

Moran (VA)	Roemer	Stenholm
Morella	Rogers (KY)	Strickland
Myrick	Rogers (MI)	Stupak
Nadler	Rohrabacher	Sullivan
Nethercutt	Ros-Lehtinen	Sweeney
Ney	Ross	Tancredo
Northup	Rothman	Tanner
Norwood	Roybal-Allard	Tauscher
Nussle	Royce	Tauzin
Oberstar	Rush	Taylor (MS)
Obey	Ryan (WI)	Terry
Olver	Ryun (KS)	Thompson (CA)
Osborne	Sanchez	Thompson (MS)
Ose	Sanders	Thune
Owens	Sandlin	Thurman
Oxley	Sawyer	Tiahrt
Pallone	Saxton	Tiberi
Pascrell	Schakowsky	Tierney
Payne	Schiff	Towns
Pelosi	Schrock	Turner
Pence	Scott	Udall (CO)
Peterson (MN)	Serrano	Upton
Peterson (PA)	Shadegg	Visclosky
Petri	Shaw	Vitter
Phelps	Shays	Walden
Pickering	Sherman	Walsh
Pitts	Sherwood	Waters
Platts	Shimkus	Watkins (OK)
Pombo	Shows	Watson (CA)
Pomeroy	Shuster	Weiner
Portman	Simmons	Weldon (FL)
Price (NC)	Simpson	Weldon (PA)
Pryce (OH)	Skeen	Weller
Quinn	Skelton	Wexler
Radanovich	Slaughter	Wicker
Rahall	Smith (NJ)	Wilson (NM)
Ramstad	Smith (TX)	Wilson (SC)
Rangel	Smith (WA)	Wolf
Regula	Snyder	Woolsey
Rehberg	Solis	Wu
Reynolds	Spratt	Wynn
Riley	Stark	Young (FL)
Rivers	Stearns	

NAYS—48

Barr	Gutknecht	Rodriguez
Becerra	Hoekstra	Sabo
Bonilla	Hostettler	Schaffer
Callahan	Istook	Sensenbrenner
Cannon	Jones (NC)	Sessions
Capuano	Kerns	Smith (MI)
Coble	Kingston	Souder
Collins	Lucas (OK)	Thomas
Cubin	Mica	Thornberry
Duncan	Miller, Jeff	Toomey
Everett	Moran (KS)	Udall (NM)
Filner	Napolitano	Velazquez
Flake	Otter	Wamp
Gonzalez	Pastor	Watt (NC)
Goode	Paul	Watts (OK)
Goodlatte	Putnam	Whitfield

NOT VOTING—26

Berman	Houghton	Ortiz
Blagojevich	Jenkins	Reyes
Bonior	King (NY)	Roukema
Cooksey	Lipinski	Stump
Coyne	Manzullo	Sununu
Dicks	Matsui	Taylor (NC)
Ehrlich	Miller, Gary	Waxman
Ganske	Murtha	Young (AK)
Gutierrez	Neal	

□ 2227

Messrs. COBLE, COLLINS, JEFF MILLER of Florida, CANNON, OTTER, WAMP, FILNER, CAPUANO, WHITFIELD, SOUDER, HOEKSTRA, and Ms. VELAZQUEZ changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Messrs. SAWYER, PETRI, GREEN of Texas, and OBEY changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the conference report was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Without objection, the House insists on its disagreement to the Senate amendment to the title.

There was no objection.

CONSIDERING DISAGREEMENTS BETWEEN HOUSE AND SENATE WITH RESPECT TO H.R. 3295, HELP AMERICA VOTE ACT OF 2002, RESOLVED

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker I offer a concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 508) resolving all disagreements between the House of Representatives and Senate with respect to H.R. 3295, and ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request by the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 508

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the conference report to accompany H.R. 3295 be considered to have resolved all disagreements between the two Houses thereon as proposed by the House of Representatives, which acted first on the conference report.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 2230

INTENTION TO AMEND TIME ALLOCATION ON MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 4546

(Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, this is an issue of great importance to a great many disabled veterans in America. We know that the hour is late. Because of the courtesy of the gentleman from New York (Mr. McHUGH), in order to expedite the matter, we are going to ask that the time be reduced by half.

