

World War II, Korea, and Vietnam (AMVETS), to reflect changes made at its 1998 convention. Their original charter, received in 1947, has been amended by Congress over the years to give membership to Korean War veterans and Vietnam veterans, and to reflect other changing characteristics of the organization.

In 1998, at the AMVETS annual convention, the delegates voted for an official name change from American Veterans of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam to "American Veterans" to more accurately reflect the membership of AMVETS. Additionally, the AMVETS voted to change the structure of their governing body. The organization also voted to change the location of their headquarters from the District of Columbia to Lanham, Maryland. Therefore, the "Headquarters and principal place to business" section of their charter needs to be changed to indicate they are now located in Maryland.

In order for these changes to be recognized by the Department of Veterans Affairs the AMVETS federal charter must be amended. This bill will accomplish all of this.

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

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GEKAS).

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

This time, of course, I want to speak about the AMVETS who, in Pennsylvania, throughout the time that I served in the legislature, continuously participated in legislative action that pertained to veterans. On the question of veterans preference in civil service examinations and placement, in veterans benefits of all types, and in the question that arose from time to time on the legitimacy of when certain holidays were to be observed: Memorial Day, Veteran's Day back then, which was Armistice Day, et cetera.

So the AMVETS themselves, just like the American Legion aforementioned, have participated in civic, as well as neighborhood, events throughout Pennsylvania and, I am sure, throughout the Nation.

I wanted the record to be complete that this veterans organization, just as the American Legion, have been a part of the neighborhood for many, many years and will continue to expand now that we know the parameters, through this legislation, will have been expanded.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me just simply say that today as we stand here on this floor, we have young men and women fighting for us in Afghanistan, young men and women serving in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. This is important legislation, as the previous legislation was, to make procedural changes for our vets; and we honor them as we amend this particular legislation, and I would ask my colleagues to support it.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3214, the AMVETS

Charter Amendment Act. I urge my colleagues to support this timely measure.

This legislation amends the charter of the AMVETS organization to: change the meaning of AMVETS to American veterans, revises the composition of its governing body, and provides for its headquarters and place of business to move from the District of Columbia to Maryland.

AMVETS, which previously stood for the American Veterans of World War II, Korea and Vietnam, was founded in 1944 out of the belief that WWII Veterans needed an organization that represented their generation. In the following decades, veterans from Korea and Vietnam were permitted to join through charter modifications made by Congress.

Like its fellow veterans service organizations, AMVETS offers valuable services to its membership, including, but not limited to: seeking discharge upgrades, record corrections, education benefits, disability compensation matters and pension eligibility. AMVETS also has a long and distinguished history of community service.

Given our current war on terrorism, I believe it is appropriate for Congress to recognize, expand and promote the efforts of our veterans service organizations. For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3214, a bill I introduced to amend the Federal charter for the AMVETS organization. The bill makes a number of simple changes to the organization's current charter, which was first approved in 1947.

First, my bill changes the meaning of AMVETS from American Veterans of World War II, Korea and Vietnam to American veterans. AMVETS was founded on December 10, 1944, in Kansas City, Missouri. It was born out of the desire for WWII veterans to have their own organization.

Overtime, AMVETS' charter has been amended to allow veterans from following wars to join the organization. In 1984, the charter was amended to allow anyone who served honorably after 1940 to join the veterans' group. As a result, its current name does not encompass this broader membership. H.R. 3214 would correct this discrepancy and allow the organization's name to more adequately reflect its current membership. This name change was also approved by the organization's members at their 1998 annual convention.

In 1961, AMVETS modified the structure of its governing body. However, its current charter still reflects its old organizational structure. Therefore, H.R. 3214 also revises the organization's Federal charter to reflect the new composition of AMVETS' governing body.

Finally, since the approval of the original charter, the organization has relocated their headquarters from the District of Columbia to Lanham, Maryland. H.R. 3214 amends the original AMVETS charter to provide for its headquarters and principal place of business to be in Maryland rather than the District of Columbia.

I want to thank Chairman SENSENBRENNER, Subcommittee Chairman GEKAS, full Committee Ranking Member CONYERS and Subcommittee Ranking member SHEILA JACKSON-LEE for their assistance in moving this legislation.

