

Kolbe
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
Marshall
Matheson
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris
Melancon
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nunes

Nussle
Osborne
Otter
Oxley
Paul
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pombo
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Salazar
Saxton
Schmidt
Schwarz (MI)
Sensenbrenner

Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simmons
Simpson
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Sodrel
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Sweeney
Tancredo
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOES—185

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boehlert
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brown (OH)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Carnahan
Carson
Chandler
Clay
Clever
Clyburn
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLaunt
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Edwards
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)

Gonzalez
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth
Higgins
Hinchev
Hinojosa
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hookey
Hoyer
Insee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kind
Kucinich
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Maloney
Markey
Matsui
McCarthy
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Michaud
Millender-
McDonald
Miller (NC)

Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pelosi
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sabo
Sanchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanders
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz (PA)
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sherman
Skelton
Slaughter
Snyder
Solis
Spratt
Stark
Strickland
Stupak
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Udall (CO)

Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velazquez
Visclosky
Wasserman
Schultz

Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Wexler

Woolsey
Wu
Wynn

NOT VOTING—4

Cardoza
Evans

Kennedy (RI)
Smith (WA)

□ 1816

Mr. CLEAVER changed his vote from “aye” to “no.”

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.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 806 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 5122.

□ 1817

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 5122) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2007 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes, with Mr. DUNCAN (Acting Chairman) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, amendment No. 5 printed in House Report 109–459 by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. TANNER) had been disposed of.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. ANDREWS

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The pending business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIRMAN. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 191, noes 237, not voting 4, as follows:

[Roll No. 136]

AYES—191

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow

Bass
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Biggert
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)

Blumenauer
Boehlert
Bono
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Bradley (NH)
Brady (PA)

Brown (OH)
Brown, Corrine
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Carnahan
Carson
Case
Castle
Chandler
Clay
Clever
Clyburn
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Cramer
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLaunt
DeLauro
Dent
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Edwards
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Foley
Ford
Frank (MA)
Frelinghuysen
Gilchrest
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth
Higgins
Hinchev
Hinojosa

Holt
Honda
Hookey
Hoyer
Insee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kaptur
Kelly
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kind
Kirk
Kolbe
Kucinich
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Maloney
Markey
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McKinney
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Millender-
McDonald
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor

Payne
Pelosi
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Ramstad
Rangel
Reyes
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Sabo
Sanchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanders
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz (PA)
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sherman
Skelton
Slaughter
Snyder
Solis
Spratt
Stark
Strickland
Stupak
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velazquez
Visclosky
Walden (OR)
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Wexler
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn

NOES—237

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Beauprez
Berry
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonner
Boozman
Boren
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite,
Ginny
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Carter
Chabot
Chocoma
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Costello

Crenshaw
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis (TN)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeLay
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Emerson
English (PA)
Everett
Feeney
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick (PA)
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gibbons
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger

Graves
Green (WI)
Gutknecht
Hall
Harris
Hart
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Hostettler
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Istook
Jenkins
Jindal
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Kanjorski
Keller
Kennedy (MN)
Kildee
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kline
Knollenberg
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Langevin
Latham

LaTourette	Nussle	Schwarz (MI)
Lewis (CA)	Oberstar	Sensenbrenner
Lewis (KY)	Ortiz	Sessions
Linder	Osborne	Shadegg
Lipinski	Otter	Sherwood
LoBiondo	Oxley	Shimkus
Lucas	Paul	Shuster
Lungren, Daniel	Pearce	Simpson
E.	Pence	Skelton
Lynch	Peterson (MN)	Smith (NJ)
Mack	Peterson (PA)	Smith (TX)
Manzullo	Petri	Sodrel
Marchant	Pickering	Souder
Marshall	Pitts	Stearns
McCaul (TX)	Platts	Stupak
McCotter	Poe	Sullivan
McCrery	Pombo	Sweeney
McHenry	Porter	Tancredo
McHugh	Price (GA)	Taylor (MS)
McIntyre	Putnam	Taylor (NC)
McKeon	Radanovich	Terry
McMorris	Rahall	Thornberry
McNulty	Regula	Tiahrt
Melancon	Rehberg	Tiberi
Mica	Reichert	Turner
Michaud	Renzi	Upton
Miller (FL)	Reynolds	Walsh
Miller (MI)	Rogers (AL)	Wamp
Miller, Gary	Rogers (KY)	Weldon (FL)
Mollohan	Rogers (MI)	Weldon (PA)
Moran (KS)	Rohrabacher	Weller
Murphy	Ros-Lehtinen	Westmoreland
Murtha	Ross	Whitfield
Musgrave	Royce	Wicker
Myrick	Ryan (OH)	Wilson (NM)
Neugebauer	Ryan (WI)	Wilson (SC)
Ney	Ryun (KS)	Wolf
Northup	Salazar	Young (AK)
Norwood	Saxton	Young (FL)
Nunes	Schmidt	

NOT VOTING—

Cardoza	Kennedy (RI)
Evans	Smith (WA)

□ 1834

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. FRANKS OF ARIZONA

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN (Mr. DUNCAN). The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 6 printed in House Report 109-459 offered by Mr. FRANKS of Arizona:

At the end of title XII (page 419, after line 7), insert the following new section:

SEC. 12 . . . HUMANITARIAN SUPPORT FOR IRAQI CHILDREN IN URGENT NEED OF MEDICAL CARE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Secretary of Defense has discretionary authority to permit space-available travel on military aircraft for various reasons, including humanitarian purposes.