We would ask that every Member who wishes to speak keep their remarks as short as possible. I am going to do my part to move it along. I am certain the gentleman from New York (Mr. McHUGH) will.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 4546, BOB STUMP NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2003

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer the motion to instruct that I presented yesterday pursuant to clause 7(c) of rule XXII.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 4546 be instructed to agree to the provisions contained in section 641 of the Senate amend-

ment (relating to payment of retired pay and compensation to disabled military retirees).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XXII, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. McHUGH) each will control 30 minutes.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that debate on this motion be limited to 30 minutes, 15 minutes on each side.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. McHUGH) each will control 15 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR).

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today almost 300 of us voted to give the President the authority to wage war, and a sad consequence of that is that there will be, if there is hostile action, young Americans coming home who have lost their arms, their legs, their vision, their ability to speak.

Traditionally, there has been a system where they are compensated for that loss. Unfortunately, for those people who have served our Nation for 20 years or more, that compensation comes at the expense of the retirement benefit they have already earned. A lot of us do not think that is fair.

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) has been for 17 years pushing legislation to address this inequity, to allow those people who served our Nation honorably in the military for 20 years or more to collect their full pension benefits and be compensated for whatever injuries they incurred on active duty, because it has very much so reduced their ability to make a living in their post-military life.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), the person who has worked so hard on this issue for 17 years.

Mr. McHUGH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) is recognized for 6 minutes.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlemen for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in reluctant support of the Taylor motion to instruct conferees on H.R. 4546, the Bob Stump National Defense Authorization Act. I say reluctant not because I did not support the Senate provision to provide for the full concurrent receipt of military retired pay and VA disability compensation but because this motion should not even be necessary.

My legislation to completely eliminate the offset between military retired pay and VA disability compensation has received strong bipartisan support in both Houses of Congress. In

fact, more than 90 percent of the Members of the House of Representatives and more than 80 percent of the Senate have cosponsored legislation to repeal the current offset.

This is the People's House, Mr. Speaker, and this is a Republic. The people, by way of their Representatives, want concurrent receipt, concurrent receipt based on two separate episodes, one having served 20-plus years and the other having suffered a service-connected disability. It is not double dipping.

The last Congress took the first steps toward addressing this inequity by authorizing the military to pay a monthly allowance to military retirees with severe service-connected disabilities rated by the Department of Veterans Affairs at 70 percent or greater. These provisions were expanded to include retirees with ratings of 60 percent.

Earlier this year, I was very pleased when the House took the next step in our fight to eliminate the offset by including funding for a partial repeal of the offset in its fiscal year 2003 budget resolution. Specifically, the budget resolution earmarks over \$500 million as a first step in fiscal year 2003, with increasing amounts over the next 5 years, providing a cumulative total of \$5.8 billion. I want to acknowledge and thank the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE) for this.

I repeat, Mr. Speaker, the money is in our budget. The money is in our budget. For years I have been told by the authorizers, get the money in the budget and we will authorize it. The money is in the budget. It will not come out of the military readiness allotment. The funding falls short of the funding needed to completely eliminate the current offset, but it will provide for a substantial concurrent receipt benefit.

The House Committee on Armed Services incorporated the budget resolution proposal into its authorization bill. As approved by the House, H.R. 4546 includes a provision to authorize military retirees who are 60 percent or greater disabled to receive their full retired pay and VA disability compensation benefit by fiscal year 2007; not complete elimination of the offset, but providing for concurrent receipt for the more seriously disabled.

Until the program is fully implemented, the bill establishes a transition program through which retirees will receive increasing amounts of their retired pay. Transition payment levels will increase annually until fiscal year 2007, when all retirees with a disability rating of 60 percent or greater will receive their full retired pay and VA disability compensation.

During its consideration of the authorization bill, the Senate approved an amendment to authorize full concurrent receipt immediately. While I would obviously prefer the Senate language because it does mirror my bill, H.R. 303, I recognize it may be difficult to achieve this goal in one step and

that an incremental approach such as the House language may be necessary.

I am extremely disappointed, Mr. Speaker, by recent efforts by the Department of Defense to derail our progress on the concurrent receipt issue. I believe the arguments against concurrent receipt being used by the Defense Department are baseless and designed to be intentionally misleading.

