

the conference report includes \$20 million for Parkinson's research in the Army's Neurotoxin Exposure Treatment Research Program, NETRP. This critical program was established over 10 years ago to investigate the causes, diagnosis, and treatments of Parkinson's disease to improve military readiness. American troops are routinely exposed to external stressors and toxins such as head injury, pesticides and herbicides, and scientists believe these exposures increase the risk of developing neurodegenerative conditions, particularly Parkinson's disease, that negatively impact the readiness of American military forces. Understanding how exposures occur and the incidence of disease afterwards will allow the Department of Defense to minimize the risk of future exposures, better protect military personnel, and improve military readiness.

The military is not the only recipient of NETRP's benefits. Any research breakthroughs in prevention, detection, and treatment of neurodegenerative conditions are immediately applicable to civilians—particularly the more than 1 million Americans with Parkinson's disease, including nearly 79,000 veterans and 60,000 newly diagnosed Americans each year.

The Defense Appropriations conference report also includes a continuing resolution to fund the Federal Government for another month at fiscal year 2007 spending levels, and adds additional funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs, grants a temporary extension of the children's health, S—CHIP, program, and provides \$500 million to bolster funding for federal firefighting programs following the California wildfires.

I remain concerned about rising costs of weapons systems that have yet to be fully funded, and by budget projections that tell us that we'll need to increase defense budgets annually simply to sustain the current force structure and weapons programs. Because operations and maintenance and personnel costs—as well as training and recruiting costs—are also rising, we will need to do a better job balancing spending on current and future military priorities, and consider whether to fully fund all these weapons systems.

Mr. Chairman, this is not a perfect bill. It does not solve or attempt to solve some of these looming budget problems. But overall, the bill deserves to pass and I urge its approval.

THE WHITE RIBBON CAMPAIGN

HON. ADRIAN SMITH

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 9, 2007

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the White Ribbon Campaign and call on men everywhere to help stop violence against women.

The White Ribbon Campaign is the largest effort in the world organized by men and aimed at men to say that all forms of violence against women must stop now.

I applaud this grassroots effort of men from all walks of life working together to contribute to this important goal.

One in every four women will experience domestic violence in her life, and an estimated 1.3 million women are victims of physical assault by a partner each year.

I am proud that my home State of Nebraska has long been concerned for women living in fear of violence, and in 1976 was the first State to abolish the marital rape exemption.

We owe our thanks for the important work the men of the White Ribbon Campaign are doing as they work toward the goal of stopping violence against women.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008—CONFERENCE REPORT

SPEECH OF

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 8, 2007

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3222) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes:

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this measure, which will give our men and women in uniform the resources they need to help protect our Nation and its people.

Taking care of our military families is a vital responsibility, and this bill meets that obligation. It provides a 3.5 percent pay raise for all military personnel, rejects the President's proposed increases in TRICARE co-pays by fully funding the \$1.9 billion TRICARE shortfall without cost to our troops, and allocates \$2.6 billion to provide more counselors, teachers, and child care providers to reinforce the support network serving military families. The bill also provides \$615.7 million for Army facilities to upgrade barracks, improve child care facilities and enhance community services at bases throughout the U.S., Europe and Korea. All of these things will improve the quality of life of our military families, and I appreciate what Chairman MURTHA has done on their behalf.

Providing our deployed troops with the equipment they need is our other vital responsibility. This bill provides \$11.6 billion for Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles and for body armor and other protective equipment. Earlier this year, I joined a number of my colleagues in a letter to Defense Secretary Gates urging him to make the acquisition of MRAP vehicles a priority, and I'm pleased he has worked with the Congress to expedite the acquisition of these life-saving vehicles.

Our Guard and Reserve units will also benefit from a \$980 million appropriation in this bill for new equipment. I think just about all of us in this House have Guard and Reserve units in our districts that have been short of key equipment, a situation that not only has compromised the deployability of those units overseas but has also made it harder for Guard units to provide disaster support to communities in the wake of floods, hurricanes, and other natural disasters. I'm glad these equipment shortages are being addressed in this bill, and I hope we'll continue working this problem until all Guard and Reserve units have their full allocation of needed equipment.

Finally, to help those who return from war wounded, this bill provides \$70 million for the Dignified Treatment of Wounded Warriors Act (H.R. 1538), which passed the Congress in

July 2007. That legislation mandated improvements in the care of wounded service members and in the services provided to them, including improving the system of case managers for wounded service members, creating a system of patient advocates, and the creation of a formal transition process from the Armed Forces to the VA for service members who are being retired or separated for health reasons. I'm pleased we're finally funding this important bill, which was passed in the wake of the Walter Reed Medical Center scandal in January. However, I view this as just the first step in properly funding these programs, and I hope we can do even more in next year's budget.

Mr. Chairman, this bill will help us give our men and women in uniform and their families the support and resources they need, and I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for it.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3043, DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 6, 2007

Mrs. MALONEY. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this conference report, which keeps our commitments to our veterans and invests in critical domestic priorities to strengthen our Nation. By putting the needs of the American people first, we are moving in a new direction to make overdue investments in education, health care, and jobs. We're doing this in a bipartisan way: both pieces of the bill originally passed the House with strong bipartisan support.

I would like to thank Chairman OBEY again for working with Representative WELDON to secure an important provision that Representative WELDON put forward in today's LHHS conference report that will ban the use of funds from being used to administer a mercury-containing flu vaccine to children under the age of three. This provision implements the policy advocated by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the U.S. Public Health Service, and vaccine manufacturers. Providing our children with safe vaccines is long overdue.

In addition to making vaccines safer, helping families pay for college, funding job training and providing for groundbreaking medical research, this bill helps the heroes of 9/11 who have become sick because of their work at Ground Zero. These are police officers, fire fighters, cleanup workers and others who risked their lives in the hours after the planes hit and risked their health in the weeks and months that followed, laboring in the toxic dust and fumes. For the first time, funding for 9/11 health needs is being included in regular spending. The \$52.5 million included in the conference report will go a long way in providing medical monitoring and treatment for everyone exposed to the toxins of Ground Zero.

I have to emphasize again the "everyone." I have always said that it shouldn't matter