(2) Recently, 110 Iraqi children journeyed 22 hours by bus from Baghdad, Iraq, to Amman, Jordan, for urgently needed oral/facial surgery. While traveling, armed insurgents stopped and boarded the children's bus, raising serious questions about the safety of further travel by ground.

(3) Pursuant to the Secretary's discretionary authority referred to in paragraph (1), the Secretary authorized the Iraqi children to travel on military aircraft for their return trip from Amman to Baghdad.

(4) The Secretary is to be commended for his initiative in providing for the safe return of these children to Iraq by military aircraft.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Defense should continue to provide space-available travel on military aircraft for humanitarian reasons to Iraqi children who would other-

wise have no means available to seek urgently needed medical care such as that provided by a humanitarian organization in Amman, Jordan.

(c) FUNDING SUPPORT.—Within the amount provided in section 301 for Operation and Maintenance, Defense-wide—

(1) \$1,000,000 shall be available only for Department of Defense support of the Peace Through Health Care Initiative; and

(2) the amount provided for Budget Activity 4 is reduced by \$1,000,000.

MODIFICATION TO AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. FRANKS OF ARIZONA

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Chairman, I have a modification to my amendment at the desk, and I ask unanimous consent that my amendment be considered in accordance with this modification.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will report the modification.

The Clerk read as follows:

Modification to amendment No. 6 printed in House Report 109-459 offered by Mr. FRANKS of Arizona:

In the text proposed to be inserted by the amendment, insert "due to operational unobligated balances" before the period at the end.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the modification be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Without objection, the modification is agreed to.

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 806, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today to offer an amendment that will provide funds for a critical component in our Nation's effort to win the hearts and minds of Iraqis and others in the global fight for freedom and democracy.

For 25 years, groups like Operation Smile have sent teams of volunteer surgeons and medical personnel throughout the world to provide medical treatment and surgery to children suffering from facial injuries, cleft palates and other facial deformities.

Last year, I had the wonderful opportunity to travel to Jordan to take part in the first mission of the Iraq Initiative of Operation Smile. I was able to observe the indescribable joy of families as the lives of over 50 Iraqi children were transformed.

Mr. Chairman, it is difficult to describe how moving such an experience really is. It made clear absolutely to me the vital role these efforts play in our Nation's diplomatic efforts.

Recently, the Secretary of Defense exercised his discretionary authority

to permit space available travel on military aircraft in order to safely return 110 Iraqi children to Baghdad from Amman where they had undergone urgently needed oral and facial surgeries. This intervention was deemed necessary and appropriate because armed insurgents had stopped and boarded the children's buses when they were traveling to Amman, raising serious questions about the safety of undertaking the return trip by ground.

Mr. Chairman, such activities are vital to our efforts in Iraq. Not only are many young children receiving critical, life-changing reconstructive surgeries, Iraqi physicians are also being trained so that even more children can be helped. This helps the Iraqi people understand that our war is with the terrorists and not with the Iraqi people.

Mr. Chairman, Americans have a genuine and abiding compassion for their fellow human beings, and if our diplomatic efforts and our military efforts in other Nations are to truly succeed, compassion must always be a centerpiece of those efforts. Groups such as Operation Smile provide a clear, tangible demonstration of such compassion. They put a smile on the face of freedom and our Nation's commitment to liberty in Iraq and the world over.

I truly believe these efforts save American lives by helping to win the peace, and I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

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

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time in opposition to the amendment, although we do not oppose it.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York.

There was no objection.

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the gentleman's amendment. The amendment would provide \$1 million for the Peace Through Healthcare Initiative to provide humanitarian assistance for critically ill Iraqi children.

Mr. Chairman, it is well known that nothing aids the international reputation of our country, and particularly our image in the developing world, as much as our humanitarian and our relief efforts. Following the aid we provided after the recent disasters of the tsunami in Indonesia and the earthquake in Pakistan, polls in both countries showed a significant increase in those who viewed America favorably. Yet humanitarian relief is more than just a tool of international politics. It is exactly who we are.

Americans are the most generous people in the world. We give more to charity each year than any other nation. We are just and we do not hold a people guilty for the sins of their leadership.

Mr. Chairman, health care in Iraq is in a perilous state, but time and time

again American servicemembers in the field, warriors and medics, and American hospitals and doctors back home have gone out of their way to help those in need. I have read numerous cases of Iraqi children being medivaced out of the country in order to receive first class medical treatment for everything from cleft palate to congenital heart disease.

Mr. Chairman, I know that the gentleman has heard these stories as well, and we both recall one case of the chief of police in the southern Iraqi province of Wasit. He worked hand-in-hand with our troops every day, putting his own life at risk. And then, one night, he turned to his American advisers and said, "My son is dying of leukemia and the road to Baghdad is too unsafe for me to drive him to a good hospital."