I want to remind my colleagues of a quote by our first Commander-in-Chief, George Washington. He said, "The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their nation."

We are at war, Mr. Speaker, and our first President's words are more applicable than ever.

At a time when our Nation is calling upon our Armed Forces to defend democracy and freedom, we must be careful not to send the wrong signal to our military service members. For those of them who have selected to make their career in the U.S. military, they face an additional unknown risk in the fight against terrorism. If they are injured, they will be forced to forgo their earned retired pay in order to receive their VA disability compensation. In effect, they will be paying for their own disability benefits with their retirement collection.

We must include a substantial concurrent receipt provision in a final defense authorization bill, and I urge my colleagues to support the Taylor motion to instruct conferees. The time has come to do what is right and support the elimination of the current offset between military retired pay and VA disability compensation.

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

Mr. Speaker, let me begin by thanking my friend from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR), both for bringing this question to the floor at this time, well, maybe not at this time, but at all, and join in his very gracious and I think very appropriate comments about the previous speaker, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), who clearly has been, amongst many defenders and many fighters, the number one champion on behalf of this issue. All veterans and, indeed, all Members of this House and all people who live under the blanket of security and freedom provided by our military Armed Forces owe him a great debt of thanks.

This is obviously a very troubling issue. It has been a perplexing one for this House for a number of years. But it is not a new issue in terms of confronting Members of Congress.

This is a policy that has been in place for some 100 years. As the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) so clearly stated, the House has taken some very definitive steps, and I think thanks are due to, as the gentleman from Florida said, the gentleman from

Iowa (Chairman NUSSLE) of the Committee on the Budget, the leadership on the Committee on Armed Services on both sides of the aisle and Members again on both sides of the aisle who have fought for and have been concerned about this for some time.

It is interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that when the House provision was adopted in H.R. 4546, the vote on the floor was 359 to 58. Clearly every Member, Democrat and Republican, have expressed great concern and great support for trying to take an important step towards righting what most of us feel is a very clear wrong.

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) also pointed out some realities in conference with respect to what we were able to achieve. The fact of the matter is, the Senate provision over 10 years costs nearly \$46 billion. Maybe equally important is the fact that, over 10 years, \$15 billion of that \$46 billion amount is discretionary spending, money that would have to come out of the military services budget, money that would diminish the appropriations that we provide to do all kinds of good things in support of those very brave men and women that we all care so much about.

The House version, on the other hand, compared to the Senate version, is more affordable and less expensive; not \$46 billion, but nearly \$18 billion. Again, as the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) so correctly stated, it has, regrettably, caused a great deal of concern and expressions of opposition from the department and one that has placed the entire authorization bill into a great state of flux.

I want to give compliments to the leadership of the other body. They are working in the conference, Senators LEVIN and WARNER particularly, to try to find a way in which we can do all that is humanly possible in the confines of the bill at hand to right this wrong. They have been joined by the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), with the great support, of course, of the gentleman from Arizona (Chairman STUMP) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), the ranking minority member, and all of the members of the committee to try to see what we can do to, as I say, make this situation better for every deserving veteran.

There is no disagreement tonight between myself and the objective that the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) has defined. I would certainly suggest, respectfully, to all of our Members that the objective of this motion to instruct is a very laudable and a very worthy goal that all of us support; and I certainly would not urge a single Member to vote against it.

Let me again give my appreciation to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) and to all those other Members who have fought so long and hard to try to take a step in the right direction on this.

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

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), a senior Democrat member of the Committee on Armed Services and a father of two members on active duty in the United States military.

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

Mr. Speaker, my fellow Missourian Mark Twain once said, "The more you explain it to me, the more I don't understand it," and I have a difficult time in understanding why we cannot go forward with this issue.

The motion by the gentleman from Mississippi is well taken, and I thank him for it. I associate myself with the gentleman from Florida and with the gentleman from New York in their views. We in Congress need to ensure that our military retirees who have become disabled as a result of military service receive all the benefits to which they are entitled because of service-connected disabilities.

□ 2245

This is not brain surgery. This is what is fair; this is what is decent. They are the ones who made the sacrifices for our wonderful country, and the least we can do is to ensure that we repay the debt that we truly owe them.

