

This bill is supported by the National Governors Association, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the Council of State Governments, the National Association of Counties, the National League of Cities, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the International City/County Management Associations, as well as the National Association of Clean Water Agencies. All of these national groups understand that stormwater management fees, without any exceptions, are necessary for managing and reducing water pollution caused by stormwater runoff. Moreover, they understand that many agencies in States and localities may stop paying their water and stormwater management fees if we do not act, putting even more financial burden on residents.

Federal law has mandated that these local governments must collect these fees. No exemption has been granted to Federal facilities. Please support S. 3481 to clarify the original intent of the law.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 22, 2010

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I was unable to cast votes on the following legislative measures. If I were present for roll call votes, I would have voted "aye" for each of the following votes:

Roll 657, December 21, 2010: On Agreeing to the Resolution: H. Res. 1771, Waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules, and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules.

Roll 658, December 21, 2010: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass: H.R. 6540, Defense Level Playing Field Act.

Roll 659, December 21, 2010: On Motion to Concur in the Senate Amendment: H.R. 5116, America COMPETES Reauthorization Act.

Roll 660, December 21, 2010: On Motion to Concur in the Senate Amendment: H.R. 2142, GPRA Modernization Act of 2010.

Roll 661, December 21, 2010: On Motion to Concur in the Senate Amendments: H.R. 2751, FDA Food Safety Modernization Act.

Roll 662, December 21, 2010: On Motion to Concur in the Senate amendment to House amendment to Senate amendment: H.R. 3082, Making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes.

Roll 663, December 21, 2010: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass: H.R. 6547, Protecting Students from Sexual and Violent Predators Act.

Roll 664, December 21, 2010: On Motion to Concur in the Senate Amendment: H.R. 847, James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DEAN HELLER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 22, 2010

Mr. HELLER. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 662 I was unavoidably detained.

Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS AND SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EXTENSIONS ACT, 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. PEDRO R. PIERLUISI

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 21, 2010

Mr. PIERLUISI. Madam Speaker, I rise to express my strong support for the inclusion of increased funding for the Federal Pell Grant Program in the Continuing Resolution. Pell Grants are instrumental in helping students obtain college degrees and further prepare themselves to join the modern workplace. In Puerto Rico, over 280,000 students benefit from this funding each year.

Last year, I was proud to join my colleagues on the House Education Committee in voting to increase the maximum Pell Grant award to \$5,550 for the current academic year and to tie future awards to inflation. However, this increased funding will be put in jeopardy if Congress does not act today. Largely as a result of the economic downturn, Pell Grant applications have increased by 20 percent during the past year. Without an additional investment in the Pell Grant Program, the maximum award could be cut by more than 15 percent, putting college out of reach for many students.

I urge my colleagues to support the Continuing Resolution to ensure that college remains affordable for our Nation's students.

POST-9/11 VETERANS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 2010

SPEECH OF

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 15, 2010

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 3447, the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Improvements Act of 2010.

The original GI Bill proved to be a landmark initiative for our troops and an outstanding investment in the future of our Nation. The Post-9/11 GI Bill, signed into law in 2008, built on the success of the original program by providing helpful and hard-earned educational and economic benefits for our newest generation of veterans. Although today's legislation seeks to make it easier for veterans to utilize their educational benefits, some of the changes will have detrimental consequences.

Just as the veterans of WWII were the engine of economic recovery and expansion in the post-war period, the most recent genera-

tion of veterans will continue their service to America by reaching their full educational and economic potential through the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

While I support this bill and urge my colleagues to vote for it, there are some provisions in the legislation that I believe deserve additional consideration. Although I support setting a national average tuition rate for benefits, I am concerned that students in states like New York will be negatively impacted by the \$17,500 baseline.

This legislation will reduce benefits for students in New York already enrolled in programs where the cost is above the baseline. Students based decisions about which institution of higher education to attend partly on a benefit level guaranteed in the 2008 law. A "hold harmless" provision would have allowed these students to continue to receive the same level benefits for which they are entitled.

