

□ 1400

## AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. Emerson) at 2 p.m.

## PRAYER

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

Teach us, O gracious God, to translate our ideas and feelings and attitudes into actions that promote justice and mercy, and help us express the unity of ideas and feelings and attitudes in the lives we live every day. May good words become good deeds, may good thoughts become acts of kindness and generosity, and may good plans become the bedrock on which we build the qualities of righteousness and hope. Bless us, O God, this day and every day, we pray. Amen.

## THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Nevada [Mr. GIBBONS] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GIBBONS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

## CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2158, DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1998

Mr. LIVINGSTON submitted the following conference report and statement on the bill (H.R. 2158) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes:

## CONFERENCE REPORT (H. REPT. 105-297)

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2158) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes, having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate, and agree to the same with an amendment, as follows:

In lieu of the matter stricken and inserted by said amendment, insert:

*That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes, namely:*

## TITLE I—DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

## VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION

## COMPENSATION AND PENSIONS

## (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

*For the payment of compensation benefits to or on behalf of veterans and a pilot program for disability examinations as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. 107, chapters 11, 13, 18, 51, 53, 55, and 61); pension benefits to or on behalf of veterans as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. chapters 15, 51, 53, 55, and 61; 92 Stat. 2508); and burial benefits, emergency and other officers' retirement pay, adjusted-service credits and certificates, payment of premiums due on commercial life insurance policies guaranteed under the provisions of Article IV of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1940, as amended, and for other benefits as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. 107, 1312, 1977, and 2106, chapters 23, 51, 53, 55, and 61; 50 U.S.C. App. 540-548; 43 Stat. 122, 123; 45 Stat. 735; 76 Stat. 1198); \$19,932,997,000, to remain available until expended: Provided, That not to exceed \$26,380,000 of the amount appropriated shall be reimbursed to "General operating expenses" and "Medical care" for necessary expenses in implementing those provisions authorized in the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990, and in the Veterans' Benefits Act of 1992 (38 U.S.C. chapters 51, 53, and 55), the funding source for which is specifically provided as the "Compensation and pensions" appropriation: Provided further, That such sums as may be earned on an actual qualifying patient basis, shall be reimbursed to "Medical facilities revolving fund" to augment the funding of individual medical facilities for nursing home care provided to pensioners as authorized by the Veterans' Benefits Act of 1992 (38 U.S.C. chapter 55).*

## READJUSTMENT BENEFITS

*For the payment of readjustment and rehabilitation benefits to or on behalf of veterans as authorized by 38 U.S.C. chapters 21, 30, 31, 34, 35, 36, 39, 51, 53, 55, and 61, \$1,366,000,000, to remain available until expended: Provided, That funds shall be available to pay any court order, court award or any compromise settlement arising from litigation involving the vocational training program authorized by section 18 of Public Law 98-77, as amended.*

## VETERANS INSURANCE AND INDEMNITIES

*For military and naval insurance, national service life insurance, servicemen's indemnities, service-disabled veterans insurance, and veterans mortgage life insurance as authorized by 38 U.S.C. chapter 19; 70 Stat. 887; 72 Stat. 487, \$51,360,000, to remain available until expended.*

## VETERANS HOUSING BENEFIT PROGRAM FUND PROGRAM ACCOUNT

## (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

*For the cost of direct and guaranteed loans, such sums as may be necessary to carry out the program, as authorized by 38 U.S.C. chapter 37, as amended: Provided, That such costs, including the cost of modifying such loans, shall be as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as amended: Provided further, That during fiscal year 1998, within the resources available, not to exceed \$300,000 in gross obligations for direct loans are authorized for specially adapted housing loans: Provided fur-*

*ther, That during 1998 any moneys that would be otherwise deposited into or paid from the Loan Guaranty Revolving Fund, the Guaranty and Indemnity Fund, or the Direct Loan Revolving Fund shall be deposited into or paid from the Veterans Housing Benefit Program Fund: Provided further, That any balances in the Loan Guaranty Revolving Fund, the Guaranty and Indemnity Fund, or the Direct Loan Revolving Fund on the effective date of this Act may be transferred to and merged with the Veterans Housing Benefit Program Fund.*

*In addition, for administrative expenses to carry out the direct and guaranteed loan programs, \$160,437,000, which may be transferred to and merged with the appropriation for "General operating expenses".*

## EDUCATION LOAN FUND PROGRAM ACCOUNT

## (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

*For the cost of direct loans, \$1,000, as authorized by 38 U.S.C. 3698, as amended: Provided, That such costs, including the cost of modifying such loans, shall be as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as amended: Provided further, That these funds are available to subsidize gross obligations for the principal amount of direct loans not to exceed \$3,000.*

*In addition, for administrative expenses necessary to carry out the direct loan program, \$200,000, which may be transferred to and merged with the appropriation for "General operating expenses".*

## VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION LOANS PROGRAM ACCOUNT

## (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

*For the cost of direct loans, \$44,000, as authorized by 38 U.S.C. chapter 31, as amended: Provided, That such costs, including the cost of modifying such loans, shall be as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as amended: Provided further, That these funds are available to subsidize gross obligations for the principal amount of direct loans not to exceed \$2,278,000.*

*In addition, for administrative expenses necessary to carry out the direct loan program, \$388,000, which may be transferred to and merged with the appropriation for "General operating expenses".*

## NATIVE AMERICAN VETERAN HOUSING LOAN PROGRAM ACCOUNT

## (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

*For administrative expenses to carry out the direct loan program authorized by 38 U.S.C. chapter 37, subchapter V, as amended, \$515,000, which may be transferred to and merged with the appropriation for "General operating expenses".*

## VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION MEDICAL CARE

## (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

*For necessary expenses for the maintenance and operation of hospitals, nursing homes, and domiciliary facilities; for furnishing, as authorized by law, inpatient and outpatient care and treatment to beneficiaries of the Department of Veterans Affairs, including care and treatment in facilities not under the jurisdiction of the Department; and furnishing recreational facilities, supplies, and equipment; funeral, burial, and other expenses incidental thereto for beneficiaries receiving care in the Department; administrative expenses in support of planning, design, project management, real property acquisition and disposition, construction and renovation of any facility under the jurisdiction or for the use of the Department; oversight, engineering and architectural activities not charged to project cost; repairing, altering, improving or providing facilities in the several hospitals and homes under the jurisdiction of the Department, not otherwise provided for, either by contract or by the hire of temporary employees and purchase of materials; uniforms or allowances*