are also disabled, 100 percent of their disability benefits. We started doing this in the 1800s. It is indefensible, in my opinion, and I think most Americans, if they realized we were doing it, would recognize that this is an indefensible policy of our country.

Mr. Speaker, for the last 20-some-odd years a supermajority of the Members of this House have signed on to legislation to end the disabled veterans tax. Once again, there is legislation that would end the disabled veterans tax with many cosponsors. Most of the Members of this House will ultimately cosponsor that legislation.

My amendment, Mr. Speaker, would have brought to the floor as part of the Armed Services authorization bill a

complete elimination of the disabled veterans tax. That amendment was ruled out of order by the Committee on Rules. I think that rule is wrong. I think Members of this House want to vote on that particular subject.

Two years ago in the House Committee on Armed Services authorization bill we took a small step toward eliminating this tax. Mr. Speaker, we should take the final step of eliminating this tax by permitting the amendment to be made. It would receive an overwhelming vote. We would end the disabled veterans tax and we would end an injustice to our veterans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY). The gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) has 5 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) has 15 minutes remaining.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentlewoman yielding me time.

This restrictive rule is unfortunate and unnecessary. We have heard from my colleagues today, talking about huge issues and deep concerns. It is unfortunate that one additional casualty in the short-circuiting of this process is that we will not discuss the hidden issue surrounding base closures, and that is the cleanup of the mess the military leaves behind.

I offered a modest amendment that would have at least required that the 17 bases from the 1988 round of base closures be dealt with by the Department of Defense with a framework. But even as we move into a fifth round of base closures, that problem remains unaddressed.

To date, the Pentagon has been dragging its feet and Congress has been missing in action. Due to this unnecessarily restrictive rule, the bill is another lost opportunity to treat communities with closed bases fairly, and for Congress to continue to be absent without leave.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. UDALL).

(Mr. UDALL of Colorado asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise to voice my strong objection to this rule. It allows debate on some important amendments, but leaves out many more, some of them dealing with key issues that I believe the House should have an opportunity to consider.

As a new member of the Committee on Armed Services, I am grateful to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) for working with me on a number of provisions on the bill that are important to my State of Colorado.

But I am disappointed that the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) and the committee did not see it fit to work with Democrats on issues of additional importance to the Nation.

Last week, the Committee on Armed Services voted for the Taylor amendment to provide TRICARE to all Reservists on a permanent basis. But this language was removed due to budget constraints, and the Committee on Rules refused to make the Taylor amendment in order.

The Committee on Rules also precluded debate on the Spratt amendment to increase spending on nonproliferation programs, on the excellent Tauscher amendment on sharing reports on detainee treatment, and on an amendment I offered with my colleague, a bipartisan amendment to help former nuclear weapons workers in Colorado who are suffering from cancer related to exposure to radiation.

The rule also precludes debate on the Skelton-Snyder-Wilson-Shimkus amendment that should have been offered, another bipartisan amendment, to strike the provisions saying that any positions currently closed to women shall remain closed.

Many more amendments worthy of consideration were not made in order, Mr. Speaker.

My friend, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) mentioned that in the committee the bill was voted out almost unanimously, but that does not mean that on the floor we cannot improve it. There are many of these amendments that should have been made in order.

For that reason, Mr. Speaker, I oppose the rule. It stifles debate and I cannot support it.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to voice my strong objection to this rule. It allows debate on some important amendments but leaves out many more, some of them dealing with key issues that I believe the House should have an opportunity to consider.

As a new Member of the Armed Services Committee, I am grateful to Chairman HUNTER for working with me on a number of provisions in the bill that are important to me and my state of Colorado. But I'm disappointed that Mr. HUNTER and the Committee didn't see fit to work with the Democrats on additional issues of importance to the nation and to the prosecution of the war in Iraq and Afghanistan.

I'm sure that the views of the Republican leadership of the Armed Services Committee influenced the deliberations of the Rules Committee and thus the final rule that was adopted. But it is the Rules Committee—not the Armed Services Committee—that determines which amendments are made in order.