Under current law, state approving agencies, SAAs, are charged with approving programs and schools that are deemed appropriate for vets using the GI Bill. S. 3447 permits the Veterans Administration, VA, to make this determination and I am concerned that this responsibility should remain within SAA's jurisdiction, as they have been the experts in protecting veterans from fraudulent programs. The bill goes further by permitting veterans to use their GI benefits at schools without any approval by SAAs or the VA. In my view this is unwise.

This legislation permits the VA to expand GI benefits to trade schools, unaccredited colleges, and programs that lead to no degree or certificate. While I understand that many veterans choose not to take a more traditional path and attend an institution of higher education, I am deeply concerned that taxpayer dollars will go to programs that will not lead to gainful employment.

I am also concerned that this bill includes a so-called "last-payer" provision. The last payer provision withholds the student's GI Bill benefit until a calculation is made of any state and private tuition aid, for which a veteran may be eligible. In some cases, this would cause a delay in GI benefits and lead to needless confusion.

As a former college administrator, I am very pleased to see so many veterans returning home and choosing to seek further education. However, I am deeply concerned with a growing number of reports that some institutions may be abusing GI tuition payments by aggressively targeting veterans for academic programs that may not provide an actual benefit to a student, such as preparation for future employment.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that in the 112th Congress we can achieve bipartisan solutions to these issues to protect both taxpayers and distinguished veterans. The Post-9/11 GI Bill is a small token of our appreciation for their valor and service to our Nation. I would like to submit for the RECORD a letter signed by various higher education groups that outlines the community's concerns with this legislation.

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION,
Washington, DC, December 14, 2010.

*House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the American Council on Education and the organizations listed below, we write to express our hope that before adjournment, the 111th Congress will approve a final version of the

Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Improvement Act of 2010 that addresses the concerns outlined below.

Both the House version (H.R. 6430) and the Senate version (S. 3447) make welcome improvements to current law, such as expanding the benefits to troops serving in the Active Guard Reserve and to National Guard members who have honorably served their country on active duty, including at the sites of natural disasters. The bills also replace the complex state-by-state tuition and fee cap look-up chart with language that specifies that GI Bill benefits cover tuition and fees for veterans attending public institutions while establishing a single national tuition baseline for those who enroll in private institutions.

However, we believe that the House version is preferable in two very critical respects. First, S. 3447 contains a provision that would add a new source of confusion for veterans and prevent them from having a clear idea of the level of support to which they are entitled. This so-called "last-payer" provision, which withholds the GI Bill benefit until a calculation is made of any state and private tuition aid for which a veteran may be eligible, would not only confound veterans and delay the delivery of aid, but in some cases would conflict with state statutes. In contrast, H.R. 6430 does not include such a provision and will help end the frustration and confusion that far too many veterans have experienced in attempting to access their benefits.

Second, H.R. 6430 includes an important "hold harmless" provision, designed to protect veterans who might otherwise be negatively impacted by the establishment of a national baseline. In several states, veterans attending private institutions currently receive a base benefit that is greater than the new national baseline amount provided in either version of the legislation. By failing to include this "hold harmless" language, the Senate bill would reduce benefits for a number of veterans upon enrollment for a subsequent term. In contrast, the House bill would help ensure that veterans continue to receive their current benefits without interruption.

As this legislation nears passage, we strongly urge you to modify S. 3447 so that it reflects the approach taken by the House bill on these two important issues. Our campuses have worked very hard to smooth out the difficulties that veterans have faced under current law, and these improvements will enable them to serve veterans even more effectively.

Thank you for all of your work on behalf of the nation's veterans.

Sincerely,

MOLLY CORBETT BROAD,
President.

DOMESTIC MINOR SEX TRAFFICKING DETERRENCE AND VICTIMS SUPPORT ACT OF 2010

SPEECH OF

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 21, 2010

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of S. 2925, the Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking Deterrence and Victims Support Act.

