

employees before potential violations, we can protect employers from costly litigation, potential fines, and public embarrassment.

Mr. Speaker, Section 211 would not create additional paper work or burden employers with difficult Department of Labor requirements. In fact, Section 211 is an effort to educate employers and keep them from unknowingly breaking existing law.

Let me briefly share with you how I came to introduce H.R. 4477. I was contacted by a constituent who is a member of the Massachusetts ESGR. He suggested that simply altering USERRA to require its posting would solve many of the problems that he had seen arise between employers and returning Reservists and Guardsmen. He described how many employers are not fully aware of their responsibilities under USERRA, and why many employees are afraid to exercise their rights, even though those rights are protected by USERRA. In posting USERRA and familiarizing themselves with the law, employers and employees will gain a deeper understanding of USERRA and preferably work out any potential conflicts before employees are activated.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman CHRIS SMITH and Ranking Member LANE EVANS of the Committee on Veterans Affairs, as well as Chairman HENRY BROWN and Ranking Member MICHAEL MICHAUD of the Subcommittee on Benefits, for moving forward with H.R. 4658. Their dedication and leadership on issues affecting the well-being of our veterans and uniformed men and women are appreciated and respected by all members of this House, including myself. I would also like to extend my thanks to the staff of the Committee on Veterans Affairs for their hard work on H.R. 4658. In particular, I would like to extend my deep appreciation to Geoffrey Collver of the Democratic Staff of the Committee on Veterans Affairs for working closely with me on Section 211.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge the adoption of H.R. 4658.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OSE). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4658, as amended.

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

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to make certain improvements and technical corrections to that Act, otherwise to improve legal protections provided to reserve component members called to active duty, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution (H.J. Res.

108) congratulating and commending the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.J. RES. 108

Whereas the organization now known as the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States was founded in Columbus, Ohio, on September 29, 1899;

Whereas the VFW represents approximately 2,000,000 veterans of the Armed Forces who served overseas in World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf War, Bosnia, Iraq, and Afghanistan; and

Whereas the VFW has, for the past 105 years, provided voluntary and unselfish service to the Armed Forces and to veterans, communities, States, and the Nation and has worked toward the betterment of veterans in general and society as a whole: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Congress—*

(1) recognizes the historic significance of the 105th anniversary of the founding of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (the VFW);

(2) congratulates the VFW on achieving that milestone;

(3) commends the approximately 2,000,000 veterans who belong to the VFW and thanks them for their service to their fellow veterans and the Nation; and

(4) calls upon the President to issue a proclamation recognizing the anniversary of the VFW and the contributions made by the VFW to veterans and the Nation and calling upon the people of the United States to observe such anniversary with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Maine (Mr. MICHAUD) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.J. Res. 108 which would congratulate and commend the Veterans of Foreign Wars on its 105th anniversary. Tracing its roots back to the Spanish-American war, the VFW is one of the Nation's oldest, largest and one of the most respected veterans service organizations. The VFW has a proud history of directly supporting America's veterans and their families. Over 100 full-time service officers work directly with veterans on claims for VA benefits and oversee VA's programs around the country as well. VFW's "Buddy Poppy" program is a symbol of their continuing tradition of caring for fellow veterans, and their community service programs have made VFW a valued partner for thousands of charitable and civic organizations around the country.

Mr. Speaker, I can attest to the valuable contributions of the VFW's legislative specialists who continue to provide expert advice and counsel to help us develop State and national veterans priorities and policy. Over the past 4 years, I have had the privilege, and before that for 6 years as vice chairman of the committee and the last 4 as chairman, of working closely with nu-

merous VFW leaders both on the national level and on the State level back in my home State of New Jersey. My colleagues and I have benefited from the candid advice of VFW's Executive Director Bob Wallace from New Jersey, Legislative Director Dennis Cullinan, and past Commanders in Chief Ed Banas, Ray Sisk and John Gwizdak. We also look forward to working with the new Commander in Chief John Furgess.