Last week the Armed Services Committee voted for Representative TAYLOR's amendment to provide TRICARE to all Reservists on a permanent basis. But Chairman HUNTER took the language out due to budget constraints, and the Rules Committee refused to make Mr. TAYLOR's amendment in order. The Rules Committee also precluded debate on Representative SPRATT's amendment to increase spending on nonproliferation programs, on

Representative TAUSCHER's excellent amendment on sharing reports on detainee treatment with Congress, and on an amendment I offered with my colleague Representative BEAUPREZ to help former nuclear weapons workers in Colorado who are suffering from cancer and other conditions related to their exposure to radiation and other hazards.

The rule also precludes debate on an amendment to be offered by Representatives SKELTON, SNYDER, WILSON and SHIMKUS to strike the provision saying that any positions currently closed to women shall remain closed. Mr. HUNTER will offer an amendment that waters down the provision slightly but combines it with other provisions, thus preventing a clean up or down vote on this very important issue.

Many more amendments worthy of House consideration were not made in order. This means that the bill we will debate today on the House floor will not address some of the key issues affecting our military and our policy in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, this rule stifles debate, and I cannot support it.

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. I yield to the gentleman from Mississippi.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I had to leave the room briefly. It was my understanding, when I left the room, that the gentleman had mentioned that the bill had passed committee 61 to 1. Is that correct?

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. That is correct.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Is the gentleman aware that when the bill passed the committee, the amendment that provided TRICARE for every single Guard member and Reservist was a part of that bill?

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. I am aware of that.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Okay. I just want the gentleman to know that that 61 to 1 vote included that amendment.

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Reclaiming my time, I am also aware that the item the gentleman mentioned was actually stricken on the parliamentary question.

I would like to submit for the RECORD the chairman of the committee's letter to that effect and also the statement from CBO upholding that decision.

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, May 20, 2005.

DEAR ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE COLLEAGUE: This morning the Congressional Budget Office informed me via letter (copy attached), that the amendment agreed to during the committee's mark-up of H.R. 1815, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006, extending TRICARE coverage to all reservists will result in additional direct (or mandatory) spending. As a result, the inclusion of this provision would cause the bill to exceed the mandatory spending allocation provided under the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget. Exceeding the mandatory allocation will cause H.R.

1815 to violate the Congressional Budget Act and subject the bill to a point of order against its consideration on the House floor.

I have consulted the Chairman of the House Budget Committee on this matter and he informs me that if the bill is brought forward to the floor in violation of the Budget Act, he will exercise his prerogative to raise the applicable point of order and thus prevent its consideration on the floor.

Accordingly, after informing Mr. SKELTON and the sponsor of the amendment, I am exercising the authority granted to me by the committee to remove this section in order to bring the bill back into compliance with the Budget Act and eliminate this impediment to its floor consideration. In summary, if this action is not taken, a point of order will be raised and sustained against the bill and its consideration will be blocked.

Sincerely,

DUNCAN HUNTER,
Chairman.

Attachment.

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, May 20, 2005.

Hon. DUNCAN HUNTER,
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, U.S.
House of Representatives, Washington DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: As requested by your staff, we are sending you this letter containing our preliminary estimate of a provision in H.R. 1815, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006, as ordered reported by the committee on May 19, 2005. The provision would provide access to TRICARE health insurance benefits for reserve component personnel. Implementing that provision would have significant effects on both spending subject to appropriation and direct spending.

The provision would affect direct spending by increasing mandatory expenditures in the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program. On a preliminary basis, CBO estimates that enacting this provision would increase direct spending for the government's share of FEHB premiums for retirees by \$5 million in 2006, \$94 million over the 2006-2010 period, and \$269 million over the 2006-2015 period.

Under the provision, all reservists in the Selected Reserve would be eligible to enroll in TRICARE, the health insurance system for the Department of Defense (DoD). Based on information from DoD, CBO estimates that about 120,000 reservists work for the federal government. CBO expects that some of these reservists who are currently enrolled in the FEHB program would leave that program and enroll in the new TRICARE for Reservists program because the premiums would be lower than for FEHB and the coverage would be more generous. Generally, TRICARE premiums are lower because medical costs are highly correlated with age—the average reservist is age 34 while the average for enrollees in the FEHB program (including retirees) is closer to age 60.