Now, the House version of the authorization bill would authorize the payment of military retiree pay and VA disability compensation for all military retirees who are at least 60 percent disabled. The Senate version, more expensive. The Senate version of the bill would authorize both the military retiree pay and the VA disability compensation of any retiree who has been determined to be disabled at any percentage.

Well, out of all of this, there ought to be a compromise that we can live with. Unfortunately, the President has threatened a veto, to veto this conference bill in a time of war, with a lot of very, very important items in this bill such as pay raise, benefits; many, many items that they need with which to conduct the war against terrorism. I would simply say that we need to follow the dictates of this House as it has happened and voted before.

Mr. MCHUGH. Mr. Speaker, I proudly yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM), a Member of this House that certainly knows firsthand about the sacrifices of the men and women of the military, and a gentleman who is a former member of the Committee on Armed Services and then moved over as a member of the Subcommittee on Military Construction of the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution. Remember the movie "Born on the 4th of July" with Ron Kovic? Remember Agent Orange, Desert Syndrome. These are folks that fought for our country. Some of them died, some of them came back with afflictions and

they need this resolution. It is important. I would hope every Republican and every Democrat comes together on this particular bill, and I laud my colleagues who are supporting the bill.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Alexandria, Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, we are talking about people who have watched their families struggle all their adult lives because of their service-connected disability. Now that they are eligible for military retirement, they are being punished because they are eligible for both; and like most military retirees who are able to enhance their military retirement pay, because of their disability, they have not been able to.

It is only fair that they receive their military retirement and their service-connected disability. On the day that we voted to send more troops to war, this is the day we ought to fix this injustice. Let us do the right thing. Let us pass it.

Mr. MCHUGH. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD).

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

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in very, very strong support of this motion, and I would take this opportunity to congratulate the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) for years of work.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. SHOWS), someone who has worked very hard for the veterans for his duration of his time here in Washington.

Mr. SHOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the gentleman's motion to instruct.

The gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) and I have been working together to help restore the broken promise of health care for our country's military retirees. Our failure to make good on what is known as a concurrent receipt is one of those broken promises.

One of those promises is a pension when they retire, if they serve a career in uniform, at least 20 years. Another promise is that VA health care would be provided if they become disabled in the line of duty.

They do not know about the archaic law that requires them to deduct service-connected disability pay from their pensions. No other Federal employee has to do that. All other Federal employees earn VA health care benefits if they are service-connected disabled.

Some may argue that we cannot afford to pay for full concurrent receipt. I would argue that we cannot afford not to authorize full concurrent receipt. How can we expect to recruit troops for the conflict we are about to wage if we continue the cycle of broken promises?

Earlier this year, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) and I offered an amendment that would include a full concurrent receipt in the Federal budget and it was paid for. We are already on record supporting full concurrent receipt. H.R. 303, which would institute full concurrent receipt, 402 cosponsors. It is long overdue.

Mr. Speaker, we need to instruct the defense authorization conferees to do the right thing and insist they support full concurrent receipt.

Mr. MCHUGH. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS), the distinguished member of the Committee on Armed Services.

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

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in strong support of the motion to instruct from the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR).

This law is over 100 years old. It is time we fixed it. It is time that we recognize a disability as a disability and a retirement as a retirement. I urge strong support of the motion to instruct.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BARTLETT), someone who has been a great help on this issue.

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I want my colleagues to imagine two brothers. They are twin brothers, they joined the military at the same time, they go to war, they are both wounded, they are 60 percent disabled. One of them chooses to stay in the military and serve his country; the other leaves the military and gets a job in the private sector.

The inequity begins right now, because the person who leaves the military starts drawing disability pay, and it continues until he retires in the private sector. When he retires in the private sector, the private sector retirement is not cut by his disability pay. But that brother, that twin brother who chose to stay in the military does not collect any disability until he retires, and even when he retires and after the disability pay, they tell him that it has to be deducted from his retirement.

Mr. Speaker, it is obvious how inequitable this is and how wrong it is; and the fact that it is going to cost money to fix it is just more testimony of how egregious this treatment has been of our disabled veterans. We should have fixed this a long time ago. We do not need to do it tomorrow. We need to do it today.

