

pension plans, provided workers with meaningful disclosure about the financial status of their benefits, and protected taxpayers from a possible multi-billion dollar bailout of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC).

The Pension Protection Act's reforms were built on six fundamental principles that helped ensure a stronger, more secure retirement for millions of American workers. Those principles were: certainty, with a permanent and more accurate calculation of employers' pension liabilities; common sense, which enabled employers to build up a cushion in their pension plans during good economic times; stability, achieved by closing funding loopholes and ensuring employers make adequate and consistent cash payments to their plans; transparency through timely and straightforward information given to employees about the health of their retirement plans; honesty from employers and union leaders, who are no longer permitted to make hollow promises of extra benefits that will never materialize because a plan is severely underfunded; and portability, established by ensuring that hybrid plans, such as cash balance pensions—which offer portable, more generous worker benefits—remain a viable part of the defined benefit system. Having served as the Chairman of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce during this process, I am pleased to have been part of this effort.

Of course, it is to be expected that in legislation of that magnitude, we did not get every word perfect, or every provision as clear as it could be. That is the point of the bill before us today—H.R. 3361 is a narrow, technical bill that corrects inadvertent errors in drafting contained in the original law, and provides necessary clarification and focus, to ensure that the law is administered as Congress intended. For that reason, I support the bill before us today, and hope that it will quickly be enacted into law.

I must note for the record, however, that more remains to be done. The bill before us is very narrow in scope, and addresses only those issues that are considered purely technical on a consensus basis. There are other issues that remain to be addressed.

For example, late last year, the Senate passed by unanimous consent its own version of a technical corrections bill, which included critical clarifications with respect to the issue of asset smoothing. I would hope that this issue is addressed in any final technical correction package that we consider.

Also, there are numerous provisions which Members and staff have discussed since enactment of the 2006 law, which enjoy broad, bipartisan support, but which did not fall within the scope of this narrow package of technical corrections. Going forward, it will be necessary for us to address these items, and I stand ready to work with my Chairman, Mr. MILLER, and the distinguished Chairman and Ranking Member of the Ways and Means Committee in doing so.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I reiterate my support for this narrow legislation.

Mr. POMEROY. 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 North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3361, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3361.

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

There was no objection.

RECOGNIZING THE EXCEPTIONAL SACRIFICE OF THE 69TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, KNOWN AS THE FIGHTING 69TH

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 991) recognizing the exceptional sacrifice of the 69th Infantry Regiment, known as the Fighting 69th, in support of the Global War on Terror.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 991

Whereas the 69th Infantry Regiment, or the Fighting 69th, with citizen-soldiers from Brooklyn, Queens, Manhattan, the Bronx, Staten Island, and Long Island, has faithfully answered America's call to arms since its formation in 1851;

Whereas the Fighting 69th was one of the first units to assist in the recovery effort at the World Trade Center in New York following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack, where they lost a comrade, a firefighter;

Whereas the 69th Infantry Regiment, while deployed to Iraq as "Task Force Wolfhound", its first overseas combat since World War II, fought to defend the city of Al Taji against al-Qaeda terrorists, protected Iraq's first free elections, and secured the infamous "Route Irish", the most dangerous road in Baghdad;

Whereas 19 members of the Fighting 69th were killed in action and over 78 were wounded in Operation Wolfhound; and

Whereas the Fighting 69th has now served the Nation in 5 wars and over 20 campaigns, and Congress has awarded 6 members with the Congressional Medal of Honor: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the 69th Infantry Regiment, or the Fighting 69th, as one of the great regiments in American military history;

(2) recognizes that America owes a tremendous debt for the exceptional service, patriotism, and fidelity of the soldiers of the Fighting 69th;

(3) recognizes that the Fighting 69th has continually participated in the Global War on Terror since the attack on September 11, 2001; and

(4) acknowledges that as the 69th Infantry Regiment deploys to Afghanistan to fight in the central front in the Global War on Terror, that the proud traditions of the regiment will be respected and that the sacrifices of one of America's most storied combat units will not go unnoticed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCINTYRE) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

I rise today in support of H. Res. 991 which recognizes the exceptional service of the 69th Infantry Regiment known as the Fighting 69th in support of the conflicts that they have been involved in around the world. The 69th Infantry Regiment has a proud and strong history dating back to 1851 when it was created as the 69th New York Militia.

