

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 9

To express the sense of Congress that a comprehensive effort is required to revitalize and sustain the all-volunteer force and address the decline in the quality of life for members of Armed Forces and their families and to provide a 4.8-percent increase in the rates of monthly basic pay for members of the uniformed services.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 1, 1999

Mr. BUYER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To express the sense of Congress that a comprehensive effort is required to revitalize and sustain the all-volunteer force and address the decline in the quality of life for members of Armed Forces and their families and to provide a 4.8-percent increase in the rates of monthly basic pay for members of the uniformed services.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Securing America’s
5 Future Uniformed Services Act (SAFE–USA) of 1999”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 The Congress finds the following:

3 (1) The steady decline in the defense budget
4 during the past 15 years has eroded the readiness
5 of the Armed Forces to execute those missions called
6 for under the National Military Strategy to the point
7 where the Joint Chiefs of Staff have repeatedly
8 characterized the ability of the Armed Forces to exe-
9 cute the National Military Strategy as representing
10 “moderate to high risk”.

11 (2) This erosion in readiness of the Armed
12 Forces, particularly in recent years, has resulted
13 from inadequate rates of equipment modernization,
14 delayed equipment maintenance, degraded quality
15 and quantity of combat training, and a declining
16 quality of life for members of the Armed Forces and
17 their families.

18 (3) The declining quality of life for members of
19 the Armed Forces and their families has resulted
20 from a range of factors, including inadequacies in
21 pay and benefits, military retirement, health care,
22 military housing, and family support programs, as
23 shown by the following:

24 (A) Low military pay, estimated on aver-
25 age to be 13.5 percent behind civilian levels, is

1 forcing servicemembers and their families to
2 struggle to make ends meet.

3 (B) Inequities in the current military re-
4 tirement system are a contributing factor to the
5 current military personnel retention problem.

6 (C) Growing dissatisfaction with military
7 health care is another important factor contrib-
8 uting to military retention problems.

9 (D) Military families and unaccompanied
10 military personnel continue to live in inadequate
11 facilities, as indicated by the fact that military
12 barracks and dormitories are on average over
13 45 years old and almost two-thirds of military
14 family housing has been deemed by the Depart-
15 ment of Defense as unsuitable.

16 (E) With a current force in which 65 per-
17 cent of military personnel are married, family
18 support programs are increasingly inadequate
19 to meet their needs in the face of historically
20 high rates of peacetime operations and the re-
21 sulting increase in family separations.

22 (4) The drawdown of the Armed Forces during
23 the post-Cold War period, combined with the dra-
24 matic increase in the pace of military operations

1 during the same period, has resulted in significant
2 strains on military personnel and their families.

3 (5) The Armed Forces face severe recruiting
4 and retention difficulties and shortages of personnel
5 with high-demand skills.

6 (6) Surveys conducted by the Armed Forces
7 and testimony before Congress indicate that the
8 leading factors in declining retention rates are inad-
9 equate pay, family separations resulting from in-
10 creased contingency operations, and the lack of ade-
11 quate resources to carry out assigned missions.

12 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

13 It is the sense of Congress that—

14 (1) the United States must provide the Armed
15 Forces with sufficient resources to maintain the nec-
16 essary capability to execute the National Military
17 Strategy with minimal risk; and

18 (2) despite past congressional efforts to improve
19 military pay and benefits and housing, health care,
20 and family support programs, a comprehensive effort
21 is required to revitalize and sustain the all-volunteer
22 force and address the decline in the quality of life
23 for members of Armed Forces and their families
24 by—

1 (A) significantly improving the quality and
 2 availability of affordable housing for military
 3 families and enhancing the condition of housing
 4 for unaccompanied military personnel;

5 (B) reforming the military retirement sys-
 6 tem to permit the Armed Forces to retain suffi-
 7 cient high-quality personnel to meet require-
 8 ments; and

9 (C) enhancing pay and benefits to permit
 10 the Armed Forces to recruit and retain high-
 11 quality personnel.

12 **SEC. 4. FISCAL YEAR 2000 INCREASE IN MILITARY BASIC**
 13 **PAY.**

14 (a) INCREASE IN BASIC PAY.—Effective on January
 15 1, 2000, the rates of monthly basic pay for members of
 16 the uniformed services shall be increased by 4.8 percent.

17 (b) WAIVER OF SECTION 1009 ADJUSTMENT.—The
 18 adjustment to become effective during fiscal year 2000 re-
 19 quired by section 1009 of title 37, United States Code,
 20 in the rates of monthly basic pay authorized members of
 21 the uniformed services shall not be made.

○