Americans with an additional level of accountability when it comes to job-killing regulations from government agencies.

Madam Speaker, it’s time we stand up for small business owners, and it’s time we all tell the American people that we can remove the barriers Washington is putting in their way. Let’s come together as a Congress and help get America back to work again.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 2055, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker’s table the bill (H.R. 2055) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes, with a Senate amendment thereto, disagree to the Senate amendment, and agree to the conference requested by the Senate.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The motion to instruct conferees.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Dicks moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 2055, be instructed to recommit to the Senate on the higher level of funding for the “Department of Veterans Affairs—Medical and Prosthetic Research” account.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XXII, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. Dicks) and the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. Rogers) each will control 30 minutes.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on the motion to instruct.

There was no objection.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. The motion instructs conferees to provide the highest level of funding for medical and prosthetic research. This program helps the Department of Veterans Affairs develop cutting-edge treatments for veterans and their families. It is fully integrated throughout the medical community through partnerships with academic affiliates, non-profits, and commercial entities, as well as other Federal agencies. It is unique because both the clinical care and research occur together.

The Medical and Prosthetic Research Program plays a vital role in advancing the health and care of our Nation’s veterans. Some of the areas that the Medical and Prosthetic Research Program focus on include mental health research, prosthetic and traumatic brain injury, and posttraumatic stress disorder, or PTSD. The program has emphasized efforts to improve the understanding and treatment of veterans in need of mental health care.

We hear a lot about the casualties of war and soldiers who have sacrificed their lives in duty. However, over the past few years, the VA has begun to examine the psychological wounds of posttraumatic stress disorder. The program will provide funding for the VA to care for veterans returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan who may suffer from depression, anxiety, and substance abuse.

Funding for medical and prosthetic research in the House-reported bill was inadequate, and during floor consideration the House majority agreed to increase funding by $22 million. While I was pleased to see this increase, I believe we need to do more.

The Senate-passed bill funds this program at the FY2011 enacted level, which is $51 million higher than the House-passed level. I believe the higher funding levels should be maintained because of the impact this research can have on the everyday life of our Nation’s veterans.

This Nation must get its fiscal house in order. However, even in an austere budget, we need to make room to fully fund our priorities. The Medical and Prosthetic Research Program is a high priority for each of us.

I’m sure that all of my colleagues would agree we can never repay America’s veterans for the sacrifice they have made for our country. As a first installment, we should make a substantial investment in health care research for our veterans, and I urge a “yes” vote on the motion to instruct.

I reserve the balance of my time.