The regiment has an Irish heritage because at its inception it was made up entirely of Irish Americans. Not only is it to honor for their current contributions to this country, but also it is only fitting that with the approach of St. Patrick's Day this coming Monday, when we honor our country's Irish heritage, it is also equally important to recognize that based upon this unit's history and its Irish heritage that we recognize this unit at this time.

This unit, while deployed to Iraq as Task Force Wolfhound, secured the infamous Route Irish, which was one of the most dangerous roads in Baghdad. With that said, the Fighting 69th has now served our Nation in five wars and in over 20 campaigns. They are made up of New Yorkers from Brooklyn, Queens, Manhattan, the Bronx, Staten Island and Long Island. These servicemembers are a tremendous credit to themselves, to their country and their unit.

Those individuals who have previously served in the Fighting 69th would be proud of those that are currently serving and who are now carrying the mantle and battle colors of one of the greatest regiments in American history. The actions of the Fighting 69th, both after 9/11, to include their assistance and recovery efforts of the World Trade Center in New York, and their deployment now to Iraq, show the tremendous service and sacrifices this regiment has made, and that these servicemembers have individually, and, of course, collectively given their country. When the call to serve and fight has come, the Fighting 69th continues to answer that call.

I would like to thank my colleague and my friend and fellow member of the Blue Dog Coalition, Congressman STEVE ISRAEL of New York, who is a former member of the House Armed

Services Committee and who now currently serves on the House Appropriations Committee and who was also a cochairman of both the Center Aisle Caucus and the Democrat Study Group on national security, for bringing this resolution to the floor at this time.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 991, which recognizes the continuing service of the 69th Infantry Regiment, New York National Guard, whose citizen soldiers have faithfully answered America's call to arms since the regiment's formation back in 1851.

Today, the 69th Infantry Regiment is again deploying to Afghanistan to continue America's fight in the global war on terror.

In this most recent of American wars, the 69th has borne already a distinguished part. It was one of the first units to assist, as was mentioned, in the recovery effort at the World Trade Center in New York following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack. It subsequently deployed to Iraq as Task Force Wolfhound where it fought to defend the City of al Taji against al Qaeda terrorists, protected Iraq's free elections, first free elections, and secured the infamous Route Irish, the most dangerous road in Baghdad. During that service in Iraq, 19 members of the Fighting 69th were killed in action and 78 were wounded.

In its history, the regiment has served the Nation, and as was mentioned also, in five wars and 20 campaigns and six of its members have been awarded the Medal of Honor. It is fitting that this resolution recognizes not only the historic contributions of the 69th Infantry Regiment, but also the depth America owes the soldiers of the unit for their exceptional service, patriotism and fidelity in fighting in all fronts of the global war on terror since the attack on September 11, 2001.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to my friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL).

Mr. ISRAEL. I thank the distinguished gentleman, my very good friend from North Carolina, who has always been a tenacious advocate for the needs of the military and military families at Fort Bragg. I don't reside in North Carolina, but I do know from our friendship and our many conversations that no one fights harder and more effectively to represent the interests of those who are at Fort Bragg, including many of my constituents, who are there now waiting to deploy to Afghanistan.

I am very proud to stand here as a sponsor of this bill to honor New York's 69th Infantry Regiment, known

as the Fighting 69th, once fought as part of the Irish Brigade.

I also want to acknowledge my cosponsor, Congressman PETER KING, the gentleman from New York, one of the earliest Republican sponsors of this measure which I have drafted.

Soon we will celebrate St. Patrick's day. That is a day when we will commemorate the enduring contributions of Irish Americans to the founding and development of this Nation.

In fact, if you read a book by Tom Cahill called "How the Irish Saved Civilization," you would know that not only have the Irish made an enduring contribution to the founding and development of our country, but that their contribution transcends our country. When the world was a dark place, when the Roman Empire fell, when barbarians ruled, they tore down libraries, they destroyed all literature.

But it was the Irish who built monasteries. It was the Irish who brought scribes in who literally copied all of the great works of civilization. They preserved it. They handed it down from one generation to the next so that we would have it today.

In fact, it was Irish who did save civilization and similarly, it is the Fighting Irish, the 69th Infantry, that has saved America time after time after time and always answered their country's call.