It is fitting that as one of the last acts of this Congress which has done so much to aid the

most vulnerable in our society, we are considering legislation that would protect children from sex traffickers.

Tragically, this heinous crime is becoming more common with as many as 100,000 young people trafficked every year within our borders.

To address this heartbreaking trend, the legislation before us authorizes a comprehensive grant program to identify and assist victims and strengthens the National Crime Information Center, NCIC, database that enables law enforcement officials to track missing and exploited children.

These commonsense steps will make a real difference in the lives of thousands of kids who have experienced unimaginable ordeals.

S. 2925 mirrors House legislation authored by my colleagues Congresswoman CAROLYN MALONEY and Congressman CHRIS SMITH. I applaud their hard work on behalf of these forgotten young people and commend them for their leadership in devising smart solutions to fight the scourge of child prostitution in America.

The Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking Deterrence and Victims Support Act will significantly augment our efforts to help children traumatized by the worst kind of criminal act and I urge its swift passage.

In an era characterized by bitter partisanship, it is exceedingly gratifying for me that members of this body can still reach across the aisle and stand together in defense of children caught in perilous circumstances.

It is my sincere hope that next year we can come together in the same spirit of bipartisanship to help young people apprehended along our southern border.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DEAN HELLER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 22, 2010

Mr. HELLER. Madam Speaker, on roll call No. 663, I was unavoidably detained.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 22, 2010

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, due to an illness, I was unable to be in Washington, DC, for votes on December 21, 2010 and December 22, 2010.

Had I been present for the votes on Tuesday, December 21, 2010, I would have voted as follows:

Rollcall vote No. 662: I would have voted in favor of the Motion to Concur in the Senate amendment to House amendment to Senate amendment on H.R. 3082, the Continuing Appropriations Act for 2011.

Had I been present for the votes on Wednesday, December 22, I would have voted as follows:

Rollcall vote No. 663: I would have voted in favor of the Motion to Concur in the Senate amendment to H.R. 847, the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act.

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL ALPHONSE R. TELESE JR.
AND SPECIALIST JIM BATCHELOR

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 22, 2010

Mr. HALL of Texas. Madam Speaker, as we approach the close of the 111th Congress, it is important to remember our men and women in uniform around the world. These brave men and women sacrifice every day to ensure that United States citizens enjoy the freedom that we all cherish. We pay tribute as well to our wounded warriors and wish them a safe and happy holiday season.

One such hero is retired specialist Jim Batchelor who has served his country proudly for over three and a half years. During his tenure in the Army he has earned numerous awards and decorations, including the Purple Heart, Combat Infantry Badge, expert badges in driving and marksmanship, good conduct medals, and Army Commendation medals. Not allowing his military injury to slow him down, he has finished his degree in criminal justice and is now pursuing a master in psychology to help his fellow soldiers returning from the war. He and his wife, Antoinette, live in Cooper Texas, and are expecting the birth of their first child.

Another hero who deserves tribute is retired Lieutenant Colonel Alphonse R. Telese Jr. Mr. Telese served in the U.S. Army for over 32 years before retiring in August of 2008. It was during his tour of duty in Iraq that he was permanently injured during a mortar attack. He has received numerous awards and decorations throughout his distinguished career. These include the Legion of Merit award, National Defense Medal, and the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, to name a few. Today, he and his wife Tierney reside in Frisco, Texas. Since his retirement, LTC Telese continues to support the military, volunteering his time and talents to the Dallas Summer Boat Show Tournament of Heroes Invitation Bass Fishing Tournament which provides a much deserved break for our military heroes.

As we adjourn today, let us do so in memory and in honor of those who answer the call to duty and to whom we owe a debt of gratitude that can never be paid.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ERIK PAULSEN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 22, 2010

Mr. PAULSEN. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 657, (H. Res. 1771), my flight was delayed due to weather and had I been present, I would have voted "no."