Mr. MCHUGH. Mr. Speaker, I have no requests for time at this time, so I will reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. MALONEY), a great member of the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) for yielding me this time. I want to associate myself with his remarks in urging the House to instruct the conferees to adopt the Senate's concurrent receipt provisions in the fiscal year 2003 defense authorization bill.

The Bob Stump National Defense Authorization Act for 2003 contains a provision to authorize military retirees who are 60 percent or greater disabled to receive their full retirement pay as well as disability compensation benefits by fiscal year 2007. The Senate bill, however, S. 2514, authorizes the concurrent receipt of retired pay and veterans disability compensation immediately and for all disabled military retirees with at least 20 years of service.

Concurrent receipt cannot come soon enough for the veterans of Connecticut. Veterans have made possible the very existence and continuation of our country and our way of life. Disabled veterans have made a great personal sacrifice to the security of the United States and are entitled to their due compensation as well as their retirement benefits in full. So I join with the veterans of my State and my colleagues on the House Committee on Armed Services in urging support for this stronger, timely, and comprehensive Senate language.

Mr. MCHUGH. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), a true gentleman and my neighbor and friend from my home State, the dean of our conference and the New York State delegation and a former chairman of the Committee on International Relations.

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I rise in strong support of the Taylor motion to instruct. I think this is a long-overdue measure to provide equity for all of our veterans who have had retirement and disability benefits, and I urge my colleagues to fully support this measure.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. PHELPS).

Mr. PHELPS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Mississippi for his leadership on this issue.

Just a few hours ago, I gave in good faith my full-fledged support to the President to deal with Iraq in whatever manner possible. With that commitment I also pledged my support for those in the military, the men and women who have given their service with that commitment for whatever action necessary, and I also pledged support to those that are serving now. But also we should recognize even more those who have already served. It is not right that we would penalize them. We should be rewarding those who have disabilities because of their connection

in service, not penalizing them and their pensions because of their service. Whose side are we on?

It is simple and clear. How can we ask those who serve that we are asking to commit now, with new action possibly coming about soon, and those who have already served that come back with injuries and who barely escape losing their lives, and tell them that we cannot afford to pay them what we owe them? That is a sad commentary on this country.

I stand with the gentleman from Mississippi and his motion to instruct, and I hope all of us can unite in this one action.

Mr. MCHUGH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON), another great Northeasterner who, as every Member of this House understands, has been a constant leader in health care issues for both veterans and the civilian community.

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for yielding me this time.

I rise in strong support of this motion. Nothing is more humiliating to me than to sit with a constituent whom I know is being treated in a grossly unfair manner, and I have sat with disabled veterans who have high costs associated with their disability, health care costs, accommodation costs, and their disability has imposed limits and hardships on their families. For them not to receive both their military pension and their disability pension is indeed simply unfair, and it is time we corrected that injustice; and I commend the members of the committee on doing that here tonight.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS).

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the veterans of San Diego County, I want to thank all of the people that worked on this issue so hard over these years.

Mr. Speaker, during a Memorial Day breakfast last year, the President remarked, "America's veterans have earned not only honors, but specific benefits, and those only become more necessary with the years. My administration will do all it can to assist our veterans and to correct oversights of the past."

I believe that those were sincere words, and we must work together to turn them into reality. Over 400 Members have pledged their support to legislation to right an injustice and provide veterans with their well-deserved benefits. I hope both the Congress and the administration will accept the final version of the fiscal year 2003 National Defense Authorization Act.

□ 2300

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker I yield 45 seconds to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ).

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

Mr. Speaker, let me urge colleagues on both sides of the aisle, this is embarrassing. We need to do the right thing. It is not going to be enough just to show the votes that are out there, we have to make it happen.

I know I get sick and tired when I go back, because I know we are doing the wrong thing. Those veterans are still approaching me and asking me. I can tell them that we did the language, and the President is supposed to do this and that, but we need to make it happen now.

I ask both Democrats and Republicans, let us vote on this. Let us make sure we do the right thing. I ask the conference committee that, after they look at this vote, that they go out there and stick to their guns and make it happen.

The reality is that these veterans have fought; they have been there. It is the fair thing for us to do. They have been our heroes. If we can declare war, this is the time for us to stand up. This is the time to make it happen.