H.R. 3214 is noncontroversial and I urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, as an original co-sponsor of H.R. 3214, the AMVETS Charter Amendment Act, I am pleased this important measure has been considered and favorably reported by the Committee on Judiciary. This measure amends the AMVETS charter to bring the charter into conformance with current practices. It deserves the support of every Member.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank the gentleman from Florida, MIKE BILIRAKIS, for his leadership on this issue. As the author of H.R. 3214, MIKE BILIRAKIS has been a strong and committed advocate for H.R. 3214 and his efforts in large measure are responsible for this important legislation being considered by the House today.

Again, I urge all of my colleagues to support passage of H.R. 3214, the AMVETS Charter Amendment Act.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3214.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS CHARTER AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3838) to amend the charter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States organization to make members of the armed forces who receive special pay for duty subject to hostile fire or imminent danger eligible for membership in the organization, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3838

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. AMENDMENTS TO VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES CHARTER.

(a) ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP OF INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING SPECIAL PAY FOR DUTY SUBJECT TO HOSTILE FIRE OR IMMINENT DANGER.—Section 230103 of title 36, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking "or" at the end of paragraph (1);

(2) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (2) and inserting "; or"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(3) in an area which entitled the individual to receive special pay for duty subject to hostile fire or imminent danger under section 310 of title 37."

(b) CLARIFICATION OF PURPOSES OF THE CORPORATION.—Section 230102 of such title is amended in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by inserting "charitable," before "and educational,".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3838, the bill currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3838 would amend the Federal charter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars to allow any member of the Armed Forces who received hostile fire or imminent danger pay to be a member of the VFW. The language would allow veterans from conflict areas such as Somalia or Kosovo to be eligible for membership in the VFW.

Currently, VFW membership is limited to those who have honorably served in the Armed Forces and who have received a campaign medal for service or those who served honorably for a specific period on the Korean peninsula.

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Without this amendment, members of the Armed Forces who served under equally dangerous conditions, such as those experienced in the campaign medal service in Korea, are not eligible for VFW membership.

The bill also adds the word "charitable" to the purpose of the VFW. VFW members volunteer millions of hours to local communities. Although volunteerism has always been a large part of the mission of the VFW, in some States the VFW is being denied qualification as a charitable organization because "charitable" is not included in their charter language.

These amendments reflect the language of two resolutions approved by the voting delegates of the VFW at their national convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I urge the House to pass this bill to ratify the changes to the VFW Federal charter, which have been approved by the membership.

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this legislation. This bill amends the Federal charter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, VFW, to allow any members of the armed services or Armed Forces who have received hostile fire or imminent-danger pay to be a member of the VFW, and that is a great honor for so many of our men and women who have served in the United States military.

Without this amendment, members of the Armed Forces who have served under equally dangerous conditions as those experienced in campaign medal service in Korea and in conflict areas such as Somalia or Kosovo are not eligible for VFW membership.

The act also amends the charter of the VFW to include the word "charitable" as one of the purposes. VFW members have provided substantial amounts of time and volunteer efforts in their communities and to the needy. This will prevent some States from denying the VFW qualification as a charitable organization under 501(c) of the Tax Code simply because the word "charitable" is not mentioned in the charter.

In Texas, there are tens of thousands of members of the VFW. In my district there are thousands of VFW members, and I can assure the Members they are outstanding members of our community. They always provide us with honor and grace in our patriotic parade, and they serve us in the Memorial Day commemoration as well as the Veterans Day commemoration, along with the many other veterans groups. Also, they are there to serve the community when we are in need.

As I speak today, I pay tribute to all of the veterans groups in the State of Texas, in the 18th Congressional District, and, of course, this Nation. These members provide critical assistance to other veterans, they help raise funds for the March of Dimes, and they provide scholarships to our Nation's youth.

I urge my colleagues to support this measure, which will simply allow veterans of succeeding conflicts entry into these esteemed veterans organizations. Again, I would be remiss without acknowledging the brave men and women who serve us now in Afghanistan, throughout the Nation, and throughout the world.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the federal charter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, VFW, to allow any member of the armed forces who has received hostile fire or imminent danger pay to be a member of the VFW. Without this amendment members of the armed forces who served under equally as dangerous conditions as those experienced in campaign medal service in Korea and in conflict areas such as Somalia or Kosovo are not eligible for VFW membership.