Because the estimated health care costs for reservists switching to TRICARE are likely to be lower than the average per capita costs for all other enrollees in the FEHB program, average costs for the FEHB program would rise, even though its total costs would decline. Thus, CBO expects premiums for the remaining enrollees in the FEHB program would rise to cover the higher average cost. The government's share of premiums for annuitants (about 72 percent) is direct spending.

In addition to the direct spending effects, this provision would affect spending subject to appropriation. CBO estimates that implementing this provision would increase spending by DoD for this new benefit by about \$230 million in 2006, and \$4.6 billion over the 2006-

2010 period, assuming appropriation of the estimated amounts. In addition, we estimate that spending for reservists in the Coast Guard would increase by \$2 million in 2006 and \$46 million over the 2006-2010 period, assuming appropriation of the estimated amounts. Finally, under this provision, spending by the federal government for active workers in the FEHB program would decline by an estimated \$340 million over the 2006-2010 period.

If you have any questions, the CBO staff contact is Sam Papenfuss, who can be reached at 226-2840.

Sincerely,

DOUGLAS HOLTZ-EAKIN,
Director.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. MCKINNEY).

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, I am against this rule and the underlying bill. Good substantive amendments that the American people need to hear debate on were not ruled in order.

I have offered an amendment to force the Pentagon to share the names of the companies that have received \$20 billion to make Pentagon computers talk to each other. According to the GAO, DOD business systems remain fundamentally flawed, unable to provide timely and reliable information and leaving DOD vulnerable to fraud, waste, and abuse. And yet we continue to give the Pentagon more and more, despite their admission that they cannot track \$2.3 trillion and despite the fact that they lost \$100 million in Iraqi building funds and \$9 billion in Iraqi oil revenue.

Both my amendments would force the Pentagon to tell us where all of this money is going.

My second amendment would have required the Pentagon to tell the American people who had the contracts to operate the detention centers like Abu Ghraib that have so shamed us recently.

Just imagine what we could do for Americans in need without all that Pentagon waste. I do, and that is why I ask these questions.

Other amendments addressing critical issues were not allowed, and I can think of no reason why the majority refuses to allow a full debate on these critical issues confronting us today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) has 1 minute remaining.

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

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) for yielding me time and the Committee on Rules for their hard work on this bill, on the many amendments that they reviewed, took testimony on, and for their shaping of this package which will move the defense bill onto the floor here momentarily and allow us to do what it takes to make sure that the men and women of

the Armed Forces, who are fighting in the war against terror in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other theaters around the world, will have the tools to get the job done.

Now, we have two considerations here. One consideration is to make sure that Members get their amendments heard and have their voices heard. The other consideration is to make sure we get a bill. And sometimes one of those considerations overbalances the other.

The worst thing that could happen is not to move this bill expeditiously through the House, move it quickly to conference, and provide the leadership not only for the base bill this year, but for the \$49 billion that we have bolted onto the base package that, at the end of this fiscal year, will give our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan the force protection, the armor, the pay, the troop levels and all the other things that we need to carry out this mission.

So this is a crucial and critical bill, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate the expeditious fashion that the committee has moved in.

This bill provides a 3.1 percent pay raise for our troops. We have increased pay 25 percent over the last 4 years. It provides many, many personnel benefits. It provides an expansion of family housing. It provides additional bonus flexibility for the services to continue to attract and recruit Americans to come into the armed services. And it gives our people additional warfighting capability, additional sensors, additional armor, additional munitions and weapons, all the tools that they need to get the job done.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, we have put in some very important limitations on the costs of weapons systems. We see weapons systems costs going through the roof. We see a DDX program that now says it is going to cost \$3 billion a ship. In a very businesslike way, we have analyzed these costs and the increases, and we have put in limitations and mechanisms that will allow us to control these costs. If we do not start bringing down the costs per ship, per aircraft, per big unit, we are not going to have enough of these systems to provide the coverage we need around the world.

Mr. Speaker, this is the most important of bills. It is a bill that goes to the very heart of our freedom, and that is the equipping and projection of our Armed Forces. I thank the Committee on Rules for doing a great job in packaging this bill in a way that we can move it expeditiously across the floor.