I ask very seriously after this vote and after we make it happen, let the conference committee take a stand, and let us support them.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOOLEY).

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Just a few hours ago, this body overwhelmingly voted to give our President the authority to go to war in Iraq. The least we can do is give the same level of overwhelming support to our veterans.

It is time to keep our promises to the men and women in our Armed Forces, the men and women who made a career of the military service, the men and women who have paid their taxes and were promised a pension. It is time to keep our promises.

If Members want a list of offsets, I would be happy to go over those. The bottom line is, it is time to do what is fair. It is time to keep our promises to our veterans.

Mr. MCHUGH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, the hour is late. Obviously, the sentiment of this House and its Members is, as I have suggested in my opening remarks, very, very clear. It is a sentiment we all join in.

As a member of the Committee on Armed Services, as a conferee, as I know the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) understands, we are working on both sides of the aisle in both Houses of Congress to do all that we possibly can within the fiscal as well as the political realities of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, finally, I urge all of my colleagues to vote for this motion as a very clear indication of our ultimate objective.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of the time.

Mr. Speaker, I thank all of the Members for their help tonight, Democrats and Republicans. We will send a message to the conferees: It is time, after 17 years of the efforts of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), to do the right thing for those people who were injured serving us.

They paid the price for us; it is time for us to pay what is due to them.

Ms. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, Concurrent receipt is the offsetting military retired pay, dollar-for-dollar, by the amount of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) service-connected disability compensation.

I am appalled that this Congress has not been able to grant veterans what they have earned. The Senate version of the Defense Authorization bill completely eliminates the current offset between military retired pay and VA disability compensation.

Our men and women who have given of themselves deserve more for their sacrifices than an excuse about funding.

How dare those people who accept the freedom these brave people declare that any reason is good enough to deny them their due.

402 House members have cosponsored H.R. 303, a bipartisan bill that would permit concurrent receipt in precisely the same manner as the Senate language to the Defense Authorization. The Taylor Motion appropriately insists that the House conferees accept the Senate provision which would eliminate the current offset entirely and allow veterans to collect full retirement pay and disability compensation to which they are entitled.

I am sure there is overwhelming support for veterans. Vote in favor of this motion to instruct.

Let's prove our appreciation for the veterans who preserved the land of the free.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I rise today to express my support for the so-called concurrent receipt provision in the Senate Defense Authorization Act that would allow all disabled military retirees to receive both their military retired pay and their VA disability compensation. As we know, current law requires that the two are offset so, in effect, our disabled veterans are paying for their own disability! We must correct this unfair practice.

I am extremely dismayed with the word we have been hearing that the Administration is threatening to veto this bill if this concurrent receipt provision is included. Thousands of our disabled veterans are being cheated out of the pensions and disability compensation they have earned and that are their due!

I urge all members to, first, support concurrent receipt of military retired pay and VA disability compensation and, then, to contact the President and impress upon him the importance of this legislation.

Disabled veterans did not hesitate when called to serve. Disabled veterans returned home with wounds they did not have when they were called to duty. It is imperative that we meet our obligation to these brave men and women who have given so much to our nation. Please do what is right and support concurrent receipt.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Taylor motion to instruct conferees on the Defense Authorization bill. Many of our retired military personnel have made tremendous sacrifices while defending our nation. As Congress debates entering a

new military conflict, I find the timing of the Administration's reluctance to support this provision ill-chosen. Under current regulation, veterans must essentially pay their own disability compensation out of their retirement benefits. No other profession restricts the concurrent payment of disability and retirement benefits.

One of my constituents, who served in the Army for nearly 20 years and fought in Vietnam where he was injured, must deduct his \$864 monthly disability compensation from the \$1650 monthly retirement benefit for which he is eligible. The Senate language would put \$864 more dollars into this veteran's pocket each month. I am aware of many veterans who would benefit from this change.

