

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.

I do ask that you help me support this bill. It is a great bill. It is a broken promise that we have not kept to our military retirees.

I want to acknowledge the efforts of four organizations that have been instrumental in crafting this legislation: The Retired Enlisted Association, The Retired Officers Association, The National Association for Uniformed Services, and the Class Act Group of Military Retirees.

I also want to thank Congressman CHARLIE NORWOOD for his cosponsorship and his efforts.

Before I close, Madam Speaker, I want to pay special tribute to one man: Jim Whittington. I want all of my colleagues here in Congress to know that the introduction of this landmark legislation is living proof that democracy really works in our country, and that one American citizen really can make a difference.

Jim Whittington is the most tenacious individual I know. Last March, Jim organized a summit of military retirees in his hometown of Laurel, Mississippi. The summit attracted hundreds of retirees from the southeastern United States.

Madam Speaker, if you ever have the opportunity to meet Jim, be prepared to get an earful. He is articulate and passionate about this issue.

And he is selfless. Jim does all right for himself, but he cares about his fellow retirees, many of whom have been abandoned by their country and need help.

Madam Speaker, I would not be introducing this legislation today without the persistence of Jim Whittington. He is what democracy is all about.

In closing, Madam Speaker, I am proud to introduce today "The Keep Our Promise to America's Military Retirees Act."

Passing this bill will let America's military retirees know that we honor them, we respect them, we appreciate them, and that we will keep our word to them.

And passing this bill will get the attention of the next generation of Americans, who must not be discouraged from military service.

They must know that the American people will value the sacrifice they would make by devoting their lives to national service.

After all, Madam Speaker, we must face the fact that we will always need heroes who will be willing to make the ultimate sacrifice!

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

(Mr. HULSHOF 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 American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KASICH. Madam Speaker, pursuant to Sec. 314 of the Congressional Budget Act, I hereby submit for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD revisions to the allocation for the House Committee on Appropriations pursuant to House Report 106-288 to reflect \$77,000,000 in additional new budget authority and \$13,000,000 in additional outlays for international arrearages. This will increase the allocation to the House Committee on Appropriations to \$543,200,000,000 in budget authority and \$582,478,000,000 in outlays for fiscal year 2000.

As reported by the House Committee on Appropriations, H.R. 2606, a bill making appropriations for Foreign Operations, export financing, and related programs for fiscal year 2000, includes \$77,000,000 in budget authority and \$13,000,000 in outlays for international arrearages.

These adjustments shall apply while the legislation is under consideration and shall take effect upon final enactment of the legislation.

ON AGRICULTURE APPROPRIATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I rise to object this evening to the manipulation of the leadership of this body, particularly the Speaker, Mr. HASTERT, and the majority leader of the other body, Mr. LOTT, that is essentially disenfranchising the membership of this body with regard to one of the most important issues before us, and that is, meeting the needs of rural America, the disaster affected regions of our country, our farmers, who are experiencing historically low prices and bad weather, sort of twin eviscerators, that we are witnessing the hemorrhaging of equity out of rural America.

For the record and for the American people and hopefully for my fellow Members, I come to the floor tonight to recount what has been happening here sort of below the surface where the press is generally not picking up on it.

Employing what certainly must be the most unusual committee process I have ever experienced in my 17 years here in the House, the Republican leadership of this House has basically taken the drafting authority of our appropriations agriculture subcommittee away from our membership. Last week, the Republican leadership of this House as well as the Senate subcommittee twice recessed our conference committee because they could not reach agreement on the Republican side of the aisle on at least three provisions relating to regional compacts regarding milk, sanctions on terrorist states, and the level of disaster assistance that is really necessary in our country to meet the needs of our farmers in rural communities coast to coast. Our subcommittee has not met since last

Wednesday due to that disorganization. Then over the weekend and early this week, Speaker HASTERT and Senator LOTT, their offices began drafting something for floor action. That effort is now being circulated in the form of a committee report that a majority of House subcommittee Republicans thus far, as of 5 p.m. today, had refused to sign, and which no Democrat had seen at all, certainly not those of the subcommittee of jurisdiction where we have legal responsibility to meet our obligations to the American people.

The Republican leadership appears to be deal-making on such matters as mandatory price reporting, for example, to try to get a majority of the members on their side of the aisle to sign on to that report. The difficulty is that if that happens, let us say they make enough deals to bring that bill to the floor, that will be brought to the floor without our subcommittee membership in conference being allowed to amend and discuss under regular order as is required by the rules of this institution. Thus, Democrats for sure will not be able to offer amendments on such critical issues as the fairness and the adequacy of the formulas and the commodities and sectors to be covered in the bill, as well as the economic level of assistance and disaster assistance titles of the bill, which are extremely expensive and depending on how they are drafted benefit certain regions of the country and certain sectors more than others. We will not be able to deal with the sanctions issue, we will not be able to deal with many of the other titles of the bill that our members wanted a chance to discuss. We will only be left with the option on this floor of taking that report and being given a moment in time to vote to recommit it back to conference, which obviously has been recessed, if we do not like something that is in that report.

As of Tuesday at 5 o'clock, now it is 6:25 here in Washington, the minority membership of the committee does not have a copy of the working document, at a time when rural America is in crisis. I have really been working with the leadership on our side of the aisle and I have pleaded with the leadership on the other side of the aisle to let us go back to regular order.

This is wrong, this is not the way to run the Nation, and really what you find out is in the end that good government is good politics. If we use the full membership of this institution, if we each bring our experiences to the table, which is what a conference committee is supposed to be for, in the end we produce legislation that meets the needs of all corners and all quarters of our country. This is really the wrong way to do business.

Today we had to pass a continuing resolution to keep this institution and the country operating for the next 2 weeks in order that these respective bills might be finished. The Agriculture appropriation bill this year is