The Act also amends the charter of the VFW to include the word "charitable" as one of the purposes of the VFW. VFW members have provided substantial amounts of time to volunteer efforts in the communities and to the needy. This will prevent some states from denying VFW qualification as a charitable organization under 501(c) of the Tax Code simply because the word charitable is not mentioned in the charter. In the state of Texas, there are ten of thousands of members of the VFW. In my district there are thousands of VFW members. These members provided critical assistance to other Veterans, help raise funds for the March of Dimes and provide scholarships to our nation's youth.

I urge my colleagues to support this measure which will simply allow veterans of suc-

ceeding conflicts entry into these esteemed veterans organizations.

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

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GEKAS).

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, this time I rise to pose some reflections on the VFW. Many people will recall historically that during the Truman years there was an act of terrorism right in this Chamber, when terrorists of a different era shot up the entire Chamber here, wounding several people.

One of the Members of the House at that time was the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Jimmy Van Zandt from Altoona, Pennsylvania, who helped to apprehend one of the terrorists with a gallant leap into the back portion of the balcony, and brought him or helped bring him to justice.

But more than that, this Jimmy Van Zandt was also, prior to that, national commander of the VFW. He holds a place of honor in that organization for his special efforts and for his service directly to the country.

Then there was Dominique DeFrancesco, also from central Pennsylvania, served as national commander of the American Legion when, in 1991, he joined then President Bush in the 50-year commemorations at Pearl Harbor.

These are the kinds of devoted veteran citizens who are in the background of what we do here today when we enlarge the membership potential of their organizations.

But the most important portion of the VFW, as far as I am concerned, is because the last 30 years or more I have participated as a judge in the VFW's annual Voice of Democracy contest. Here is a contest of radio-spoken essays by our high school students who speak on what America means to them, or some other subject matter having to do with patriotism. In this way, the VFW spreads the notion of loyalty to our Nation, service to our communities, and patriotism. For that, I salute the VFW and urge everyone to support the legislation that is in front of us.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say that just a few minutes ago we have supported H.R. 3988, H.R. 3838, and H.R. 3214, legislative initiatives helping our veterans.

I want to acknowledge and applaud the President for his recent pronouncement of allowing those who are serving in our military to apply for citizenship immediately, without having to wait a period of time previously embodied in our law.

With that in mind, Mr. Speaker, I think as member of the Subcommittee on Immigration, Border Security, and Claims of the Committee on the Judiciary, I hope that the Congress will move

swiftly to pass 245(i) that will allow immigrants to access legalization and become citizens. This is long overdue. This is legislation that recognizes that we do not equate immigration to terrorism, and it is as patriotic as the legislation that we have just passed today.

So I hope that the Congress will move quickly on this legislation, and I rise again to support the legislation before us and ask my colleagues to support this legislation as we honor the men and women who have served us in the United States military and now our veterans; and as we honor those, as well, who serve us every day fighting for our freedoms.

I know the veterans of the nation, are sympathetic to doing the right thing for all of us!

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, just let me make it clear, this bill has nothing to do with the immigration law, lest anybody have a misimpression on this. It is legislation that changes the qualification for membership in the VFW, as well as makes it clear that the VFW is a charitable organization. Both of these changes were requested by the delegates to the last VFW annual convention that was held in August of last year in my hometown of Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The best way we can help our veterans, I think, is by not confusing the issue. Let us help our veterans by doing what they asked us to do, which is to allow them to expand their membership, as well as to get some State departments of revenue off their back claiming that what the VFW does is not charitable in nature.

I think all of us in this Chamber know that the VFW is a legitimate and honorable charitable organization, and I think that we can send the message very clearly by amending their charter to get the State tax departments off their backs so that they can continue to do their very meritorious work.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, as the sponsor of H.R. 3838, I rise to urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation that will amend the Congressional charter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). As Chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, I was pleased to introduce this bill on March 4, 2002, at the request of the VFW to allow Members of the armed forces who have received hostile fire or imminent danger pay to be eligible for VFW membership.

