

PRINTING OF PROCEEDINGS OF
FORMER MEMBERS PROGRAM

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the proceedings during the former Members program be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and that all Members and former Members who spoke during the proceedings have the privilege of revising and extending their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WESTMORELAND). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Alabama?

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5293, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 783 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 783

Resolved, That at any time after 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 further consideration of the bill (H.R. 5293) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes. No further general debate shall be in order.

SEC. 2. (a) The bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read through page 170, line 7. Points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI are waived.

(b) No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, amendments en bloc described in section 3 of this resolution, and pro forma amendments described in section 4 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, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment except as provided by section 4 of this resolution, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole.

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

SEC. 3. It shall be in order at any time for the chair of the Committee on Appropriations 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 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations or their respective designees, shall not be subject to amendment except as provided by section 4 of this resolution, and

shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole.

SEC. 4. During consideration of the bill for amendment, the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations or their respective designees may offer up to 10 pro forma amendments each at any point for the purpose of debate.

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. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommend with or without instructions.

SEC. 6. It shall be in order at any time on the legislative day of June 16, 2016, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules as though under clause 1 of rule XV. The Speaker or his designee shall consult with the Minority Leader or her designee on the designation of any matter for consideration pursuant to this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Alabama is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), the ranking member, 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. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 783 provides for further consideration of H.R. 5293, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act. The resolution provides for a structured rule and makes in order 75 amendments. The rule also provides suspension authority for Thursday.

I want to kick off today's debate by making one thing very clear: the underlying bill is a very good bill. I know some of my colleagues may have some things to say that they would want to have added or a few things they would want to see changed. But all things considered, this is a very good bill. Let me tell you why.

This bill provides funding for the entire United States military, including critical funding to help fight the Islamic State and others who wish to do us harm. This bill ensures that our military receives the 2.1 percent pay raise they deserve, instead of the 1.6 percent pay raise requested by President Obama.

An important function of our military is research and development of new technologies and weapons systems, so this bill provides funding for those efforts. This bill makes important investments in military readiness by providing for equipment procurement for

each of the service branches. We are sending far too many of our servicemembers into harm's way with outdated or damaged equipment, so this bill also includes much-needed funding for maintenance operations.

This bill also includes vital funding for the Defense Health Program, which provides care for our troops, while also spurring investment in important areas like traumatic brain injuries, cancer research, suicide prevention programs, and sexual assault prevention and response.

Now, I seriously doubt that any of my colleagues disagree with those functions. So this should be a bipartisan bill that passes with overwhelming support, especially considering all that is going on in the world today.

Just look at what happened this past weekend in Orlando. A person influenced by radical Islamic terrorists took the lives of innocent Americans.

Well, this bill includes funding to help fight the groups and organizations like the Islamic State that are spreading this radicalization. This bill is critical if we are to defeat the radical organization that is spreading terror all around the globe.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, I expect that today's debate will focus little on what is actually in this bill. I fear that today's debate will result in conversations about things that have absolutely nothing to do with the United States military. That is a real shame, because this bill is so very important.

I know some of my colleagues are going to express concerns about procedure and the fact that this is a structured rule. So I want to share some quick facts with you. More importantly, this rule makes in order 75 amendments out of 105 submitted to the Rules Committee. Forty-three of these amendments—over half—are Democrat and bipartisan amendments.

Mr. Speaker, we hear a lot of talk here about regular order. Well, regular order means that the House works. Regular order doesn't mean chaos. Regular order doesn't mean that Members get to offer poison pill amendments just to kill a bill. Regular order is about ensuring we can do the business that the American people elected us to do and that they expect us to do.

Let's be real for a second. Only in Washington are people debating or worried about whether a bill to fund our troops comes to the floor under a structured rule or an open rule.

You know what people are worried about in homes from Maine to Hawaii? They are worried about the safety and security of their families.

So let's not get caught up, especially on this bill, in political games. The men and women who put their lives on the line each and every day to keep us safe deserve better than that. And the American people deserve better than that.

I urge my colleagues to support this rule and this bill.