

I commend the Congress for developing a bill that includes requested funding for the District of Columbia. The bill includes essential funding for District Courts and Corrections and the D.C. Offender Supervision Agency and goes a long way toward providing requested funds for a new tuition assistance program for District of Columbia residents. I appreciate the additional funding included in the bill to promote the adoption of children in the District's foster care system, to support the Children's National Medical Center, to assist the Metropolitan Police Department in eliminating open-air drug trafficking in the District, and for drug testing and treatment, among other programs.

However, I am disappointed that the Congress has added to the bill a number of highly objectionable provisions that would interfere with local decisions about local matters. Were it not for these provisions, I would sign the bill into law. Many of the Members who voted for this legislation represent States and localities that do not impose similar restrictions on their own citizens. I urge the Congress to remove the following provisions expeditiously to prevent the interruption of important funding for the District of Columbia:

—*Voting Representation.* H.R. 2587 would prohibit not only the use of Federal, but also District funds to provide assistance for petition drives or civil actions that seek to obtain voting representation in the Congress for residents of the District of Columbia.

—*Limit on Access to Representation in Special Education Cases.* The bill would cap the award of plaintiffs' attorneys' fees in cases brought by parents of District schoolchildren against the District of Columbia Public Schools under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In the long run, this provision would likely limit the access of the District's poor families to quality legal representation, thus impairing their due process protections provided by the IDEA.

—*Abortion.* The bill would prohibit the use of not only Federal, but also District funds to pay for abortions except in those cases where the life of the mother is endangered or in situations involving rape or incest.

—*Domestic Partners Act.* The bill would prohibit the use of not only Federal, but also District funds to implement or enforce the Health Care Benefits Expansion Act of 1992.

—*Needle Exchange Programs.* The bill contains a ban that would seriously disrupt current AIDS/HIV prevention efforts by prohibiting the use of Federal and local funds for needle exchange programs. H.R. 2587 denies not only Federal, but also District funding to any public or private agency, including providers

of HIV/AIDS-related services, in the District of Columbia that uses the public or private agency's own funds for needle exchange programs, undermining the principle of home rule in the District.

—*Controlled Substances.* The bill would prohibit the District from legislating with respect to certain controlled substances, in a manner that all States are free to do.

—*Restriction on City Council Salaries.* The bill would limit the amount of salary that can be paid to members of the District of Columbia Council.

I urge the Congress to send me a bill that maintains the important funding for the District provided in this bill and that eliminates these highly objectionable provisions as well as other provisions that undermine the ability of residents of the District of Columbia to make decisions about local matters.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, September 28, 1999.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The objections of the President will be spread at large upon the Journal, and the message and bill will be printed as a House document.

(Mr. ISTOOK asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ISTOOK. Madam Speaker, President Clinton has just surrendered in America's war against drugs. I'm deeply disturbed by this veto, and every parent, teacher and police officer should be, too.

His veto throws away all the good things this bill does: help D.C. kids go to college, get foster kids into permanent homes, clean up the foul Anacostia River, crack down on drug offenders, and reduce the size of D.C.'s bloated government.

And for what?

I'm appalled that the President of the United States would throw away all these good things just to support legalizing marijuana.

This is about legalizing drugs in the nation's capital, and using that as a stepping-stone for the rest of the country. Nobody should be fooled by the pretense that this is a medical issue. That's a smoke screen. Anyone who reads D.C.'s proposed new law knows:

It wouldn't even require an actual doctor's prescription.

People who claim they have approval to use marijuana are allowed to authorize their friends to grow and keep it for them.

It even requires government to provide the marijuana in some cases, at taxpayers' expense.

It's wide-open for abuse. It conflicts with our national law making marijuana illegal.

It's also a smokescreen for the President to pretend this is about local control. The Constitution (Article I, Section 8) puts Congress in charge of the laws in D.C. Furthermore, the items of which the President complains were all approved by him in last year's bill. They are not new. The only new thing

is that now D.C. wants to legalize marijuana, and President Clinton wants to help them.

Everyone who cares about combating drugs should be sickened by the Clinton veto. You can't have a war on drugs if the President turns the nation's capital into a sanctuary. This ends any hope of drug-free zones around D.C.'s schools.

Every police officer, every teacher, and every parent who has ever fought against drugs should be crying today. The President is sending the worst possible message to our children.

Not only that, he's exposing our nation's capitol to renewed ridicule over drug abuse and hijacking D.C.'s progress on the road to recovery from the Marion Barry days. I'm shocked that he would sacrifice everything just to promote a pro-drug agenda. Neither the Congress nor the country will accept what the President has done."

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the veto message of the President, together with the accompanying bill, H.R. 2587, be referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The veto message and the bill will be referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed without amendment a joint resolution of the House of the following title:

H.J. Res. 68. Joint Resolution making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2000, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate agrees to the report of the Committee of Conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2605) "An Act making appropriations for energy and water development for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes."

#### NAVY ENSIGN DAN JOHNSON, A TRUE HERO

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks and include therein extraneous material.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Madam Speaker, some say that America lacks true heroes, and I disagree. Last Friday, I had the privilege to see a young man, a constituent of mine, Navy Ensign Dan Johnson receive the Navy/Marine Corps medal for heroism.

On August 23, Ensign Johnson, a safety officer aboard the USS Blue Ridge, was working on a deck as the ship prepared to leave Pusan Harbor. During

the course of that operation, a young sailor who was handling a towline attached to a Korean tug became entangled and was being dragged to what would have been certain death.