I thank the gentleman for his great work and his great work as a former member of the Committee on Armed Services, who is going to be coming back to see us and who sits in with us regularly.

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS).

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, my faith means everything to me. And because of it, I strongly believe that the men and women in uniform should be able to practice their own faith as the Constitution guarantees.

Recent accounts paint a picture of considerable religious intolerance at our Air Force Academy. There has been a tide of complaints about harassment of anyone who is not an Evangelical Christian and special treatment for those who are. And the Air Force recently reassigned Captain McLinda Morton, an Academy chaplain, who spoke out about this issue.

□ 1130

These accounts must be thoroughly and publicly investigated. We must avoid a repetition of the initial slow response of allegations of sexual assaults at the Air Force Academy.

Last week, I, along with 45 of our colleagues, sent a letter to the Air Force Secretary asking for a thorough and public investigation. I understand that the DOD Inspector General is looking into the reassignment of Captain Morton. But Air Force investigators looking into the allegations of religious intolerance have not interviewed key people who brought this issue to light, and this does not bode well for how seriously the Air Force is taking this matter.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL) had an amendment to direct the Pentagon to protect religious freedom at the Air Force Academy. Unfortunately, it was not made in order. I hope this does not signal that the House will not take this issue seriously.

Religious freedom is the bedrock on which this Nation is founded. It would be intolerable if those who risk their lives for American ideals and values are denied the very religious freedom that they are defending.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time, and I urge Members to vote "no" on the previous question. If the previous question is defeated, I will amend the rule to allow three very important amendments that were offered to the Committee on Rules last night and defeated on party-line votes.

The first amendment is by the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) and would provide members of the selected reserves access to the TRICARE military health care program on a permanent basis for the duration of their service. The second amendment, by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. MARSHALL), would provide eligibility for payment of both retired pay and veterans disability compensation for certain additional military retirees with compensable service-connected disabilities. The last amendment is by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR) and would repeal the dependency and indemnity compensation offset from survivor benefit plans' surviving spouse annuities.

Let me make it clear that a “no” vote will not stop the House from taking up the authorization bill, but a “yes” vote will preclude the House from considering these three amendments critical to the debate of our national defense. I urge a “no” vote on the previous question.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today, in closing, I again want to draw the attention of the Members to the strengths of H.R. 1815. It takes many steps forward in reforming the procurement and acquisition systems, increasing end strength, and provides \$49.1 billion in supplemental funds for the war on terror.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to respond just briefly to some of the concerns expressed on the other side of the aisle. First, about the process by which the Committee on Rules operated.

I remind my good friends that this bill was again reported out of the House Committee on Armed Services by a vote that was nearly unanimous, only one dissent; that 29 amendments have been made in order; that the majority of those amendments are Democratic amendments; and that we will, obviously, have an additional opportunity to debate the full merits of the bill as we move forward. I think there is more than ample time for discussion and debate.

Second, on the Reservist health care issue. This is a difficult issue, to say the least. It is an emotional issue and an important issue. I would like to point out that under the leadership of the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), the Committee on Armed Services has made important progress in this particular area. It has extended the amount of time that members that are going to be deployed are eligible for TRICARE. It has extended the amount of time that those who are leaving service are able to enjoy the benefits of TRICARE. It has allowed additional time granted for time served in deployment and combat situations. So I think the Committee on Armed Services has expressed a continuous desire to keep looking at these issues.

I have personally visited with the gentleman from New York (Mr. McHUGH), who is the subcommittee chairman responsible for this particular area; and he has assured me he wants to continue the progress that has been made over the last several years.

Again, I remind my good friends there were many opportunities when they were in the majority to address these type of issues. While we have

been in the majority, we have addressed concurrent receipt in a step-by-step process that is moving us in the right direction. We have addressed survivor benefits in a step-by-step process moving us in the right direction. And now we are addressing the critical issue of health care as well. So I think important progress is being made on all these fronts, Mr. Speaker.