I would also like to thank the leaders of the VFW in my home State of New Jersey, especially longtime leader and friend Mike Wysong. For the entire 24 years that I have served in Congress and on Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I have always been able to count on my State VFW leaders to lend their support and offer their ideas to help our State's veterans and also with national issues as well.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to support this resolution. It is a fine one.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure that I rise in support of this joint resolution to congratulate and commend the Veterans of Foreign Wars for 105 years of dedicated service. These congratulations extend not only to the current members of the more than 9,000 VFW posts worldwide but to all members since the beginning of this accomplished veterans service organization who served in wartime overseas.

I would also like to recognize the contributions the VFW has made in my State of Maine. From Fort Kent in the north to Kittery in the south, the 13,500 members of the VFW located in 83 individual posts have always worked to improve the lives of veterans and our communities and I am honored to call many of them my friends.

The VFW's origins extend back to 1899 with the founding of the American Veterans of Foreign Service and the National Society of the Army of the Philippines, which merged in 1914 to form the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. Originally the organization was created to help secure rights and benefits for veterans of the Spanish-American War and the Philippines War. They succeeded then as they do now, speaking with a loud and clear collective voice to serve veterans. This organization is to be congratulated and commended. The authors of this joint resolution are also to be commended for their efforts to recognize this great service organization.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ).

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, we are incredibly blessed in this country to have a group of veterans service organizations looking out for the best interest of our veterans. For the last 105 years, the Veterans of Foreign Wars have been making a difference in the lives of those who have given so much to this country, our veterans and their families.

Through their foundation, the VFW supports programs that promote citizenship education and volunteerism and facilitate aid for veterans and their families in need of both medical, rehabilitative, educational and employment services. Additionally, their members and those of the VFW Auxiliary volunteer countless hours at our veterans and military hospitals. During this time of increased military deployments, it is so important to have a network of veterans our injured soldiers and families can turn to for help and assistance.

Throughout my 7 years in Congress, I have been fortunate to meet with VFW members in Washington as well as in my district on a regular basis as they advocate for increased veterans funding, services for homeless veterans, better education benefits for our veterans and many other issues. They have an incredible history. I would like to take this opportunity not only to thank them for all they do for our veterans but also to congratulate them on their 105th anniversary.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 105th anniversary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, who for decades have been committed to securing the rights and benefits of veterans that have served this country with honor, dignity, and valor.

In 1899, after the Spanish-American War and the Philippine War, a group of veterans banded together founding the Veterans of Foreign Wars to ensure proper medical benefits for members of the military returning from foreign service. With a mission to improve the lives of veterans, the Veterans of Foreign Wars has lobbied for quality health care, education, and retirement benefits of veterans and their families for over 105 years. They have worked to protect the memory and legacy of those who lost their lives while in military service defending the freedom and values of our great Nation. In the state of Connecticut, there are over 26,000 members and 6,000 auxiliary members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Nationwide, this organization has more than 2.6 million members who served in World War I, World War II, Korean war, Vietnam, Persian Gulf war, Bosnia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. The Connecticut Veterans of Foreign War posts have been instrumental in raising awareness and fighting for better health care and benefits for those who risked their lives for our country.

I believe that the Veterans of Foreign Wars should be recognized for their proud service to the veterans of Connecticut and the nation. Therefore, I urge my fellow Members to vote with me in support of H.J. Res. 108 and honor the Veterans of Foreign Wars as an organization committed to the courageous veterans of the United States of America.

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support to this important resolution honoring the Veterans of Foreign Wars on its 105th anniversary. I was proud to introduce this resolution with Mr. COLE of Oklahoma, and I want to express my thanks to the distinguished chairman and ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee for helping move it quickly to the floor.

In the wake of the Spanish-American War and Philippine Insurrection, thousands of wounded veterans returned from war to find

that there were no healthcare benefits or pensions provided for them. So, as people in the military do, they banded together to work as a team to provide care for each other by starting the Veterans of Foreign Wars organization. This believe in service to fellow veterans is the core value of the VFW, and it continues this tradition today.