I urge the conferees to include the Senate-passed language which would immediately assist the veterans in my district. They cannot afford to wait another four years for full relief. We owe it to these individuals to provide the entire compensation they deserve.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to instruct.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct offered by the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 391, noes 0, not voting 40, as follows:

[Roll No. 463]

AYES—391

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Allen
Andrews
Arney
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldacci
Baldwin
Ballenger
Barcia
Barr
Barrett
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Becerra
Bentsen
Bereuter
Berkley
Berry
Biggart
Bilirakis
Bishop
Blumenauer
Boehlert
Bonilla
Bono
Boozman
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Brown (SC)
Bryant

Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Carson (IN)
Carson (OK)
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Clayton
Clement
Clyburn
Coble
Collins
Condit
Conyers
Costello
Cox
Cramer
Crane
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cubin
Culberson
Cummings
Cunningham
Davis (CA)
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt

DeLauro
DeMint
Deutsch
Dingell
Doggett
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Edwards
Ehlers
Emerson
Engel
English
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Everett
Farr
Fattah
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Fletcher
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Frank
Frelinghuysen
Frost
Gallegly
Gekas
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gilman
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Goss
Graham
Granger

Graves
Green (TX)
Green (WI)
Greenwood
Grucci
Gutknecht
Hall (TX)
Hansen
Harman
Hart
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill
Hilleary
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Horn
Hostettler
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Inslie
Isakson
Israel
Issa
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kelly
Kennedy (MN)
Kennedy (RI)
Kerns
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
Kingston
Kirk
Klecza
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
LaHood
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas (KY)
Lucas (OK)
Luther
Lynch
Maloney (CT)

Maloney (NY)
Markey
Mascara
Matheson
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McInnis
McIntyre
McKeon
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Menendez
Mica
Millender
McDonald
Miller, Dan
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Miller, Jeff
Mollohan
Moore
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Morella
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nethercutt
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Oliver
Osborne
Ose
Otter
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pelosi
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Phelps
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Pombo
Pomeroy
Portman
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Quinn
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reynolds
Riley
Rivers
Rodriguez
Roemer
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Rush

Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Sabo
Sanchez
Sanders
Sandlin
Sawyer
Saxton
Schaffer
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrock
Scott
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shows
Shuster
Simmons
Simpson
Skeen
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Spratt
Stearns
Stenholm
Strickland
Stupak
Sullivan
Sweeney
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauscher
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Terry
Thomas
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Thune
Thurman
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Toomey
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Velazquez
Visclosky
Vitter
Walden
Walsh
Wamp
Waters
Watkins (OK)
Watson (CA)
Watt (NC)
Watts (OK)
Weiner
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—40

Berman
Blagojevich
Blunt
Boehner
Bonior
Clay
Combust
Cooksey
Coyne

DeLay
Diaz-Balart
Dicks
Dooley
Ehrlich
Fossella
Ganske
Gephardt
Gillmor

Gutierrez
Hoeffel
Houghton
Jenkins
King (NY)
LaFalce
Lipinski
Manzullo
Matsui

McKinney
Murtha
Ortiz
Oxley
Reyes

Roukema
Smith (MI)
Stark
Stump
Sununu

Taylor (NC)
Waxman
Young (AK)

□ 2325

Mr. MORAN of Kansas changed his vote from "no" to "aye."

So the motion to instruct was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Ms. PELOSI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I would like to inquire about the schedule for next week, and I am pleased to yield to the distinguished majority leader.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentlewoman from California for yielding; and, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that the House has completed its legislative business for the week.

The House will next meet for legislative business on Tuesday October 15 and may consider measures under suspension of the rules. No votes are expected on Tuesday.

On Wednesday, October 16, the House will meet at noon for legislative business, and no votes are expected before two o'clock p.m. The House will consider a continuing resolution and any conference reports that may be available.

Other legislation that may become available will be announced as soon as possible.

Obviously, Mr. Speaker, completion of the Department of Homeland Security which passed the House in July remains our highest priority. I am sure the gentlewoman shares my interest in getting this bill to conference as soon as the other body completes consideration of the legislation, and I am very hopeful that we will be able to finally get this critical bill into conference next week, and I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, just to clarify, there are no votes on Tuesday and no votes on Friday of next week? Suspension votes on Tuesday will be rolled until Wednesday?

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, again, if the gentlewoman will continue to yield, that is exactly right. On Wednesday, we will begin votes at 2:00; and I must say that the Members should be prepared to be working yet on Thursday, but I do not expect us to be here on Friday of next week.

