

equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services.

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Reserving the right to object, Mr. Speaker, this report contains hundreds, if not over a thousand pages. Is that my understanding?

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield under his reservation?

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

Mr. DREIER. Let me just say that this is the conference report that has been out there, has been widely available, and has been written about and addressed by the media and Members.

I know that both the minority and the majority are very enthusiastic about the prospect of moving this extraordinarily important defense authorization conference report as expeditiously as possible, and I thank my friend for yielding.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

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

There was no objection.

VACATING ORDERING OF YEAS AND NAYS ON HOUSE RESOLUTION 632, WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the House vacate the ordering of the yeas and nays on adoption of House Resolution 632 to the end that the Chair may put the question on the resolution de novo.

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

Mr. KUCINICH. I object.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Objection is heard.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I will pound the request again.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the House vacate the ordering of the yeas and nays on adoption of House Resolution 632 to the end that the Chair may put the question on the resolution de novo.

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

There was no objection.

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

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1815, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the order of the House of today, I

call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 1815) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2006 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of today, the conference report is considered read.

(For conference report and statement, see prior proceedings of the House of today.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the conference report now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

To my colleagues who have labored long and hard to get this Defense bill to the floor and to get the conference to the floor, I want to thank everyone. This is a very, very important bill. It does wonderful things for our men and women in uniform.

We have a 3.1 percent pay raise across the board. We have TRICARE expansion. We have an expansion of hazardous duty pay and an expansion of combat pay. We have a very substantial section devoted, some \$76 billion, to modernization and some \$70 billion to research development and testing. We have a very substantial military construction section that will accrue to the benefit of all of our people in uniform who are concerned about having adequate housing and a good place to work. And most important, Mr. Speaker, this bill moves lots of ammunition, lots of armor, lots of equipment to our people in the warfighting theaters in Iraq and Afghanistan, and it provides also for a \$50 billion supplemental authorization to enable us to bridge the time between now and the next supplemental that we can see coming down the pike next year.

□ 0000

This answers our call to duty, Mr. Speaker, which is to provide the tools to our men and women in uniform to win the war against terror. And let me just say at this point, Mr. Speaker, that we could not have done this, especially in such a short period of time, if we did not have such extraordinary members on the House Armed Services Committee, Democrat and Republican,

of whom I am very proud; and a wonderful staff which has worked in some cases 16- and 18-hour days to bring this bill to fruition and to work this conference report with a very, very short time schedule.

I want to point out, first, my friend, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), who is a wonderful friend and partner in this endeavor to serve our people in uniform. He has just done a great job working with me and working with his members. Our ranking members, our chairmen of the subcommittees all have done a wonderful job, as have all of our members right down through the entire ranks of the members of the Armed Services Committee.

So this is a good bill, Mr. Speaker. It provides the tools for our men and women to do the job. I also want to point out the fact that we have increased 10,000 Army and 1,000 Marine active-duty personnel in this bill. That is a very important point, Mr. Speaker, because we have cut the Army over the last 15 years from 18 divisions to only 10.

It is important to move additional personnel. Right now we have more people on the ground under the President's license to call up more people; but we think it is important to move the official end strengths, and we have done that in this bill.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have a great bill, and I want to thank all the Members who have participated.

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

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

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

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I first wanted to ask the chairman a question, because I am not sure I heard him a moment ago. Does the chairman confirm that this conference report is the report of the conferees as signed and intended to come to the floor as it was on 3 p.m. Friday?

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

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

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I want to assure my friend that the report that was just filed is the exact precise same report, without a comma changed, that was in fact signed by all members, Democrat and Republican.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, and I rise in strong support of this conference report. Once again, I am proud to be part of the process that delivers our troops the support they need.

Let me take this moment to commend our chairman, Mr. HUNTER, for his work on this bill. This is important