Tonight, we put aside whatever political differences many of us have had in the past with respect to whether we should go to war in Iraq or not have gone to war in Iraq. That's not what this is about. Because, together, every Member of this House, Democrats and Republicans, support those who are fighting for our country and have answered the country's call.

We support men and women when they are in battle. We support them when they come home. I have always said thank God we live in a country that gives us the right to agree with the decision to go to war, the right to disagree with that decision, the right to remain silent. But no one has any right at all to forget the contributions that servicemembers make when they are called into duty. That is what this resolution is about.

Tonight there are a group of men who are in my friend from North Carolina's district who are at Fort Bragg. They are waiting to deploy to Afghanistan with the Fighting 69th. They are continuing the proudest traditions of being deployed to some of the most dangerous places around the world.

In the French campaigns of World War I, the island-hopping battles of World War II, in Iraq. That has been the history of the Fighting 69th since 1851.

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In fact, it is safe to say that it was the 69th that saved the Union during the Civil War. And I would say, with apologies to my friend from North Carolina, the fact of the matter is that

those of us on the north side of the Mason-Dixon Line recognize the fact that had it not been for the Fighting 69th, that we might have lost. Why is that? Because in 1861 there was a rumor that the British were going to assist and aid the Confederacy because the British needed cotton and textiles. Had they done that, that would have tilted the balance. That would have ended the cause for those of us north of the Mason-Dixon Line.

But you know what? President Lincoln did something very, very smart. Knowing that we could not afford for that to happen, he rallied the Irish boys. He went into New York City, and he mobilized many brand-new Irish American citizens in New York City and asked them to fight for freedom and to fight for the Union. And they fought. They fought at Malvern Hill in Virginia, not very far away from here. They fought against the dreaded and omnipotent Louisiana Tigers. And they won that battle. It was one of the first battles that the Union won. We were getting beaten in many of the early battles. And when Robert E. Lee asked his staff, Who beat us? Who did we just fight? His staff said, General, it was the 69th New York, to which Robert E. Lee, said, Ah, the Fighting 69th. And that is how they got their name, and they have carried that tradition with them ever since, through four wars and a fight to come in Afghanistan, 19 campaigns, six medals of honor.

On 9/11, many of them went to the Lexington Avenue Armory. I was there just a few weeks ago. And then they went to Ground Zero. One lost his life, Firefighter Gerard Batpees, a first lieutenant in the 69th. And then they went to Iraq, men like Chris Daniels from Centerport, Lou Delapizi from Bay Shore, and Col. Charles T. Crosby, the commander of the 69th in New York City.

Mr. Speaker, I want to wrap up by telling my colleagues that a few weeks ago I visited with men of the Fighting 69th at the Bay Shore Armory on Long Island, and we had some good old New York pizza together, and I plan to visit with them in Afghanistan this July.

Many of us marched in St. Patrick's Day parades last week. Many of us will march again in St. Patrick's Day parades this weekend. And as we do, I hope we will remember the marches of the Fighting 69th, on Malvern Hill, in France, on Okinawa, where Private Ruiz won a Congressional Medal of Honor for single handedly destroying a Japanese pillbox. Private Ruiz, not exactly an Irish name, but the courage was Irish. On Route Irish in Baghdad, in Kabul and Jalalabad within weeks, that is where they marched and will continue to march. When they visit Afghanistan, they will be on some high mountains and in some very rainy and windy places, and I know we will think of them and apply to them this Irish blessing:

"May you always have walls for the wind,

a roof for the rain,
tea beside the fire,
laughter to cheer you on,
those you love near you,
and all your heart may desire.”

Mr. Speaker, may they come home soon to a country safer and sounder because of their courage.

I want to again thank the gentleman from North Carolina for his leadership. I also want to thank Major John Mark Pierre, an Army Fellow assigned to my office. He understood how important this bill was to me and his assistance was invaluable. I want to also thank Chairman SKELTON and Ranking Member HUNTER for allowing this resolution to come to this floor.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise in support of this important legislation, H. Res. 991, honoring New York's famed 69th Infantry Regiment for its dedication and valorous service in the war against terror, particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Fighting 69th has been engaged in the war against terrorism since the very onset of the war, having been deployed to secure Ground Zero in the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

The 69th was deployed to Iraq in “Operation Wolfhound” and served with great distinction, defending the city of Al Taji, protecting Iraq's first free elections and, most significantly, securing “Route Irish” which had been the most dangerous travel route in Baghdad. Tragically the 69th had 19 troops killed in “Operation Wolfhound” and 78 wounded. At no time, however, did the Fighting 69th ever waver in its mission. The Fighting 69th is now being deployed to Afghanistan where it will once more take the fight to our enemy.