Within 24 hours, the child and his mother were helicoptered to Baghdad. The child was treated there by U.S. Army medics in the International Zone and airlifted to Jordan.

In Jordan, very sadly, Mr. Chairman, the child passed away, but with tears in his eyes, the chief of police turned to his American friends only days later and said, "I will never forget what you have done for me."

That, Mr. Chairman, is what this amendment is about. It is about doing the right thing for innocent children. It is about making friends and building relationships with the people of Iraq and all for only \$1 million.

That is why, Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support the gentleman's amendment.

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

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Chairman, I would just thank the gentleman for his kind words and support. I now yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), the distinguished chairman of the Armed Services Committee.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I want to reinforce and echo the very eloquent words of the gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL).

I listened to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) when he brought in Operation Smile, and I saw the pictures and I listened to his description of how important this is. This is part of the American ripple. It is part of the effect that those 138,000 ambassadors in desert camouflage uniforms have in that theater on a human basis, on a personal basis.

If the gentleman would just tell us, because I thought this was the neatest part of your presentation when you brought Operation Smile in, the effects of this operation, because you had these kids with cleft palates. I saw the pictures of their fathers and mothers with their children after the operation. If the gentleman could describe that, I think we would all appreciate it.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HUNTER. I yield to the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

I guess the only way I can describe this, Mr. Chairman, is as they begin to create these surgeries, as they begin to pull the child's lip together with a giant hole in the center of his face or her face, it not only seems to pull a face together, it seems to pull a life together. If you understand the significance of going through life with an uncorrected cleft palate or cleft lip, this is to also take the child out of an emotional darkness that is almost impossible to describe.

The ultimate impact to these families is one that is emotional beyond words. When you hand the child back to the mother or the father, there is a wailing and a moved feeling that they express that, again, is just beyond my ability to describe.

But it does have I think an effect, as I said, of putting a smiling face on the face of freedom, and I just am so grateful that this is something that we can do together as a House and that while we may have differences on a lot of our policies throughout the world, the one thing remains that America is a noble Nation and we are committed to making sure that all of God's children, as it were, have an opportunity to lay hold on this miracle of life and to live as meaningful as they can possibly can, and I appreciate the support that is demonstrated for the amendment.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, we have no additional speakers on our side. So I would close by again thanking the chairman and the gentleman for his leadership and agreeing with them that nobility is a bipartisan virtue.

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

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am not sure what else I can add to this except to just simply express that we are not only changing the lives of children in the profoundest sense, but we are letting our soldiers in different parts of the world demonstrate their own compassion to these children as they are a part of the logistical process of making this real.

I would just suggest to you that the bottom line is that this is a diplomatic effort, a medical diplomacy, that is in the best interests of America. It saves Americans lives, and it transform the lives of all the children.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back my time.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS), as modified.

The amendment, as modified, was agreed to.

□ 1845

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. SIMMONS

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN (Mr. DUNCAN). The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 7 printed in House Report 109-459 offered by Mr. SIMMONS:

At the end of title X (page 393, after line 23), insert the following new section:

SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATION TO EXPIRE CLEARANCES REVOKED.

(a) PROHIBITION ON EXPIRED CLEARANCES.—No security clearance granted by the Department of Defense that has been requested to be renewed, based on a requirement for periodic reinvestigation, shall be permitted to expire until the Secretary of Defense certifies to the congressional defense committees and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Government Reform of the House of Representatives that—

(1) the Defense Security Service has continued to accept industry requests for new personnel security clearances and periodic reinvestigations; and

(2) the Defense Security Service has fully funded its requirement for fiscal year 2007 security clearances and taken steps to eliminate its backlog of requests for security clearance and periodic investigations by September 20, 2008.

(b) EXCEPTION TO PROHIBITION.—The prohibition in subsection (a) shall not apply if the Secretary of Defense determines that sufficient cause exists to revoke a security clearance, that has been requested to be renewed, based on other requirements of law or Department of Defense policy or regulations.

(c) DURATION OF PROHIBITION.—The prohibition on expired clearances authorized by this section expires on September 30, 2008.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section alters the process in effect as of the date of the enactment of this Act for security clearances and periodic investigations.

(e) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term "backlog" means the body of industry requests for new personnel security clearances and periodic reinvestigations that have not yet been completed or that have not yet been opened for investigation.

(f) REPORTS.—The Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives a report detailing the actions required by subsection (a)(2) no later than September 30, 2007. A final report shall be submitted no later than September 30, 2008.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 806, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut.

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First, I would like to commend Chairman HUNTER and Mr. BARTLETT, as well as Mr. SKELTON and Mr. TAYLOR for their leadership and vision on this bill. This bill is particularly historic with respect to the shipbuilding programs that it supports.

But I am rising today, Mr. Chairman, to offer a bipartisan amendment that would protect our industrial base workers from losing their jobs because of the failure of our Federal bureaucracy to process security clearances and periodic updates. Last month, without

warning or notice to Congress, the Defense Security Service stopped processing security clearance background checks and periodic updates for defense contractor workers.

What makes this most frustrating is the fact that the Department of Defense said it had fixed the security clearance problems last year when it transferred responsibility for these investigations to the Office of Personnel Management. Many of us who have defense workers in our district questioned DSS on that point, but they were emphatic that OPM could get the job done.

