Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cantor
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Coble
Conaway
Crenshaw
Cubin
Culberson
Davis, David
Deal (GA)
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Drake
Duncan
Ehlers
English (PA)
Everett
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Forbes
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Jindal
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
Kirk
Kline (MN)
Kuhl (NY)
Lamborn
Latham
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McMorris Rodgers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Paul
Pence
Petri
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Price (GA)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shuster
Smith (NE)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Terry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (SC)
Wolf

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—1

Bachus

NOT VOTING—10

Bonner
Davis, Jo Ann
Emanuel
Fallin
Kanjorski
Klein (FL)
Lampson
McKeon
Millender-McDonald
Thornberry

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The Speaker pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised 2 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 1328

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 1538.

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

There was no objection.

WOUNDED WARRIOR ASSISTANCE ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 274 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 1538.

□ 1329

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 1538) to amend title 10, United States Code, to improve the management of medical care, personnel actions, and quality of life issues for members of the Armed Forces who are receiving medical care in an outpatient status, and for other purposes, with Mr. BECERRA in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

General debate shall not exceed 1 hour and 20 minutes, with 60 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services, and 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) each will control 30 minutes, and the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER) each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

□ 1330

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to bring forward for consideration this bill, H.R. 1538, the Wounded Warrior Assistance Act of 2007. This bill is the House Armed Services Committee's first step to address the challenges and the obstacles that wounded and injured servicemembers face during their recovery at Walter Reed Medical Center, and at all military medical facilities around the world.

Mr. Chairman, I am glad this bill is a product of a strong bipartisan effort to support our troops. While recognizing the ranking member of the committee, DUNCAN HUNTER, and the House Veterans Affairs Chairman, BOB FILNER, and STEVE BUYER, the ranking member, for their support and contributions to this bill, I would be remiss if I did not also acknowledge the substantial contributions of the Military Personnel Subcommittee chairman, VIC SNYDER, and JOHN MCHUGH, the ranking member, for their considerable help during the development of this bill in committee.

Their knowledge and insights and understanding of the complex medical and disability systems that our servicemembers and their families are undergoing help to ensure that the bill before us today will have an immediate and positive impact on the lives of the wounded servicemembers as well as their families.

Mr. Chairman, the committee moved expeditiously to make changes that can be adopted fairly quickly after hearing what our wounded soldiers and their families are continuing to face at Walter Reed Hospital. However, these soldiers were not alone. The committee has heard of similar challenges that other soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines that are experiencing the same type of treatment across the country.

Sadly, what happened at Walter Reed was more than just a leadership failure in the Army. It is symptomatic of the enormous and complex factors that affect military medicine.

Yet while those in military medicine provide outstanding quality health care to wounded and injured soldiers, other factors brought to bear on this system also contribute to the state of affairs at Walter Reed Hospital as well as other medical facilities throughout our Nation.

Over the past several years, military medicine has been forced to convert thousands of military medical positions to civilian positions. One could ask how this could have an impact on our wounded forces, and the answer is clear and simple; fewer uniformed medical providers means fewer providers left at military hospitals back home treating injured and treating the wounded servicemembers. It also means that those in uniform who do remain will continue to face a high and sustained operational tempo, greater deployments and more time away from home. And yet the Navy, for example, has proposed for fiscal year 2008 to cut an additional 900 medical providers, including, Mr. Chairman, 100 doctors that provide needed health care to servicemembers as well as their families. That is why the committee chose to move quickly on this bill that will provide quick and immediate help to our troops.

It is clear that continued and persistent problems that were highlighted at Walter Reed Hospital require closer inspection and may demand a significant and comprehensive overhaul of the entire process.

As the Armed Services Committee continues to work on the fiscal year 2008 Defense Authorization bill, we will continue our efforts to examine greater comprehensive reforms to ensure that our forces receive the high quality care that our Nation has an obligation to provide for those wonderful young people in uniform.

However, H.R. 1538 is vitally needed now to provide immediate support for our wounded warriors.

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

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Chairman, I want to add my voice to the eloquent voice of the chairman, Mr. SKELTON. I want to thank him, and thank also Dr. SNYDER and JOHN MCHUGH, the chairman and ranking member of Personnel, for their hard work on this bill. And for all the other Members who worked on this, I know Mr. FILNER and Mr. BUYER were also architects of this bill. But especially our chairman, who has a heart