Finally, I would like to note that this legislation would not have been possible without much hard work on the part of the gentleman from California (Chairman HUNTER); the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), the ranking member of the committee; and the other subcommittee chairmen, and finally the members of the Committee on Armed Services themselves. As evidenced by their hard work, this is a bipartisan bill that the vast majority of the House should be able to agree is a good product. H.R. 1815 passed in the committee, again by a vote of 61 to 1. It deserves the same strong bipartisan support on the floor, as does its underlying rule.

Mr. Speaker, many today have complained about what they consider to be critical shortcomings in this legislation. No legislation is ever perfect; and as I said in my opening statement, the defense authorization specifically is more of an ongoing process than a final product. However frustrated some may be with particular aspects of H.R. 1815, it undoubtedly moves our military in the direction it needs to evolve and enhances the security of our country and the well-being of our men and women in uniform.

I would urge the Members on the other side of the aisle to consider carefully what a “no” vote would mean and say to our servicemen and -women in the field. Therefore, I once again urge my colleagues to support this rule and the underlying legislation.

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, while I rise today in support of H.R. 1815, the “National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006,” I do have concerns about language in the bill that would limit the role of women serving in the military and restrict the opportunities available to them. I am hopeful that we will pass an amendment later today to correct this language.

I am pleased that the bill includes provisions to provide retirement credit to the members of the National Guard serving on State duty who responded to the 9/11 attacks in New York and at the Pentagon.

I, along with my friend and colleague, Representative KING, and other members of the New York delegation, have introduced legislation, H.R. 2499, which would accomplish the same goal, and I am thankful that the Committee has worked with us to correct this inequity.

I would like to thank Chairman HUNTER, Ranking Member SKELTON, Representative SYNDER, and especially Representative McHUGH, who were so instrumental in this process, and I commend them for their commitment to the men and women serving this country all over the world.

I also would like to acknowledge both the military and minority staff of the committee for their assistance.

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 were an unprecedented event in American history.

The provisions included in this bill will show our gratitude to the brave men and women who responded on that day by giving them the retirement benefits to which they are entitled.

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

PREVIOUS QUESTION FOR H. RES. 293—RULE ON H.R. 1815, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FY 2006

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 7. Notwithstanding any other provision of this resolution, the amendments printed in section 8 shall be in order as though printed after the amendment numbered 1 in the report of the Committee on Rules if offered by the Member designated. Each amendment may be offered only in the order specified in section 8 and shall be debatable for 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent.

SEC. 8. The amendments referred to in section 7 are as follows:

(1) Amendment by Representative TAYLOR of Mississippi or a designee.

AMENDMENT TO H.R. 1815, AS REPORTED

OFFERED BY MR. TAYLOR OF MISSISSIPPI

At the end of subtitle A of title VII (page 290, after line 5), add the following new section:

SEC. 707. EXPANDED ELIGIBILITY OF SELECTED RESERVE MEMBERS UNDER TRICARE PROGRAM.

(a) GENERAL ELIGIBILITY.—Subsection (a) of section 1076d of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “(a) ELIGIBILITY.—A member” and inserting “(a) ELIGIBILITY.—(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), a member”;

(2) by striking “after the member completes” and all that follows through “one or more whole years following such date”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(2) Paragraph (1) does not apply to a member who is enrolled, or is eligible to enroll, in a health benefits plan under chapter 89 of title 5.”

(b) CONDITION FOR TERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY.—Subsection (b) of such section is amended by striking “(b) PERIOD OF COVERAGE.—(1) TRICARE Standard” and all that follows through “(3) Eligibility” and inserting “(b) TERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY UPON TERMINATION OF SERVICE.—Eligibility”.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Such section is further amended—

(A) by striking subsection (e); and

(B) by redesignating subsection (g) as subsection (e) and transferring such subsection within such section so as to appear following subsection (d).

(2) The heading for such section is amended to read as follows:

“§ 1076d. TRICARE program: TRICARE standard coverage for members of the selected reserve”.

(d) REPEAL OF OBSOLETE PROVISION.—Section 1076b of title 10, United States Code, is repealed.

(e) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 55 of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking the item relating to section 1076b; and

(2) by striking the item relating to section 1076d and inserting the following:

"1076d. TRICARE program: TRICARE Standard coverage for members of the Selected Reserve."