The VFW now serves more than 2½ million American heroes who answered the call when the Nation needed them. For 105 years, the VFW has fought for increasing veterans' benefit, improving veterans' healthcare, and ensuring that America's veterans receive the recognition they deserve for their service. The VFW continues to live up to its motto every day—honoring the dead by helping the living. I am proud that the House is passing a resolution honoring such an effective and dedicated advocate for our Nation's veterans.

I am also proud that this year the Veterans of Foreign Wars will be held by a son of Tennessee and a Nashville native: VFW Commander-in-Chief John Furgess. John fought for his country in Vietnam as a young man, and when he returned he continued to serve by working for the Veterans Administration for 20 years. Over the course of his distinguished career in the VA and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, John has helped thousands of veterans get the benefits they have earned and the care they deserve. John's dedication to his country and his fellow veterans is a model for all Americans, and I look forward to seeing the VFW flourish under his leadership in the coming year.

Finally, as we look back on the 105-year record of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, it is also important to look forward. I am also proud that in congratulating the veterans of Foreign Wars we are also honoring our Nation's future veterans—the troops engaged in combat overseas today in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. The brave men and women of our Armed Forces put their lives on the line for all Americans, most of whom they have never met. There is no higher expression of selfless service than the willingness to risk one's life for others, and for the ideals that this country holds dear. The troops on the front line today—who are tomorrow's veterans—deserve our repeated thanks for serving the Nation.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. 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 New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution, H.J. Res. 108.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT A MINUTE OF SILENCE SHOULD BE OBSERVED ANNUALLY ON VETERANS DAY

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution

(H. Con. Res. 195) expressing the sense of Congress that a minute of silence should be observed annually at 11:00 a.m. on Veterans Day, November 11, in honor of the veterans of all United States wars and to memorialize those members of the Armed Forces who gave their lives in the defense of the United States.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 195

Whereas Reverend George Fox, Rabbi Alexander Goode, Reverend Clark Poling, and Father John Washington served aboard the USAT Dorchester during World War II;

Whereas Reverend Fox, Rabbi Goode, Reverend Poling, and Father Washington were referred to as the "Four Chaplains";

Whereas, on February 3, 1943, the Dorchester was hit by an enemy torpedo and began to sink;

Whereas in the face of grave danger the Four Chaplains sought to calm and reassure the men on board;

Whereas the Four Chaplains handed out lifejackets and directed the frightened men to lifeboats;

Whereas when the last lifejacket had been handed out, the Four Chaplains removed their own lifejackets and gave them to four men who had none;

Whereas the Dorchester sank and took with her 672 men and the Four Chaplains, who stood arm in arm with their heads bowed in prayer and went down with the ship;

Whereas none of the Four Chaplains inquired about whether the young man to whom he gave his lifejacket was a member of his own faith;

Whereas the Four Chaplains will remain forever in the memories of Americans as an example of the kind of heroism which has always characterized the best of the United States Armed Forces;

Whereas the sacrifice of the Four Chaplains stand as a testimony to all heroic veterans who have fought for the United States;

Whereas each year on November 11 the United States pays tribute to its war dead and veterans in a national observance known as Veterans Day; and

Whereas a national minute of silence observed annually at 11:00 a.m. on Veterans Day, November 11, would provide the people of the United States with an opportunity to honor the veterans of all United States wars and memorialize those members of the Armed Forces who gave their lives in defense of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),* That it is the sense of Congress that a minute of silence should be observed annually at 11:00 a.m. on Veterans Day, November 11, in honor of the veterans of all United States wars and to memorialize those members of the Armed Forces who gave their lives in the defense of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Maine (Mr. MICHAUD) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

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Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 195, legislation expressing the sense of Congress that a minute of silence should be observed annually at 11