Well, Mr. Chairman, they were wrong. We cannot allow their failure to result in cleared defense workers losing their jobs.

Very simply, this amendment would prevent the Department of Defense from firing workers whose security clearance may have expired through no fault of their own. It does not change the security clearance process or prevent the Department from revoking security clearances for reasons other than the backlog, but it does protect our workers who currently have clearances that simply need to be updated.

Those already at work eventually need renewals to stay on the job, and there are thousands of shipyard workers in my district and elsewhere across the country who need clearances updated to design and build the best ships in the world. But we must give these defense workers peace of mind that they won't be out on the street because of a botched job in the bowels of the Pentagon.

Our amendment has support from both sides of the aisle as well as from numerous national security organizations, and I include for the RECORD a list of these associations. I urge my colleagues to support the Simmons-Davis-Davis amendment to keep American defense workers at work.

SECURITY CLEARANCE COALITION SUPPORTS
SIMMONS/DAVIS AMENDMENT TO H.R. 5122

The associations listed below have joined in coalition to work to address the significant problems their members encounter negotiating the security granting process. All of the problems that this process has experienced for the last several years were severely compounded when the Defense Security Service placed a moratorium on the acceptance of new security clearance applications and applications for periodic reinvestigations at the end of April.

The coalition supports the Simmons/Davis amendment as a positive first step toward reversing the impact of this decision and to mitigating its impact. While the ability to attract, hire and retain qualified personnel who are able to get a clearance has been greatly impacted, this proposal will at least assure those that currently employed and holding a clearance that their job will not be impacted because of their inability to submit an application for reinvestigation.

The actions by DSS are symptomatic of the chronic problems found in the Federal government's security granting process. We hope that Congress will act to mitigate the impact of this action by adopting the Simmons/Davis amendment. It is also our hope that Congress will recognize the need to

overhaul the entire clearance granting process and work with this coalition and others to bring about a more enlightened and 21st Century approach to providing trusted personnel to meet our National Security needs.

Please vote yes in support of the Simmons/Davis Amendment.

Aerospace Industries Association
Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association
Contract Services Association
Information Technology Association of America
Intelligence and National Security Alliance
National Defense Industrial Association
Professional Services Council

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time in opposition even though I support the amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, it is critical that our Department of Defense provides clearances to the right people to get access to the right information so they can do their jobs in support of our troops. Access to classified information should be need driven rather than budget driven.

For this reason, I urge my colleagues to support the amendment. I want to thank the gentleman for bringing this amendment forward. It is a fair amendment, and I ask and urge its adoption.

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

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS).

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the Simmons-Davis-Davis amendment in the defense authorization bill.

This amendment will safeguard national security and ensure fiscal responsibility by preventing the security clearances of defense contractors from expiring until the Department of Defense resumes processing their requests for security clearance investigations and fully funds its personnel security clearance program for fiscal year 2007. I urge all of my colleagues to support this amendment.

On Friday, April 28, I discovered DOD's security clearance processing arm, the Defense Security Service, was imposing a moratorium on all requests for private sector security clearance investigations. DSS reported that it experienced a massive spike in the number of clearance requests and that it didn't have the resources to handle this spike. DSS, therefore, decided to just turn off the spigot. This is, frankly, unacceptable. It is an unacceptable solution to what should have been a very foreseeable problem.

I will be chairing a Government Reform Committee hearing on May 17 to

examine this issue in more detail. In the meantime we cannot put defense contractors that need to review employees' clearances in the position of having to choose between firing their employees or granting uncleared personnel access to classified materials and facilities.

The government spends billions of dollars each year on defense contracts requiring workers with security clearances to do the work. If contractors are unable to find enough cleared personnel who have access to classified information, the cost of these contracts increases dramatically. Simply supply and demand, not enough people with the clearance, too much work to do, and the taxpayers are then forced to pick up the tab and our national security suffers.

Therefore, I rise in strong support of the Simmons-Davis-Davis amendment to prevent the Department of Defense from revoking expiring security clearances until DOD is able to get a handle on the current crisis and resume processing requests for security clearance investigations in a timely and efficient manner.

This amendment does not fix the problem, but it keeps it from getting worse. It is an important issue for national security and fiscal responsibility. I urge my colleagues to support this important amendment.

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time, and thank the chairman and my colleagues from across the aisle for bringing fairness and peace of mind to our defense workers.

Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of this amendment that I am offering with my colleagues from Connecticut and Virginia.

As we continue to fight the Global War on Terror, the Department of Defense must adapt to meet the challenges posed by this new kind of war. I believe that it is our responsibility in Congress to exercise proper oversight and direction of our military, and the recent developments regarding the processing of security clearances deserve the attention of this body.

In our post 9/11 world, the need for precise and timely security clearance processing has never been more important. The demand for clearances of all types and levels continues to increase, yet our budgets and our processes are not up to date.