Mr. Speaker, I want to especially commend the Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Mr. SENSENBRENNER; the Committee's Ranking Member, Mr. CONYERS, the Chairman of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims; Mr. GEKAS; and the Subcommittee's Ranking Member, Ms. JACKSON-LEE, for their attention to this matter in moving the bill through the committee and to the floor for House consideration.

This bipartisan amendment to the VFW charter simply allows the organization to keep

up with the times as the nature of our Nation's military operations has changed. The VFW's charter currently requires a veteran to have received a campaign medal in order to join the organization. But the dangerous contingency operations our servicemembers have participated in over the past twenty or so years have not resulted in the award of campaign medals. Servicemembers doing their duty in global hot spots have faced the type of risks that should qualify them for VFW membership. My bill would remove this barrier to membership in a way that is consistent with the type of military service the VFW has always required.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3838 would also address a technical problem the VFW has occasionally encountered with the language of its charter regarding its purposes as an organization. The VFW has maintained a tax-exempt, nonprofit status, but some states do not want to qualify it as a tax-exempt charitable organization despite its long history of charitable work in communities across America, because its charter does not contain the word "charitable". Well, Congress can and should fix this relatively simple problem by inserting the word "charitable" as one of its purposes in order to silence anyone who insists on elevating form over substance.

Mr. Speaker, with roots that go back more than a century to the Spanish-American War, the Veterans of Foreign Wars has an admirable history of helping its fellow veterans, their communities and their Nation. This legislation will help to ensure that the VFW continues to perform these services in the 21st century and beyond. H.R. 3838 deserves the support of every House member and I urge its approval.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3838, the Veterans of Foreign Wars Charter Amendment act. I urge my colleagues to support this timely measure.

This legislation amends the charter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Organization to make members of the armed forces who receive special pay for duty that is subject to hostile fire or imminent danger eligible for membership in the organization. This change would allow veterans of operations in Somalia and Kosovo to become eligible for VFW membership.

The VFW is one of the oldest veterans service organizations in the country, and has a long and hallowed history. The VFW was founded in 1899 for soldiers returning from the Spanish-American war and Philippine insurrection. It was instrumental in creating the Veterans Administration and its subsequent elevation to cabinet level status.

The VFW participates in numerous community service efforts, and assists its members in seeking discharge upgrades, record corrections, education benefits, disability compensation matters and pension eligibility.

Given our current military environment, it is appropriate for Congress to both recognize and promote the efforts of our Veterans Service Organizations. Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3838.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING INVENTION OF MODERN AIR-CONDITIONING BY DR. WILLIS H. CARRIER ON OCCASION OF ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 413) honoring the invention of modern air-conditioning by Dr. Willis H. Carrier on the occasion of its 100th anniversary.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 413

Whereas on July 17, 1902, Dr. Willis H. Carrier submitted designs to a printing plant in Brooklyn, New York, for equipment to control temperature, humidity, ventilation, and air quality, marking the birth of modern air conditioning;

Whereas air-conditioning has become an integral technology enabling the advancement of society through improvements to the Nation's health and well-being, manufacturing processes, building capacities, research, medical capabilities, food preservation, art and historical conservation, and general productivity and indoor comfort;

Whereas Dr. Carrier debuted air-conditioning technology for legislative activity in the House of Representatives Chamber in 1928, and the Senate Chamber in 1929;

Whereas the air-conditioning industry now totals \$36 billion on a global basis and employs more than 700,000 people in the United States; and

Whereas the year 2002 marks the 100th anniversary of modern air-conditioning: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress honors the invention of modern air-conditioning by Dr. Willis H. Carrier on the occasion of its 100th anniversary.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. TIERNEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 413.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the House consider House Concurrent Resolution 413, important legislation introduced by my distinguished colleague (JOHN WALSH of New York). This resolution expresses the sense of the House of Representatives in honoring the invention of modern air conditioning by Dr. Willis H. Carrier on its 100th anniversary.

Only 1 year after graduating with a master's degree from Cornell University, Dr. Carrier submitted designs and