(f) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Enrollments in TRICARE Standard that are in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act under section 1076d of title 10, United States Code, as in effect on such day, shall be continued until terminated after such day under such section 1076d as amended by this section.

Page 508, line 14, insert after the dollar amount the following: "(reduced by \$180,000,000)".

Page 509, line 22, insert after the dollar amount the following: "(reduced by \$180,000,000)".

(2) Amendment by Representative SALAZAR of Colorado or a designee:

AMENDMENT TO 1815, AS REPORTED

OFFERED BY MR. SALAZAR OF COLORADO

At the end of subtitle B of title XV (page 474, after line 9), insert the following new section:

SEC. 15xx. REPEAL OF DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION OFFSET FROM SURVIVOR BENEFIT PLAN SURVIVING SPOUSE ANNUITIES.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Dependency and Indemnity Compensation program under chapter 13 of title 38, United States Code, and the Survivor Benefit Plan under subchapter II of chapter 73 of title 10, United States Code, are separate and distinct programs, with—

(A) the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation program, administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, providing financial support for the survivors of those dying on active duty or from a service-connected disability and available only to unmarried surviving spouses, minor children, and low-income parents; and

(B) the Survivor Benefit Plan, a contributory program administered by the Secretary of Defense, providing the surviving spouse of a military retiree and those killed in service a monthly annuity upon the death of the servicemember.

(2) By law, an amount paid to a beneficiary under the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation program for any month is deducted from a payment for that month to the same beneficiary under the Survivor Benefit Plan.

(3) The offset described in paragraph (2) is inequitable, and it is necessary that such inequity should be corrected, both as a matter of fairness and as an important tool for recruiting and retention of critical personnel in the Armed Forces.

(4) The inequity of the offset requirement described in paragraph (2) has quickly become a significant issue for surviving spouses and the families of those who have died in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

(5) The requirements of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom and the fatalities that continue to occur in those operations have created a compelling need to rectify issues that adversely affect retention of critical personnel in the Armed Forces.

(6) Congress and the leadership of the Department of Defense did not anticipate that the offset between Dependency and Indemnity Compensation benefits and Survivors Benefit Plan annuities would create financial hardships on surviving families of members of the uniformed services whose cause of death is service-connected.

(7) In light of the matters stated in paragraphs (1) through (6), there is an urgent and compelling need for Congress to immediately

eliminate the offset of payments between the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation program and the Survivor Benefits Plan program.

(b) REPEAL OF DIC/SBP OFFSET.—Subsections (c), (e), and (k) of section 1450 of title 10, United States Code, and subsection (c)(2) of section 1451 of such title are repealed.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a)—

(1) shall take effect on September 11, 2001; and

(2) shall apply with respect to payment of annuities under subchapter II of chapter 73 of title 10, United States Code, for months beginning on or after that date.

(d) RECOUPMENT OF CERTAIN AMOUNTS PREVIOUSLY REFUNDED TO SPB RECIPIENTS.—(1) A surviving spouse who is in receipt of an SBP annuity that is in effect before the date specified in subsection (b) and that is adjusted by reason of the amendments made by subsection (a) and who had previously received an SBP retired pay refund shall repay an amount determined under paragraph (2). Any such repayment shall be made in the same manner as a repayment under subsection (k)(2) of section 1450 of title 10, United States Code, as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) The amount of a repayment under paragraph (1) shall be the amount that bears the same ratio to the amount of that refund as the surviving spouse's life expectancy (determined in accordance with standard actuarial practices) bears to the anticipated total duration of the annuity (determined as the sum of such life expectancy and the duration of the annuity already received).

(3) In this subsection:

(A) The term "SBP annuity" means an annuity under the program established under subchapter II of chapter 73 of title 10, United States Code.

(B) The term "SBP retired pay refund" means a refund under subsection (e) of section 1450 of title 10, United States Code, as in effect before the date specified in subsection (b).

(e) BUDGET TREATMENT.—All amounts paid pursuant to this section for fiscal year 2006 and prior years are designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 402(a)(2) of H. Con. Res. 95, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2006.