I represent thousands of workers in my district who rely on their security clearance to perform their jobs, from the shipbuilders in Newport News to the thousands of uniformed service members and contractors that are working to support our national defense. In fact, I've heard from a lot of them in the last few weeks. Our amendment will temporarily prohibit the Department of Defense's authority to expire clearances that have requested renewal until September 30, 2008, unless certain criteria are met. I firmly believe that we should not be penalizing our military and contracting community because the Department cannot adequately estimate or budget its future security clearance requirements.

Additionally, I'm pleased that a separate amendment offered by Congressman SIMMONS

and myself was included in the underlying legislation that is before the House today. The provision requires the Department to submit a series of reports on their progress in solving these problems, and I believe this is an important step in our congressional oversight of this extremely vital program for our national defense. I want to thank Chairman HUNTER for working with me on this issue.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of our amendment.

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. All time for debate has expired.

The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. GUTKNECHT

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 8 printed in House Report 109-459 offered by Mr. GUTKNECHT:

At the end of subtitle B of title VI (page 220, after line 8), add the following new section:

SEC. 624. ELIMINATION OF INEQUITY IN ELIGIBILITY AND PROVISION OF ASSIGNMENT INCENTIVE PAY.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of the Army should promptly correct the pay inequity in the provision of assignment incentive pay under section 307a of title 37, United States Code, to members of the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve serving on active duty in Afghanistan and Iraq that arose from the disparate treatment between—

(1) those members who previously served under a call or order to active duty under section 12302 of title 10, United States Code, and who are eligible for assignment incentive pay; and

(2) those members who previously served under a call or order to active duty under section 12304 of such title and who are currently ineligible for assignment incentive pay.

(b) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Army shall submit to Congress a report—

(1) specifying the number of members of the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve adversely affected by the disparate treatment afforded to members who previously served under a call or order to active duty under section 12304 of title 10, United States Code, in determining eligibility for assignment incentive pay; and

(2) containing proposed remedies or courses of action to correct this inequity, including allowing time served during a call or order to active duty under such section 12304 to count toward the time needed to qualify for assignment incentive pay.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 806, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 1½ minutes.

Mr. Chairman, I will try to make this as simple as I can. We have one of the

largest deployments right now of National Guardsmen from the State of Minnesota since World War II. It has created a disparity.

Back in January, members of the 1st Platoon Bravo Company asked my office to help with a pay problem. It just so happens that most of them were called up to serve in the Balkans back in 2003. Part of them were called up under a Presidential Reserve Call Up, and others were called up under a Partial Mobilization.

What this has led to is a discrepancy in how much they may be eligible for in terms of what we used to describe as combat pay. The bottom line is that about 400 members of the Minnesota National Guard, who will be doing the same duty as the other members of the National Guard in Iraq, will not be eligible for roughly \$7,000 in incentive pay. This is an inequity. It is unfair, and it is something that we in Congress can and should do something about.

I want to thank the chairman of the committee and the ranking member and the staff as well. We have been working with them for several weeks and they have been extremely helpful on this matter. Hopefully tonight we can adopt this amendment and send a clear message to the Pentagon that this inequity needs to be resolved and it needs to be resolved soon.

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

Mr. SNYDER. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time in opposition, although I do not oppose the amendment and I am unaware of anyone on our side of the aisle who opposes this amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

Mr. SNYDER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I think this is a very straightforward amendment supported by the entire Minnesota delegation. My understanding is it expresses very clearly that we expect people who perform equally for their government are meant to be treated equally. I also ask for the study and I support the amendment, as does this side of the aisle.

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

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE).

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Chairman, I thank Mr. GUTKNECHT for his leadership on this issue and for yielding me this time.

I rise today in strong support of this amendment. In my 25 years of military service, sadly I have witnessed other examples of pay discrepancies. It is unfortunate that even today such issues arise, but I am pleased to be in a position now to help solve this problem.

In a true sign of their dedication to duty and camaraderie, many members

of the 34th Brigade Combat Team volunteered to join their fellow Guardsmen in Iraq despite having previously deployed to Bosnia and Kosovo. I was disappointed to hear that many of these dedicated citizen-soldiers were denied incentive pay simply because of the administrative mechanism used to mobilize them. This is not the way we as a nation should treat those who have volunteered to serve.

Mr. GUTKNECHT and I promptly engaged the House Armed Services Committee professional staff to help solve this problem. As a member of the House Military Personnel Subcommittee, I was gratified by the staff's prompt action, and I would like to thank them as well as Chairman McHUGH and Chairman HUNTER for their efforts.

I would also like to commend the entire Minnesota delegation for their strong support in both the House and Senate.

This past week, my staff delivered a letter signed by the entire delegation to the Department of Defense requesting their assistance in resolving this inequity, and I will include a copy of the letter for the RECORD.

This amendment is a fitting addition to that initial effort, and it is my hope it will help spur the resolution of this significant problem. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, May 4, 2006.

Hon. THOMAS F. HALL,

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY HALL: We are writing to request a review and adjustment of the current policy regarding Assignment Incentive Pay (AIP). Several activated members of the Minnesota National Guard (MNNG), now deployed to Iraq, recently brought to our attention a pay technicality that makes the distribution of AIP inequitable. Specifically, under current finance rules, the soldiers who previously deployed and served in Kosovo are eligible for AIP, whereas the soldiers who previously deployed and served in Bosnia are not. We believe these soldiers, whether having served in Kosovo or in Bosnia, should be treated equally for purposes of AIP eligibility.