Thinking quickly, Ensign Johnson jumped on the sailor and tried to free him, but he too became entangled in the line as it became tighter. In a final desperate attempt, Ensign Johnson was able to free himself and the sailor in the nick of time, but, in the course of doing so, lost both legs at mid-calf. The sailor lost a foot.

In a time when there are too few heroes, Dan has proved that true heroes still do exist. His selfless acts will leave no doubt about his love and dedication to his service, his shipmates and his country. Dan embodies the highest standards of professionalism, courage and self-giving. The Navy should be very proud of this young man, as I and his family are. It is my hope that his actions will serve as a reminder of the sacrifices we call upon our young people to make while protecting our freedom and as an inspiration to everyone who now serves.

Madam Speaker, I include Dan's citation for the RECORD.

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY  
WASHINGTON

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the Navy and Marine Corps Medal to Ensign Daniel H. Johnson, United States Naval Reserve for service as set forth in the following Citation:

For heroism while serving as Safety Officer on board USS BLUE RIDGE (LCC 19) at Pusan, Korea on 23 August 1999.

While serving as the Station Safety Officer during a mooring evolution, Ensign Johnson took immediate action to save the life of and minimize injuries to a line handler whose leg was entangled in a tugboat's messenger line. Recognizing the imminent danger to the service member, Ensign Johnson ran to the member and attempted to control the line. The violent, jerking motion of the line entrapped both members and ultimately severed the lower limbs of Ensign Johnson.

By his courageous and prompt actions in the face of great personal risk, Ensign Johnson reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

For the President,

RICHARD DANZIG,  
*Secretary of the Navy.*

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. LIPINSKI addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

□ 1815

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE KEEP OUR PROMISE TO AMERICA'S MILITARY RETIREES ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. SHOWS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHOWS. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing the Keep Our Promise to America's Military Retirees Act, a bill which will correct an injustice against millions of Americans who have made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of their country and our country.

Madam Speaker, the United States is the greatest power in the world. American forces have fought bloody battles on land, sea and in the air to preserve democracy. We could never have achieved such military superiority without the millions of Americans who risked all to serve in this great country. These patriots put the security of home and family on the line to defend the right of all Americans.

Career servicemen and women are willing to sacrifice their own lives so that all Americans can live freely. We do not hesitate to ask American men and women to make military service a career. And what do they ask for in return? All they ask is that the promises made when they entered the service are fulfilled when they retire. That is the injustice I rise to address today.

Madam Speaker, millions of Americans joined the service with the understanding that health care would be available to them when they retired. But for too many military retirees, there is no health care, or the health care that is available is doled out like table scraps for the family dog. The United States should never break a promise to the American people. But it is wrong to be this callous to the very people who keep America safe and strong. It is wrong. It is very wrong.

Madam Speaker, prior to June 7, 1956, health care provided for retirees varied from service to service but Congress had never authorized any of those systems. This changed when CHAMPUS, the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services, was enacted into law in 1956. So people who entered the service after CHAMPUS was enacted were sure they could look forward to health care upon retirement, or so they thought. I am going to address that issue later in my remarks.

But what about the people who entered the service before CHAMPUS was enacted? The sad fact is that many Americans who joined the service prior to CHAMPUS were promised free health care by recruiters who had no right to make such a promise. Because there was no statutory health care,

those empty promises simply could not be fulfilled.

Now, Madam Speaker, when you or I or anyone else buys something on the open market, we are always warned to let the buyer beware. But, Madam Speaker, should Americans be in doubt when their own government makes similar claims? Military recruiters are not salesmen. Recruiters are agents of the United States Government, the American people. We owe it to our military retirees who were led to believe they would receive free health care upon retirement that their government will be there for them.

Now, Madam Speaker, what do we do about the military retirees who entered the service after CHAMPUS? Madam Speaker, military retirees are eligible to participate in CHAMPUS or Tricare programs that have evolved from CHAMPUS. Essentially they can get treatment at military treatment facilities on a space available basis. That is, they can pay for treatment if, and that is a very big "if," if space is available, or if civilian doctors choose to participate.

At a time when we are downsizing the military and closing bases, space availability and access to military treatment facilities are very difficult. And treatment is impossible for retirees who are unable to travel even short distances. And then guess what? At 65, retirees lose coverage and become eligible for Medicare benefits which we all know are shrinking every day. So these post-CHAMPUS retirees are left with fewer and fewer health care options.

Today, Madam Speaker, I am introducing the Keep Our Promise to America's Military Retirees Act. This landmark legislation will restore adequate health care that was promised to all our military retirees. It will make military retirees who entered the service prior to CHAMPUS eligible for health care under the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program, with the United States paying the full cost of the enrollment. This bill also extends to all our military retirees expanded options for health care. They can enroll in the Federal employees health care program, or they can participate in the CHAMPUS program after they reach age 65, or they can remain in the Tricare program. This is the "broken promise" bill that America's military retirees have been waiting for years to come.

Many of these heroic Americans risked all in World War II, Korea, Vietnam and the Persian Gulf. The least we can do for these American heroes is keep our word. We should move these bills through the legislative process so they do become law. We should restore health care that was promised to our military retirees and to which they are entitled after devoting their lives to defend this country. We should keep our promise to America's military retirees.