(2) Amendment by Representative MARSHALL of Georgia or a designee:

AMENDMENT TO H.R. 1815, AS REPORTED

OFFERED BY MR. MARSHALL OF GEORGIA

[ENDING THE DISABLED VETERANS TAX]

At the end of subtitle D of title VI (page 243, after line 2), insert the following new sections:

SEC. 6XX. ELIGIBILITY FOR PAYMENT OF BOTH RETIRED PAY AND VETERANS' DISABILITY COMPENSATION FOR CERTAIN ADDITIONAL MILITARY RETIREES WITH COMPENSABLE SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES.

(a) EXTENSION OF CONCURRENT RECEIPT AUTHORITY TO RETIREES WITH SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES RATED LESS THAN 50 PERCENT.—Section 1414 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by striking paragraph (2) of subsection (a).

(b) REPEAL OF PHASE-IN OF CONCURRENT RECEIPT OF RETIRED PAY AND VETERANS' DISABILITY COMPENSATION.—Such section is further amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking the final sentence of paragraph (1);

(2) by striking subsection (c) and redesignating subsections (d) and (e) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively; and

(3) in subsection (d) (as so redesignated), by striking subparagraph (4).

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) The heading for section 1414 of such title is amended to read as follows:

"§ 1414. Members eligible for retired pay who are also eligible for veterans' disability compensation: concurrent payment of retired pay and disability compensation."

(2) The item relating to such section in the table of sections at the beginning of chapter 71 of such title is amended to read as follows:

"1414. Members eligible for retired pay who are also eligible for veterans' disability compensation: concurrent payment of retired pay and disability compensation."

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as of January 1, 2006, and shall apply to payments for months beginning on or after that date.

SEC. 6XX. COORDINATION OF SERVICE ELIGIBILITY FOR COMBAT-RELATED SPECIAL COMPENSATION AND CONCURRENT RECEIPT.

(a) ELIGIBILITY FOR TERA RETIREES.—Subsection (c) of section 1413a of title 10, United States Code, is amended by striking "entitled to retired pay who—" and all that follows and inserting "who—

"(1) is entitled to retired pay, other than a member retired under chapter 61 of this title with less than 20 years of service creditable under section 1405 of this title and less than 20 years of service computed under section 12732 of this title; and

"(2) has a combat-related disability";

(b) AMENDMENTS TO STANDARDIZE SIMILAR PROVISIONS.—

(1) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The heading for paragraph (3) of section 1413a(b) of such title is amended by striking "RULES" and inserting "RULE".

(2) SPECIFICATION OF QUALIFIED RETIREES FOR CONCURRENT RECEIPT PURPOSES.—Subsection (a) of section 1414 of such title, as amended by section 2(a), is amended—

(A) by striking "a member or" and all that follows through "retiree)" and inserting "an individual who is a qualified retiree for any month";

(B) by inserting "retired pay and veterans' disability compensation" after "both"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(2) QUALIFIED RETIREES.—For purposes of this section, a qualified retiree, with respect to any month, is a member or former member of the uniformed services who—

"(A) is entitled to retired pay, other than in the case of a member retired under chapter 61 of this title with less than 20 years of service creditable under section 1405 of this title and less than 20 years of service computed under section 12732 of this title; and

"(B) is also entitled for that month to veterans' disability compensation."

(3) STANDARDIZATION WITH CRSC RULE FOR CHAPTER 61 RETIREES.—Subsection (b) of section 1414 of such title is amended—

(A) by striking "SPECIAL RULES" in the subsection heading and all that follows through "is subject to" in paragraph (1) and inserting "SPECIAL RULE FOR CHAPTER 61 DISABILITY RETIREES.—In the case of a qualified retiree who is retired under chapter 61 of this title, the retired pay of the member is subject to"; and

(B) by striking paragraph (2).

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as of January 1, 2006, and shall apply to payments for months beginning on or after that date.