Ms. PELOSI. That is not definite yet?

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, it is not definite.

Ms. PELOSI. I understand no votes until 2:00 p.m.

Will the investor tax bill be scheduled next week, and if so, what day?

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, if the gentlewoman will yield, we have two bills that have been reported by the committee. We are continuing to work with the chairman of the committee with respect to the scheduling, and at this time we have not made a final determination. We will notify as soon as we do.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, does the majority leader wish to share with us how long the next CR will last?

Mr. ARMEY. I thank the gentlewoman for her inquiry, and if the gentlewoman would grant me just a moment, if I had extrasensory perception, I could probably answer her with a good deal more confidence, but these continuing resolutions are subject to negotiations between the two bodies and the ability on the part of both bodies in this respect, most notably the other body, to actually pass the agreements once they are made.

So it is what we in Texas call a running gunfight, and we can only give my colleagues updates as we see the progress that is made.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, so it is not the usual consultation with Puff the Magic Dragon?

Mr. ARMEY. It is a bicameral, bipartisan consultation that involves not only the leadership on both sides of the aisle, both sides of the building, but also, as very critically, the Committee on Appropriations as well.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, the hour is late. Other than the vote on Iraq today, we have not accomplished anything much in this body since July. Since there is no question we will have a lame duck, would my colleague wish to share with us when that might begin?

Mr. ARMEY. I thank the gentlewoman for her inquiry, and I share her regret that since July we have not been able to get into conference on all the bills that we passed over to the other body that they have neglected, and clearly we will be able to complete our work, maintaining our high priority for homeland security.

□ 2330

We will continue to try to work our way through that; and again, I think it is pretty much dependent on the ability of the other body to pass anything that would result in our being able to respond to the question regarding what is euphemistically referred to as a "lame duck session."

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

DISPOSING OF VARIOUS LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I send a unanimous consent request to the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). The Clerk will report the unanimous consent request.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. ARMEY asks unanimous consent that the House

(1) Be considered to have discharged from the committee and passed H.R. 5316, H.R. 5574, H.R. 5361, H.R. 5439, Senate 2558, H.R. 5349, H.R. 5598, H.R. 5601, H.R. 670, H.R. 669, and H.R. 5205;

(2) Be considered to have discharged from committee and agreed to House Concurrent Resolution 406, House Resolution 542, House Resolution 572, House Concurrent Resolution 504, House Resolution 532, House Resolution 571, and House Concurrent Resolution 467;

(3) Be considered to have discharged from committee, amended, and agreed to House Resolution 410, House Concurrent Resolution 486, House Concurrent Resolution 487 in the respective forms placed at the desk;

(4) Be considered to have amended and passed H.R. 5400 by the committee amendment placed at the desk; and

(5) That the committees being discharged be printed in the RECORD, the texts of each measure and any amendment thereto be considered as read and printed in the RECORD, and that motions to reconsider each of these actions be laid upon the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain this combined request under the Speaker's guidelines as recorded on page 712 of the Manual with assurances that it has been cleared by the bipartisan floor and all committee leaderships.

The Clerk will report the titles of the various bills and the resolutions.

The Clerk read as follows:

DISCHARGED FROM THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES AND PASSED

H.R. 5316, to establish a user fee system that provides for an equitable return to the Federal Government for the occupancy and use of National Forest System lands and facilities by organizational camps that serve the youth and disabled adults of America, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5316

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "National Forest Organizational Camp Fee Improvement Act of 2002".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS, PURPOSE, AND DEFINITIONS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) Organizational camps, such as those administered by the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and faith-based and community-based organizations, provide a valuable service to young people, individuals with a disability, and their families by promoting physical, mental, and spiritual health through activities conducted in a natural environment.

(2) The 192,000,000 acres of national forests and grasslands of the National Forest System managed for multiple uses by the Forest Service provides an ideal setting for such organizational camps.

(3) The Federal Government should charge land use fees for the occupancy and use of National Forest System lands by such organizational camps that, while based on the fair market value of the land in use, also recognize the benefits provided to society by such organizational camps, do not preclude the ability of such organizational camps from utilizing these lands, and permit capital investment in, and maintenance of, camp facilities by such organizational camps or their sponsoring organizations.