

been spending quite a bit of energy trying to encourage Americans to save more money. As a New Englander, I speak for my constituents when I say that we know a lot about THRIFT. This is a good amendment that will encourage thrift and I hope my colleagues will support it.

Given that our Guard and Reserve are shouldering an increasing share of our world-wide missions, they should have the same savings opportunity that S. 4 gives to the active duty. Now is the time to ensure that our reserve component personnel are not overlooked.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I am pleased to rise to join my Senate colleagues in supporting the Soldiers', Sailors', Airmen's, and Marines' Bill of Rights as it comes to the floor for debate. As a former Marine, I am especially proud that the Senate Armed Services Committee has recognized the important contribution of my branch of service by including Marines in the title of this bill.

This bipartisan legislation addresses the critical need of improving retention in our military services. We've heard much over the past months about the impending crisis in maintaining the force strength of our military. For example, the Air Force has missed its recruitment targets for the past three months, in all three of its recruitment categories. This is the first time that the Air Force has ever faced this problem. It is critical that we intervene now while the problem is still manageable. This bill concentrates on improving the attractiveness of a career in the military, not only for new recruits, but also for second and third term reenlistments.

First, this bill raises the pay of service personnel to keep salaries competitive with civilian equivalents. Second, it provides incentives for active duty personnel to keep longer service commitments by repairing the damage done in 1986 to the military retirement system. Third, this bill provides service members with the opportunity to save for their own retirement by allowing military personnel to contribute up to 5% of their base pay, before taxes, into the Thrift Savings Plan. Finally, this bill enhances the Montgomery GI Bill educational benefits. I'm also aware that some of my colleagues will be offering other amendments that will further enhance the incentives for long term service. These collective changes encourage both current and prospective service members to make the military an attractive alternative for an extended career.

One of the first commitments in the Constitution is to provide for the common defense. We're demonstrating our commitment to the Constitution and our nation's defense today by taking this first step in improving the long-neglected quality of life for our service members. As we have already seen, when we don't take care of the people

who are out in harm's way, they end up leaving the service. We have almost reached the point of needlessly risking the lives of those members choosing service careers due to the increased commitments required of them.

So, we shouldn't just stop with this bill and call our work complete. Pay and Retirement incentives are not the only concerns voiced by military personnel when they discuss quality of life. They care about being able to participate in their family's activities. They want to be able to help raise their children. They want to provide a home for their families where the roofs don't leak and the water and sewer systems work. They want to be trained to handle the weapons they must use to maximize their ability to survive in a fire-fight. In our push to pass this piece of legislation, let's not forget that these other quality of life issues that service men and women weigh when they consider the military as a life-long career. As a next step, we should commit to eliminating the military construction backlog that has grown to a 100-plus-year maintenance cycle at its current funding level. Those who have seen military action in the Gulf or Panama or other regions will ask how Veterans are treated. We should commit to improving veterans' health care and access to the VA system. No service member is naive enough to believe that military life will be easy or without sacrifice. However, we shouldn't intentionally be making the sacrifice for duty greater than it needs to be. Nor should we let the administration's promise of improving true quality of life stop at pay and retirement benefits. We owe it to our service members to continue addressing all areas of quality of life to make sure that our commitment of defense for the citizens of the United States is both real and effective. I'll be using my position on the Appropriations Committee as well as chairing the Military Construction Subcommittee to push for additional improvements in these other important quality of life issues.

But let's not forget why we are here today. As demonstrated globally, the quality of our uniformed service personnel is second to none. By providing focused incentives for increasing the attractiveness of a military career, we ensure that our services will sustain its worldwide competitive edge. We owe it to the parents, spouses, and children of our service members to make sure that their physical devotion to patriotism doesn't come at fiscal expense. This bill is a critical first step in meeting our commitments to both family and country. I strongly encourage my colleagues to vote for its passage.

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of my time, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BUNNING). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL CHASE MOSELEY, U.S. MARINE CORPS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I wish to take this opportunity to recognize and say farewell to an outstanding Marine Corps officer, Lieutenant Colonel Chase Moseley, upon his retirement from the Marine Corps after more than twenty-one years of commissioned service. Throughout his career, Lieutenant Colonel Moseley has served with distinction, and it is my privilege to recognize his many accomplishments and to commend him for the superb service he has provided the Marine Corps and the Nation.

Lieutenant Colonel Moseley, a native of the State of Mississippi, graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant through the Platoon Leaders Class Program in 1978. Since then, Lieutenant Colonel Moseley has spent his career patrolling the world's skies as a Naval Aviator. Following flight training, he began his service flying the F-4 Phantom in Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 531 in El Toro, California. After his tour in California, he reported to Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 232 in Kaneohe, Hawaii, making two deployments to the Western Pacific and Far East. In 1985, he reported to Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 101 in Yuma, Arizona for instructor duty. Completing F/A-18 training in 1987, Lieutenant Colonel Moseley was again assigned instructor duty, now flying the F/A-18 Hornet. During this tour, Lieutenant Colonel Moseley was selected to attend the Naval Fighter Weapons School (TOPGUN) and in July 1989 was selected to join the Naval Flight Demonstration Squadron "Blue Angels" in Pensacola, Florida. In 1991, Lieutenant Colonel Moseley reported to Marine All Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 242 in El Toro, California to assist in the squadron's transition to the new F/A-18 "Delta" (All Weather Night Attack) aircraft. During this tour, he completed two Western Pacific deployments serving as the Squadron Operations Officer and Executive Officer.

When not in the air, Lieutenant Colonel Moseley has like-wise served with distinction. In 1994, he served on the staff of the 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, Camp Pendleton,