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

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

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 225, nays 200, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 212]

YEAS—225

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

Smith (TX)
Sodrel
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Sweeney
Tancredo
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas

Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)

NAYS—200

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Beckerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brown (OH)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson
Case
Chandler
Cleaver
Clyburn
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (TN)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLaunt
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Edwards
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Ford
Frank (MA)
Gonzalez
Gordon

Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth
Higgins
Hinchee
Hinojosa
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee
(TX)
Jefferson
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy (RI)
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kind
Kucinich
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Maloney
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Menendez
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)

NOT VOTING—8

Castle
Clay
Emerson
Gingrey

Hastings (WA)
Millender-
McDonald
Murtha

Weller
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sabo
Salazar
Sanchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanders
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz (PA)
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sherman
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Spratt
Stark
Strickland
Stupak
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Wexler
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn

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

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

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 225, noes 198, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 213]

AYES—225

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

□ 1200

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania and Mr. HIGGINS changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Wicker
Wilson (NM)

Wilson (SC)
Wolf

Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOES—198

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

NOT VOTING—10

Clay	Issa	Murtha
Emerson	Jones (NC)	Musgrave
Gingrey	Millender-	Pickering
Hastings (WA)	McDonald	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised that 2 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 1208

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NOTICE OF OUT OF ORDER CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN AMENDMENTS ON H.R. 1815, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 4 of House Resolution 293, I am providing the requisite notice and request that the following amendments as printed in House Report 109-96 be considered out of order: Goode No. 20, Jo Ann Davis of Virginia No. 24, Davis of California No. 12, Hunter No. 1, Stearns No. 6, Bradley of New Hampshire No. 29, Woolsey No. 26.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's notice has been received.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 293 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. 1815.

The Chair designates the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. SIMPSON) as chairman of the Committee of the Whole, and requests the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) to assume the chair temporarily.

□ 1212

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. 1815) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2006 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2006, and for other purposes, with Mr. BOOZMAN (Acting Chairman) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

Under the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) each will control 30 minutes.

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

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

This year, the Committee on Armed Services has put together a bill that is a true example of bipartisan cooperation, providing the men and women of the armed services with the best equipment, best training, and a benefit package that is worthy of their service and their sacrifice.

The National Defense Authorization Act For Fiscal Year 2006 provides \$441 billion for the Department of Defense and the Department of Energy. The bill was voted out of committee by a vote of 61 to 1 and contains significant improvements in areas of military personnel, acquisition reform, responsible defense procurement strategies, and addresses a need for continuity in fund-

ing for our ongoing efforts in the global war on terror.

But before I get into any details, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), who has been my partner on this committee, for all the great work that he has done. I would also like to praise our subcommittee chairmen and ranking members. This bill is a culmination of their many hearings and oversight reviews.

Almost every member of this full committee has been to the war fighting theaters in Iraq and Afghanistan and gathered firsthand important information that has ultimately been reflected in this bill that we have put together. I want to thank all the members of the committee and all our great leaders on both the Democrat and Republican side, the chairmen of the subcommittees and the ranking members, for their work.

This year, Mr. Chairman, we have made taking care of our troops, both now and in the future, one of our top priorities. We can do all of these things in developing great weapons systems and facilities, but the only thing that really is important, the element that drives the security apparatus of the United States, is people. It is the men and women in uniform. To recognize these sacrifices, the committee has included a number of very well-deserved changes in our MILPER system, and it starts with this 3.1 percent pay raise across the board.

Incidentally, that pulls down this difference in pay on the outside in the domestic world and military pay. There has always been a differential. If you were a military technician in a certain area, you have historically made less money than your counterpart in the private world.

□ 1215

But we have pulled down that differential now to a very low rate, which is now about 4.6 percent. We have increased, in fact, military pay 25 percent over the last 4 years, and that has been the result of the great work of members of our committee, Mr. Chairman.

We have also increased the death gratuity to \$100,000, and understanding that there is no way we can repay those who have lost their loved ones, this helps to bridge those very difficult times when that man or woman does not come back from the warfighting theaters.

We also provide additional increases in end strength. With this bill we have completed our end strength increase plan of 30,000 more soldiers for the Army and 4,000 for the Marine Corps.

But we also realize that there are a lot of other things we need to do, especially in the warfighting theaters. We have increased by \$572 million our inventory of Humvees, \$183 million for counter-rocket and mortar systems. Those are the systems that can take down those mortars and rockets that