

Chairman FILNER, if they could explain why this very important bill was not permitted consideration on the floor today?

Mr. FILNER. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. STEARNS. I yield.

Mr. FILNER. As the gentleman knows, we included that bill on a list of seven bills that we asked to be taken up on the floor, and we were scheduled for six of them. That is as far as I know.

Mr. STEARNS. I understand he is saying that it wasn't put in the loop at the moment, it wasn't put on the schedule, but I think you are also saying that this is the type of bill that you support and you believe should be part of a vote on the floor. Can I assume you support this bill?

Mr. FILNER. If the gentleman would continue to yield, I was one of the Californians who signed the original petition, and I support the bill. We are as mystified as you are.

Mr. STEARNS. Well, Madam Speaker, I think it is unfortunate that this bill to honor an individual who did so much for our blind veterans community and paid the ultimate sacrifice in service to his country, this particular bill is not being considered this afternoon. Many of us are disappointed, and we will work with Ranking Member BUYER and Chairman FILNER, since he is a signee on the unanimous delegation letter, to have it brought to the floor at the earliest opportunity.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the joint resolution.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.J. Res 80, "Recognizing and Honoring the blinded veterans association on its 65th anniversary of representing blinded veterans and their families," a bill sponsored by my colleague from Illinois, Congresswoman HALVORSON.

H.J. Res. 80 will honor those who have sacrificed greatly for this nation and have lost their eyesight in the process. These veterans have given great contributions and made incredible personal sacrifices so that all of us in this country might live in a safe and secure nation and world. When we pay tribute to the service of our brave veterans, we acknowledge the great debt that this Nation owes them.

Because I realize that our veterans deserve our very best, I introduced H.R. 1240, the Vision Impairment Specialist Training Act (VISTA), passed into law as part of larger bill. The provisions of VISTA help our nation's blind and low-vision veterans by establishing a scholarship program for students seeking training in blind rehabilitation. There are more than 160,000 legally blind veterans in the

United States, but approximately 35,000 are currently enrolled in Veterans Health Administration. Members of the armed forces are important to our nation and we show them our appreciation by taking care of them when they no longer can serve.

Caring for our veterans also means giving them our time. I have had the honor of visiting with some of our wounded soldiers at Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, D.C. Many of these soldiers were recovering from some of the most horrific wounds imaginable. But what made the most indelible impression on me was that to a man and woman, there was no self-pity or anger at their fate. Instead of anger or sorrow there was only concern for their fellow soldiers and pride in the certain knowledge that they had fought valiantly on behalf of a country they loved. There is no reason that any of our veterans should not receive the highest care from all of us in this country. I hope all Americans take the time to visit their local VA hospital and thank the wounded for their service to our country." We must do everything possible to let our veterans know how much we value their service.

We all know that no one has paid a higher price than the brave men and women through the years who gave the last full measure of devotion to their country. Whether it is the ultimate sacrifice of life or the loss of limb or the loss of time with family and friends, we owe our veterans an enormous outstanding debt of gratitude. So, let us celebrate and recognize our blinded veterans during the 65th anniversary of the Blinded Veterans Association.

It is out of my profound respect and gratitude for all who wear and have worn the uniform of the United States that I continue to work so hard to pass legislation that will ensure that veterans receive the health care, job opportunities, housing assistance, and educational benefits they deserve. Caring for our veterans also means giving them our support when they need it.

Madam Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues to support H.J. 80.

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues' unanimous support, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution, H.J. Res. 80.

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. FILNER. Madam Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

HELPING HEROES KEEP THEIR HOMES ACT OF 2009

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the

bill (H.R. 3976) to extend certain expiring provisions providing enhanced protections for servicemembers relating to mortgages and mortgage foreclosure, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3976

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Helping Heroes Keep Their Homes Act of 2010".

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF ENHANCED PROTECTIONS FOR SERVICEMEMBERS RELATING TO MORTGAGES AND MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE UNDER SERVICEMEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF ACT.

(a) EXTENSION.—Paragraph (2) of section 2203(c) of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-289) is amended—

(1) by striking "December 31, 2010" and inserting "December 31, 2015"; and

(2) by striking "January 1, 2011" and inserting "January 1, 2016".

(b) PROTECTION FOR SURVIVING SPOUSE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 303 of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 533) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(e) PROTECTION FOR SURVIVING SPOUSE.—With respect to a servicemember who dies while in military service and whose death is service-connected, this section shall apply to the surviving spouse of the servicemember if such spouse is the successor in interest to property covered under subsection (a)."

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsection (e) of section 303 of such Act, as added by paragraph (1), shall apply to a surviving spouse of a servicemember whose death is on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

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

Madam Speaker, I want to thank Congressman TOM PERRIELLO of Virginia for introducing H.R. 3976, the Helping Heroes Keep Their Homes Act of 2010. Mr. PERRIELLO is one of the first-term members we have on our committee. They are incredibly active and committed. Mr. PERRIELLO hit the ground running in his first year and is here today with a bill that will make an immediate difference in the lives of our Nation's military veterans.

I yield to Mr. PERRIELLO to explain the bill.

Mr. PERRIELLO. Madam Speaker, I am proud to stand in support of H.R. 3976, the Helping Heroes Keep Their Homes Act, a bill that I introduced to help ensure that our veterans have the resources they need to confront the myriad of challenges in today's economic environment.