After consulting with House Armed Services Committee staff, we conclude that this would best be treated as a Department of Defense (DOD) policy matter. There appears to be nothing in the law that would preclude DOD from modifying the technical eligibility criteria, making these soldiers, and others like them, eligible for AIP.

Enclosed please find the letter we received from the MNNG soldiers who brought this matter to our attention. Also enclosed is a letter from Major General Larry W. Shellito, Adjutant General of the MNNG. General Shellito's letter supports our view that a change to current policy regarding AIP is needed.

After an initial review of this issue, we would request an update from your office. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Fred Chesbro in Congressman John Kline's office at (202) 225-2271.

Sincerely,

John Kline; Martin Olav Sabo; James L. Oberstar; Collin C. Peterson; Jim Ramstad; Mark Kennedy; Mark Dayton; Gil Gutknecht; Betty McCollum; Norm Coleman.

Enclosures.

JANUARY 27, 2006.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN RAMSTAD: We are soldiers in the Minnesota National Guard currently in Mississippi training to go to Iraq, and we have a concern we hope you can help us with.

As you know, for some of us, this is not our first deployment; many of us also went to Bosnia or Kosovo in 2003-2004. Because of our prior deployment those of us that went to Bosnia or Kosovo had to sign a volunteer form to go on the OIF rotation we have been tasked with. But, here comes the problem, there is a type or pay called COTTAD that is specific to soldiers who have been recently deployed. The guys who went to Bosnia are not going to receive this pay; however, the soldiers that went to Kosovo are going to receive this pay. We feel that anyone who volunteered to go to Iraq after recently going on a separate deployment are entitled to that extra pay, and should not be discriminated based on where and when they were deployed before.

Being deployed is a hardship. We take time off from our family and friends, many of us are trying to finish our civilian educations or advance our civilian careers, and we have put all that on hold and volunteered for this rotation. Now, because of what best we can tell is a technicality, we will not be receiving a substantial amount of pay. This affects a lot more soldiers than those that signed this letter; hundreds are affected by this. But we, unfortunately, do not have the time to have them all sign this letter. However, I believe that most would have the same viewpoint as we do.

Congressman, we would appreciate any help you can give us. If you have time can you please respond to us and let us know if there is anything you can do. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

1ST PLATOON BRAVO COMPANY CREWS.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,

House of Representatives, March 24, 2006.

Interested Soldiers from 1st Platoon,
Company B, 2nd Battalion, 136th CAB 1 BCT,
2490 25th SF, Camp Shelby, MS 39407
(ATTN: B Co. ISG)

DEAR SOLDIERS: Thank you very much for taking the time to write to me. While it is always good to hear from fellow Minnesotans, it is especially meaningful to hear from members of the Minnesota Army National Guard. I appreciate that you brought to my attention the issue of compensating Soldiers who, like you, are mobilized in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

In response to your request, I've asked my staff to research the current law and to provide me with possible recommendations taking into account your special circumstances. I believe it is particularly important to provide fair and equitable pay and benefits to all members of our armed services, active and reserve components alike.

Please know that I am very proud of you and I applaud each of you for stepping forward and volunteering to serve our State and Nation during these challenging times.

Sincerely,

JOHN KLINE,
Member of Congress.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY,

Saint Paul, Minnesota, March 13, 2006.

Hon. JOHN KLINE,
Representative in Congress, Burnsville, MN.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN KLINE: Thank you for your inquiry of March 10, 2006 raising concerns regarding the compensation of Soldiers mobilized for deployment in support of the Global War on Terrorism. Your issues were researched by Colonel Greg Langley, Mobilization and Readiness Officer for the Joint Force Headquarters in Minnesota. Detailed

below is an explanation of the different categories of mobilization and what qualifies a Soldier for the entitlement to the Assignment Incentive Pay requested by the Soldiers in their letter of January 27, 2006. In their letter they referred to Assignment Incentive Pay as "pay called COTTAD".

Within federal law there are different types of authority to mobilize the Reserve Components (RC). The two types of authority pertaining to this matter are Title 10, USC 12302, called Partial Mobilization (PM) Authority and Title 10 USC 12304, referred to as Presidential Reserve Callup (PRC). Since President Bush signed Executive Order 13223 on September 14, 2001 authorizing partial mobilization of the reserve components, Minnesota Soldiers have been mobilized under the provisions of both Partial Mobilization Authority and Presidential Reserve Call-up Authority, depending upon the needs of the Army.

The Soldiers from 1st Platoon, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 136th Infantry who wrote to you were previously mobilized in July 2003 and sent to Bosnia as part of Stabilization Force (SFOR) 14. The Army mobilized those Soldiers using Title 10, USC 12304, PRC. The maximum length of this types of mobilization is 270 days and most of these Soldiers returned from the mission and left active duty in March or April of 2004. Each Soldier's individual record may have a different release from active duty date based on their flight back to the United States and the length of time out-processing at Ft. McCoy, WI.