Having served in the Fighting 69th and being an active member of the 69th Infantry Veterans' Corps, I take particular pride in this regiment's achievements.

The Fighting 69th has served in five wars and six of its members have been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Its courageous service in Iraq and Afghanistan is adding new chapters to the regiment's historic and noble history.

I urge adoption of the resolution.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers that are available, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCINTYRE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 991.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THAT ALL AMERICANS SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN MOMENT OF SILENCE TO REFLECT UPON SERV- ICE AND SACRIFICE OF MEM- BERS OF THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 953) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that all Americans should participate in a moment of silence to reflect upon the service and sacrifice of members of the United States Armed Forces both at home and abroad, and their families, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 953

Whereas it was through the brave and noble efforts of the Nation's forefathers that the United States first gained freedom and became a sovereign nation;

Whereas there are more than 1,354,000 active component and more than 1,100,000 reserve component members of the Armed Forces serving the Nation in support and defense of the values and freedom that all Americans cherish;

Whereas the members of the Armed Forces deserve the utmost respect and admiration of their fellow Americans for putting their lives in danger for the sake of the freedoms enjoyed by all Americans;

Whereas the families of members of the Armed Forces make sacrifices commensurate with the men and women of the Armed Forces;

Whereas members of the Armed Forces are defending freedom and democracy around the globe and are playing a vital role in protecting the safety and security of all Americans;

Whereas the Nation officially celebrates and honors the accomplishments and sacrifices of veterans, patriots, and leaders who fought for freedom, this resolution pays tribute to those who currently serve in the Armed Forces;

Whereas all Americans should participate in a moment of silence to support our troops and their families; and

Whereas March 26th, 2008, is designated as “National Support Our Troops Day”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that all Americans should participate in a moment of silence to reflect upon the service and sacrifice of members of the United States Armed Forces both at home and abroad, and their families.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCINTYRE) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight in support of H. Res. 953 honoring the service and sacrifice of the members of the United States Armed Forces, both at home and abroad, as well as their families.

Every day we have servicemembers who volunteer to serve in harm's way. They have volunteered to serve our great country and protect its citizens from threats to liberty and our way of life.

Indeed, by God's grace, our Nation now celebrates 232 years of freedom this year, and it is due to the service and sacrifices that have been made throughout our history by the men and women of this country who have served in its military.

This evening, it is no different. Just like in the past when young men and women stepped forward to serve, they continue to do so. However, the difference now of course is our Nation is at war. And today, these men and women are joining the military knowing they will be headed overseas, knowing they will be put in harm's way, knowing that they will be sent away from their families and their loved ones and their communities.

It takes tremendous courage, Mr. Speaker, and intestinal fortitude to come forward and wear the uniform, especially in today's environment where we are fighting conflicts literally all around the world. I have spent time with many of our men and women in uniform, both at home and abroad, in many different countries and on different continents, and I have seen it in their eyes and heard it from the deepest part of their hearts as they have expressed their commitment, as I have seen their courage, and I have understood their conviction to serve our country and to honor it, putting their very lives on the line. Their unselfish service and their sacrifice is quite evident.

Whether it is our active duty personnel who have heard the call to duty or our Reserve component members who are our citizen soldiers who stand up to be counted to go out and serve and defend our values and freedom whenever called upon, we all are so appreciative of the service that our men and women in uniform give.

And we realize it is not just the servicemembers themselves, but also their families who are making sacrifices. The parents, the spouses, the children who go many months, a year, and sometimes even longer without seeing their loved ones. It is they who are constantly concerned, and have to go about life here without their son or daughter or husband or wife or mother or father or brother or sister. It is they who also sacrifice for this great country by yielding up a family member to go and serve on behalf of all of us.

Whether it is missing the birth of a child or the first steps of a newborn, whether it is watching their child in a