Homeownership is the touchstone of the American dream. H.R. 3976, the Helping Heroes Keep Their Homes Act, will reauthorize home foreclosure protections to prevent lenders from foreclosing on veterans' homes within 9

months after the end of military service. Unfortunately, some of the protections established in Public Law 110-289 are scheduled to expire at the end of this year. This bill will ensure that these critical protections remain available to our veterans.

H.R. 3976 is a commonsense bill that has been supported by the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. I appreciate the bipartisan support on this bill, the chairman's leadership and others', and I urge all members of this body to join me in supporting our military families by voting in favor of this bill.

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, if I might digress, I just wanted to thank Mrs. HALVORSON on H.J. Res. 80 for introducing the resolution, and the chairman and Mr. BUYER for bringing that joint resolution to the floor. I think that is important to remind all of my colleagues.

Madam Speaker, I also rise in support of H.R. 3976, as amended, a bill to extend certain expiring provisions providing enhanced protections for servicemembers relating to mortgages and mortgage foreclosure.

Madam Speaker, Public Law 110-289, the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008, extended the protections against foreclosure and related actions on servicemembers' homes contained in the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act from 90 days to 9 months following lengthy deployments. Extensions of these protections will sunset December 31, 2010.

To address the continuing lengthy deployments by our servicemembers, the Veterans Home Preservation Act of 2010 would simply extend the mortgage-related sunset days contained in Public Law 110-289 through December 31, 2015. The bill also adds a new clause that would apply these same mortgage protections to a surviving spouse of a servicemember who dies while in military service and whose death is service connected.

Madam Speaker, these are good provisions that are appropriate given the current economic climate. I thank the authors of the bill, Mr. PERRIELLO, as well as Chairman HERSETH SANDLIN and Ranking Member BOOZMAN for their fine work, and the Veterans' Affairs Committee chairman, Mr. FILNER, and Mr. BUYER, the ranking member, for bringing this legislation to the floor.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FILNER. I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3976, as amended, a bill to extend certain expiring provisions providing enhanced protections to servicemembers relating to mortgages and mortgage foreclosure.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, it is unfortunate that these protections are

still needed. Two years ago or so we went through this major foreclosure crisis. We unfortunately, have not solved it and expect a recurrence, and we must protect and serve these brave men and women in uniform with the same commitment and dedication with which they protected and served us.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3976, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3976, "Helping Heroes Keep their Homes Act of 2009," a bill that will prevent mortgage lenders from foreclosing on a veteran's home after their service.

Strengthening comprehensive programs by investing in our veterans, requiring housing counselors to grant more housing opportunities at each Veteran Affairs centers is the right thing to do. It is my distinct honor to stand here today to support a bill that will allow us to show our appreciation to our veterans who are in danger of losing their homes and possibly becoming homeless.

I really find it unacceptable that an estimated 131,000 veterans are homeless on any given night after honorably serving their country. We are doing our veterans a great disservice. We owe our veterans the utmost respect, appreciation, and definitely a home to come home to after serving as a member of our Armed Forces. In these challenging economic times, we must do more to provide for our veterans basic needs. H.R. 3976 shows that all Americans take pride in our veterans service to this Nation, and just as the military doesn't believe in leaving a soldier behind on the battlefield, I believe that I speak for all Americans that we don't believe in leaving our veterans behind . . . we must help them push forward.

In these challenging economic times, with returning veterans experiencing unemployment rates in the double digits, we must do more to provide for our veterans' basic needs. This legislation shows that the U.S. is grateful for our veterans' service. Just as the military pledges to leave no soldier behind on the battlefield, this Nation will leave no veteran behind when they come home. This bill will allow us to show our appreciation and honor the service of veterans who have served this country and who now look to us to serve their needs.

Madam Speaker, these veterans have given great contributions and made incredible personal sacrifices so that all of us in this country might live in a safe and secure nation and world. Ensuring that our veterans are safeguarded from losing their homes is a small step towards repaying the insurmountable debt that all of us owe to all veterans. We must do everything possible to let our veterans know how much we value their service. We would be irresponsible and ungrateful if we acted otherwise.

Madam Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3976.

Mr. FILNER. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3976, as amended. 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 California (Mr. FILNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3976, as amended.

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. FILNER. Madam Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

VETERANS' COMPENSATION COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2010

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4667) to increase, effective as of December 1, 2010, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4667

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as "Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2010".

SEC. 2. INCREASE IN RATES OF DISABILITY COMPENSATION AND DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION.

(a) RATE ADJUSTMENT.—Effective on December 1, 2010, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall increase, in accordance with subsection (c), the dollar amounts in effect on November 30, 2010, for the payment of disability compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation under the provisions specified in subsection (b).

(b) AMOUNTS TO BE INCREASED.—The dollar amounts to be increased pursuant to subsection (a) are the following:

(1) WARTIME DISABILITY COMPENSATION.—Each of the dollar amounts under section 1114 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION FOR DEPENDENTS.—Each of the dollar amounts under section 1115(1) of such title.

(3) CLOTHING ALLOWANCE.—The dollar amount under section 1162 of such title.

(4) DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION TO SURVIVING SPOUSE.—Each of the dollar amounts under subsections (a) through (d) of section 1311 of such title.

(5) DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION TO CHILDREN.—Each of the dollar amounts under sections 1313(a) and 1314 of such title.

(c) DETERMINATION OF INCREASE.—