

(d) DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES.—

(1) NEW LAW DIC.—Section 1311(a) of such title is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “\$967” and inserting “\$1,033”; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “\$208” and inserting “\$221”.

(2) OLD LAW DIC.—The table in paragraph (3) of such section is amended to read as follows:

Pay grade	Monthly rate	Pay grade	Monthly rate
E-1	\$1,033	W-4	\$1,236
E-2	1,033	O-1	1,092
E-3	1,033	O-2	1,128
E-4	1,033	O-3	1,207
E-5	1,033	O-4	1,277
E-6	1,033	O-5	1,406
E-7	1,069	O-6	1,585
E-8	1,128	O-7	1,712
E-9	1,177 ¹	O-8	1,879
W-1	1,092	O-9	2,010
W-2	1,135	O-10	2,204 ²
W-3	1,169		

¹ If the veteran served as sergeant major of the Army, senior enlisted advisor of the Navy, chief master sergeant of the Air Force, sergeant major of the Marine Corps, or master chief petty officer of the Coast Guard, at the applicable time designated by section 1302 of this title, the surviving spouse's rate shall be \$1,271.

² If the veteran served as Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Chief of Staff of the Army, Chief of Naval Operations, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Commandant of the Marine Corps, or Commandant of the Coast Guard, at the applicable time designated by section 1302 of this title, the surviving spouse's rate shall be \$2,365.”

(3) ADDITIONAL DIC FOR CHILDREN OR DISABILITY.—Section 1311 of such title is amended—

(A) in subsection (b), by striking “\$241” and inserting “\$257”; and

(B) in subsection (c), by striking “\$241” and inserting “\$257”; and

(C) in subsection (d), by striking “\$115” and inserting “\$122”.

(e) DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION FOR CHILDREN.—

(1) DIC WHEN NO SURVIVING SPOUSE.—Section 1313(a) of such title is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “\$410” and inserting “\$438”; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “\$590” and inserting “\$629”; and

(C) in paragraph (3), by striking “\$767” and inserting “\$819”; and

(D) in paragraph (4), by striking “\$767” and “\$148” and inserting “\$819” and “\$157”, respectively.

(2) SUPPLEMENTAL DIC FOR CERTAIN CHILDREN.—Section 1314 of such title is amended—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking “\$241” and inserting “\$257”; and

(B) in subsection (b), by striking “\$410” and inserting “\$438”; and

(C) in subsection (c), by striking “\$205” and inserting “\$218”.

(f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on December 1, 2005.

(g) SPECIAL RULE.—The Secretary may adjust administratively, consistent with the increases made under subsection (a), the rates of disability compensation payable to persons within the purview of section 10 of Public Law 85-857 (72 Stat. 1263) who are not in receipt of compensation payable pursuant to chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, as ranking member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I am extremely pleased that the Senate will pass legislation that will authorize a cost-of-living adjustment, COLA, for veterans' compensation for next year.

The Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2005 directs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to increase, as of December 1, 2005, the rates of veterans' disability compensation, additional compensation for dependents, the clothing allowance for certain disabled adult children, and dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses and children.

This increase will be the same percentage as the increase provided to So-

cial Security recipients. The increase this year is one of the largest in recent memory—4.1 percent. In my opinion, this increase could not have come at a more crucial time. The COLA is enormously important to veterans and their families. It is critical that veterans' disability compensation rates keep pace with the increasing cost-of-living. Without it, these people would be unable to afford the simple necessities of life. I note, it is well documented that home heating fuel costs will skyrocket this winter. The COLA increase goes a long way to ensuring no veterans are left out in the cold.

Mr. President, in closing, I thank all Senators that voted to support this Nation's veterans.

The bill (S. 1234), as amended, was read the third time and passed.

THE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate en bloc consideration of the following bills reported out of the Energy Committee: Calendar Nos. 236 through 240; 242 through 249; 262 through 273; and H.R. 1972, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendments at the desk be agreed to, the committee-reported amendments, as amended, if amended, be agreed to, the bills, as amended, if amended, be read a third time and passed, and the title amendments be agreed to, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ICE AGE FLOODS NATIONAL GEOLOGIC TRAIL DESIGNATION ACT

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill (S. 206) to designate the Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail, and for other purposes, which had been reported from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, with an amendment, as follows:

[Strike the parts shown in black brackets and insert the parts shown in italic.]

S. 206

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

[This Act may be cited as the “Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail Designation Act of 2005”.]

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

[(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

[(1) at the end of the last Ice Age, some 12,000 to 17,000 years ago, a series of cataclysmic floods occurred in what is now the northwest region of the United States, leaving a lasting mark of dramatic and distinguishing features on the landscape of parts of the States of Montana, Idaho, Washington and Oregon;

[(2) geological features that have exceptional value and quality to illustrate and interpret this extraordinary natural phenomenon are present on Federal, State, tribal, county, municipal, and private land in the region; and

[(3) in 2001, a joint study team headed by the National Park Service that included about 70 members from public and private entities completed a study endorsing the establishment of an Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail—

[(A) to recognize the national significance of this phenomenon; and

[(B) to coordinate public and private sector entities in the presentation of the story of the Ice Age floods.

[(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to designate the Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail in the States of Montana, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon, enabling the public to view, experience, and learn about the features and story of the Ice Age floods through the collaborative efforts of public and private entities.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

[In this Act:

[(1) ICE AGE FLOODS; FLOODS.—The term “Ice Age floods” or “floods” means the cataclysmic floods that occurred in what is now the northwestern United States during the last Ice Age from massive, rapid and recurring drainage of Glacial Lake in Missoula, Montana.

[(2) PLAN.—The term “plan” means the cooperative management and interpretation plan authorized under section 5(f).

[(3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

[(4) TRAIL.—The term “Trail” means the Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail designated by section 4(a).