Other Soldiers from the same organization, 2nd Battalion, 136th Infantry, mobilized in October 2003 and went to Kosovo as part of KFOR 5B. These Soldiers mobilized for a period of 365 days, which exceeds the time limit on PRC and therefore the Army mobilized these Soldiers using Title 10, USC 12302, PM authority. Partial Mobilization authority has a maximum time limit of 730 days. The KFOR Soldiers returned to the United States in the August or September 2004 time period.

Another provision of federal law impacting on this situation is Title 10, USC 12302 (b), whereby all members of the RC must receive fair treatment when being considered for recall to duty without their consent. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld has directed he will personally approve or disapprove any member of RC who has previously been involuntarily mobilized under either PM or PRC since September 11, 2001. All of the Soldiers writing to you on January 27, 2006 were asked to volunteer for remobilization during their Soldier Readiness Processing in Minnesota during the June through September 2006 time period and did sign a Volunteer/Waiver Certificate. Soldiers not signing the Volunteer/Waiver Certificate were removed from this current mobilization.

The maximum length of Partial Mobilization for any RC Soldier is 730 days. The mission length of the mobilization for the Soldiers in the 1st Brigade Combat Team is 608 days, ending in May and June 2007. No RC Soldier is required to serve more than 730 days of PM time under this current Executive Order 13223. Any Minnesota Soldier who served in Kosovo has already accrued a previous PM period of approximately 330 to 360 days, depending on their return flight and out-processing time. When added together the 608 days on this current mission, plus at least 330 days from the previous Kosovo mission, the Soldier's mobilization time exceeds the maximum of 730 days. Soldiers in this situation, in addition to volunteering to be remobilized, had to volunteer to serve beyond the 730th day in a different portion of federal law called Contingency Temporary Tour of Active Duty (COTTAD), which is Title 10, USC 12301 (d).

Soldiers mobilized to go to Bosnia previously served under the provisions of Title

10, USC 12304, not 12302. Service time in Title 10, USC 12304 by law, does not apply toward an RC Soldier's 730 days of PM (Title 10, USC 12302) time. When they mobilized for this current mission under the provisions of Title 10, USC 12302, they still had 730 days remaining on their PM mobilization clock. They will never reach the 731st day of mobilization since this mission will end in approximately 608 days. Therefore, their signing a Volunteer/Waiver Certificate agreeing to be remobilized is all that is required by the Army.

The provisions of federal law creating Assignment Incentive Pay (AIP) recognized the hardship of prolonged periods of mobilization on RC Soldiers. When Congress passed the law they included Soldiers accruing 730 days of PM (12302) mobilization time and volunteering under the provisions of Title 10, USC 12301 (d) to remain on duty past 730 days with their unit to finish their current mission as qualifying for AIP. Congress omitted PRC (12304) mobilization time as counting toward the 730-day maximum a Soldier can accrue before being required to volunteer for COTTAD (12301 (d)).

This situation was explained to the Soldiers from 1st Platoon, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 136th Infantry who previously mobilized for the Bosnia mission under the PRC (12304) mobilization authority prior to their signing of the required Volunteer/Waiver Certificate. None of these Soldiers will reach the 730th day of PM authority on this current mission and will not serve under the COTTAD provisions of Title 10, USC 12302 (d).

We believe any mobilization should count towards qualifying for AIP. Soldiers sent to Bosnia served under the same conditions as their fellow Soldiers who went to Kosovo. They underwent the same hardships caused by separation from family and civilian employer. However, we have no options to grant AIP to the soldiers who previously mobilized under PRC (12304) until they have also served 730 days under PM authority.

The solution to this problem is for Congress to change the federal law authorizing AIP and include previous mobilization under either authority, PM (12302) or PRC (12304), as counting on the Soldier's mobilization clock to reach 730 days, after which the Soldier may volunteer to remain on mission in COTTAD (12301 (d)) status and earn AIP.

I hope this information from Colonel Langley is helpful to you. Please be assured we will continue to do everything we can to provide Soldiers with the necessary information to make informed decisions about remobilization and their entitlements. It is always my pleasure to respond to the concerns of our Congressional delegation regarding Soldiers of the Minnesota National Guard.

Sincerely

LARRY W. SHELLITO,
MAJOR GENERAL, MINNESOTA ARMY
National Guard, The Adjutant General.

Mr. SNYDER. Mr. Chairman, I support this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Chairman, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS).

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of this amendment. I had the honor to serve 4 years on active duty in the U.S. Army and over 30 years as a member of the U.S. Army Reserve, and as somebody who has commanded troops who have deployed, there is nothing more demoralizing to get unequal pay for equal duty.

To support a resolution that provides for equity for our Guard and Reserve is

very important. I thank the gentleman for his amendment.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KENNEDY).

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of this amendment offered by my good friend, Mr. GUTKNECHT. This amendment fixes a pay disparity currently affecting almost 400 Minnesota National Guard, men and women, serving in Iraq. These members of the 1st Platoon Bravo Company were previously on active duty in 2003, some in Bosnia and some in Kosovo, and I was pleased to be able to visit them with Mr. GUTKNECHT.

However, unlike the soldiers that served in Kosovo, the Bosnia contingent is not eligible for the extra \$1,000 a month incentive pay based on the circumstances of their mobilization.

This technicality will cost these soldiers and their families up to \$7,000. That is simply unfair and must be corrected. That is why I support this amendment which directs the Army to fix this disparity so those who have equally sacrificed for their country receive equality of pay.

Again, I thank Mr. GUTKNECHT for his leadership on this issue.

□ 1900

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Chairman, I will be very brief.

I want to thank my colleagues from Minnesota for helping to resolve this inequity. I want to thank the gentleman from Connecticut and my colleagues from Arkansas.

In the big picture, when we were talking about spending hundreds of billions of dollars, \$7,000 for these families does not seem like a lot of money in the big picture. But to those families, \$7,000 is extremely important. So I appreciate your support tonight to make certain that we have equity and create a solution for this problem that is fair to all of the folks who are proudly serving us in uniform wherever in the world, but particularly in Iraq.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to support the Gutknecht amendment along with my fellow MN Colleagues.

In January these soldiers wrote to me and every member of the MN delegation asking for help. And I believe as their representatives we have an obligation to address their concerns.

This amendment will correct a technicality that is affecting 400 Minnesota National Guardsmen who are now serving in Iraq. And who knows how many other hundreds or even thousands of reservists all over the country have fallen victim to a similar technicality.

Most of these soldiers had previously served on active duty in 2003, some in Bosnia and the others in Kosovo. The two groups were activated by different orders and now both of these groups are activated together under the same order in Iraq.

The soldiers who served in Bosnia are not eligible for the extra \$1,000 per month in incentive pay because their tours cannot be added together due to a mere technicality.

This issue is about fairness. Unless something is done to change this Army policy, these soldiers and their families will lose out on \$6,000 to \$7,000 in extra pay. They are making a huge sacrifice for our country and this is the least we can and should do for these men and women.

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of this important amendment, which seeks to end a pay disparity for our brave men and women who are serving in harm's way.

Today, Mr. Chairman, Minnesota National Guard troops are serving in the War on Terror in Afghanistan and Iraq, with more than 3,000 citizen soldiers recently called to service in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

As my colleague has previously explained, at least 400 of these 3,000 Minnesotans in Iraq will not be receiving the same pay as many others in their unit.

These are troops who have now bravely served our country in two foreign theaters. These troops not only deserve our utmost respect and gratitude, they also deserve their full compensation for their service and sacrifice.

Mr. Chairman, the Minnesota National Guard truly represents the very best of duty, honor and country. I join the people of the Third Congressional District in thanking our Guard members for their selfless service.

And I'd like to thank my colleague from Minnesota for sponsoring this important amendment and thank all my colleagues from the Minnesota delegation for cosponsoring the amendment and working to end this pay disparity.

I urge my colleagues to support this important amendment.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIRMAN (Mr. DUNCAN). All time for debate having expired, the question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. No further amendment being in order, under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. INGLES of South Carolina) having assumed the chair, Mr. DUNCAN, Acting Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5122) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2007 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

REQUEST FOR REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 4200

Mrs. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to remove myself as a cosponsor from H.R. 4200.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Because H.R. 4200 has been placed on the Union Calendar, pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII the gentlewoman's request may not be entertained.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken tomorrow.

ENCOURAGING ALL ELIGIBLE MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES TO REVIEW AVAILABLE OPTIONS TO DETERMINE WHETHER ENROLLMENT IN A MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN BEST MEETS THEIR NEEDS FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 802) encouraging all eligible Medicare beneficiaries who have not yet elected enroll in the new Medicare Part D benefit to review the available options and to determine whether enrollment in a Medicare prescription drug plan best meets their current and future needs for prescription drug coverage.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 802

Whereas Medicare now offers a prescription drug benefit for its beneficiaries, known as Medicare Part D;

Whereas more than 35,900,000 Medicare eligible individuals are receiving prescription drug coverage, of which there are more than 27,000,000, including a substantial number of low-income and minority beneficiaries, receiving coverage through the new benefit;

Whereas 8,100,000 beneficiaries have enrolled in stand alone Medicare prescription drug plans;

Whereas estimates indicate that the average beneficiary will save more than \$1,100 this year alone by enrolling in a Medicare prescription drug plan;

Whereas the average monthly premium for enrolling in a Medicare prescription drug plan is now just \$25 per month, which is far below the initial estimate of \$37 per month;

Whereas recent surveys of Medicare beneficiaries enrolled in Medicare prescription drug plans indicate that beneficiaries are satisfied with their coverage;

Whereas advocacy groups including the AARP, National Alliance for Hispanic Health, the National Medical Association, and the National Council on Aging have all sponsored enrollment events designed to encourage eligible beneficiaries to enroll in Medicare prescription drug plans;

Whereas Area Agencies on Aging, State Health Insurance Programs (SHIPs), and other local and community organizations are available to provide seniors with assistance and answer their questions about how to select the Medicare prescription drug plan that best meets their needs;

Whereas pharmacists are on the front line in delivering prescriptions to Medicare beneficiaries and continue to be instrumental in providing valuable information and assistance about the new benefit;

Whereas in recent months Members of Congress have hosted hundreds of events and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare &