

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

REPEAL OF DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL

(Mr. POLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, I just returned from the signing of the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell. The President spoke wisely and strongly and welcomed those who were discharged under the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy to consider reenlisting.

President Obama said:

"There will never be a full accounting of the heroism demonstrated by gay Americans in service to this country." He continued, "As the first generation to serve openly in our armed services, you will stand for all those who came before you, and you will serve as role models for all those who come after you."

Madam Speaker, today is an important day, not just for gay and lesbian members of the military, but to all of us who are gay or lesbian, to our families, to our friends, for they all know that today we hold our heads a little higher as Americans. We are closer to equal treatment under the law, which is all we've ever asked for.

Our government will no longer be an instrument of discrimination against us, and all America will see and be told of the patriotism of the gay and lesbian Americans who proudly defend a country that today is one step closer to considering us equal.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 22, 2010.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on December 22, 2010 at 9:41 a.m.:

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 5470.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 4445.

That the Senate passed S. 3903.

That the Senate passed with amendments H.R. 6523.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

LORRAINE C. MILLER.

□ 1110

SOUTH CAROLINA GAINS A CONGRESSIONAL SEAT

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to ad-

dress the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I am grateful to welcome the addition of a new congressional seat to my home State of South Carolina, one of America's fastest growing States. The Census Bureau announced the State's population has grown enough to merit one more Representative in Congress. Our State has been enhanced by transplants from the Midwest and Northeast and from people across the world due to a mild climate and lower tax rates.

After 80 years, it appears we will regain a seventh House Member. The people of South Carolina will now have another advocate on their behalf in Washington and another electoral vote for President. Growing our representation on Capitol Hill is a key factor in achieving goals for the people of South Carolina. Our State will have another voice fighting for conservative principles with the new district on the Grand Strand with Florence.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Godspeed to Marine Captain Ky Hunter, who has successfully accomplished her service for the people of the Second District of South Carolina, and now will be in the liaison office of the Marine Corps.

IKE SKELTON NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2011

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 6523) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2011 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, with the Senate amendments thereto, and concur in the Senate amendments.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the Senate amendments is as follows:

Senate amendments:

Strike title XVII and corresponding table of contents on page 18.

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

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, reserving the right to object, I take this moment to express great disappointment at the situation the House now finds itself. It is very unfortunate that before us is an amended version of the Ike Skelton National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011.

Last night, the other body struck title XVII of the version of the bill that this House passed last Friday, December 17. Title XVII, Madam Speaker, was the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act, which the House has passed on multiple occasions with

strong bipartisan support. Several Senators objected to its inclusion in the bill. They expressed concerns over its budgetary impact, and indicated a willingness to work toward identifying an acceptable way to authorize and pay the claims.

I regret the inability to resolve this matter at this time, and I am very appreciative of the strong support from Chairman SKELTON and incoming chairman of the House Armed Services Committee Mr. McKEON of California for their strong support of this provision. The unresolved nature of Guam war claims has serious implications for the military build-up on Guam. I appreciate the administration's strong support for this provision. The administration recognizes the connection between resolving this issue and successfully implementing the military build-up on Guam.

We will continue our work to bring closure to this matter of justice for the people of Guam, and to act on the legislative recommendations of the Federal Guam War Claims Review Commission that reported to Congress pursuant to Public Law 107-333. It was not for a lack of effort from this body, and we will continue to build on the progress we've made. The underlying bill is important for our national defense and for our men and women in uniform and their families, and therefore this body is left no other choice but than to concur with the Senate amendments at this time.

Again, I want to thank everyone who has assisted me, both the leaders and to the multiple staff members who have helped us through this process.

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, I'll keep my remarks brief as this is the third time that the House will debate and vote on the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011. They say that the third time is the charm. Let it be so this morning.

I return to the floor with this bill because the Senate found it necessary to delete a portion of the House-passed bill in order to achieve the consensus needed to move the bill to final passage. The Senate amendment removes from the House bill Title 17, which dealt with Guam War Claims. I am deeply disappointed in the Senate's decision to remove this important legislation, which I strongly support and which has been so ably advocated by the delegate from Guam. However, here we are and we are out of time to engage with a back and forth with the Senate. We must move this bill to the President's desk or watch it die. That is why I ask for unanimous consent for the House to concur to the Senate amendment to H.R. 6523.

Let me briefly repeat what I said the other day. This bill is must pass legislation with many provisions that cannot become law any other way. This bill stops an increase in health care fees from hitting the families of military personnel; authorizes military families to extend TRICARE coverage to their dependent children under age 26; and adopts comprehensive legislation fighting sexual assault in the military. It creates a counter-IED database and enhances the effort to develop new, lightweight body armor. It gives DOD new

tools and authorities to reduce its energy demand while improving military readiness. It bolsters our defense against cyber attacks. It requires independent assessments of the National Nuclear Security Administration modernization plan and of the annual budget request for sustaining a strong deterrent. It aligns the Navy's long term shipbuilding plan with the QDR. And, it includes significant acquisition reform, the Improve Acquisition Act of 2010, which could save as much as \$135 billion over the next 5 years. That is just a sampling of the good work done in this bill.

I ask the House to support the men and women of the armed forces by passing this bill by unanimous consent, and ensure that the National Defense Authorization Act finally becomes law.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, H.R. 6523 is a strong bill that is intended to provide essential funding for our nation's troops, including providing our brave men and women in uniform the tools they need to succeed in our nation's missions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise to express my concerns about the Senate Amendment to H.R. 6523, the Ike Skelton National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011. The Senate amendment struck Title XVII of the underlying bill, once again, denying the people of Guam the promise of closure and justice on the matter of Guam War Claims.

The text of Title XVII was a compromise that eliminated payments to descendants of survivors of the brutal occupation that were subjected to personal injury. I support that compromise; in fact, I am an original co-sponsor of H.R. 44, the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act. It is important that we bring closure to this long standing injustice for the people of Guam. It is even more important given that the realignment of Marines from Okinawa to Guam will begin in earnest over the coming year.

I have travelled to Guam on a number of occasions and have been so impressed by the patriotism of the people led by Governor Felix Camacho and First Lady Joann Camacho, and I recognize the importance of this legislation to the Chamorro people. I look forward to working with Congresswoman MADELEINE BORDALLO and Incoming Chairman Congressman BUCK MCKEON, incoming Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, to address this matter in next year's defense authorization bill. It is time to finally bring closure to this long standing matter for the people of Guam which is so strategic for our nation's defense and where America's day begins. I appreciate the tireless efforts of Congresswoman MADELEINE BORDALLO's service for the people of Guam.

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, I withdraw my reservation.

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

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SAYING GOOD-BYE TO FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES

(Mr. YARMUTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. YARMUTH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to say good-bye to some dear friends and colleagues. Four years ago, we arrived in this body, over 40 of us, and we were called the majority makers because we had brought control of the House back to the Democrats. And now 18 of us are leaving for other endeavors. They have become more than colleagues and Members and great Americans, they have become part of a family.

So I salute BARON HILL, PAUL HODES, JOHN HALL, CAROL SHEA-PORTER, PATRICK MURPHY, RON KLEIN, STEVE KAGEN, JOE SESTAK, BRAD ELLSWORTH, CHARLIE WILSON, CHRIS CARNEY, ZACK SPACE, HARRY MITCHELL, MIKE ARCURI, PHIL HARE, BILL FOSTER, TRAVIS CHILDERS, and CIRO RODRIGUEZ. Although their faces will not appear in this body, at least on a frequent basis, the memories and the legacy that they have left will live on forever.

THE RUMP CONGRESS

(Mr. MCCLINTOCK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, this lame duck session is rapidly descending into farce. I believe the House is now in danger of becoming a caricature of everything the American people rejected in November: incompetence, arrogance, and a complete detachment from reality.

Nearly 2 months ago, the American people said very clearly they don't want this Congress legislating for them any longer. And instead of graciously and humbly accepting the public's verdict, the Democratic leaders seem intent to thumb their nose at the American people.

Perhaps the most bitter indictment of a malingering legislative body was delivered by Cromwell to the Rump Parliament. His words seem appropriate now to this rump Congress:

"You have sat here too long for any good you have been doing. It is not fit that you should sit here any longer. You shall now give way to better men. Now depart and go, I say, in the name of God, go."

CELEBRATING THE 111TH CONGRESS

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, today does end the 111th Congress, which Norm Ornstein, one of the most respected historians and observers of public events, said was the most historic and productive Congress since 1965.

I am proud to have been a Member of this 111th Congress that gave us health care, which this country yearned for for over 100 years; that saved us from the precipice of economic decline with the stimulus act that has done much good for this country and saved us

from a great depression; that gave us the Lilly Ledbetter law for women who were discriminated against in the workplace; that gave us Don't Ask, Don't Tell; that also gave us credit card reform, student loan reform, additional Pell Grants, tobacco regulations, and food safety legislation.

This 111th Congress did more than any Congress since Lyndon Johnson's in 1965 to 1966, and did it under the effective, passionate, honest, and remarkable leadership of the most historic Speaker in the House of Representatives' history, the Honorable NANCY PELOSI, who I am proud to have voted for and served with.

CONGRATULATING LADY NITTANY LIONS VOLLEYBALL TEAM

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, the Lady Nittany Lions volleyball team went to Kansas City on Saturday, December 18, and brought home a terrific and unprecedented Christmas present to their school, Penn State University. They won their fourth straight NCAA Division I championship.

While the team was undefeated in their previous two seasons, they were 32-5 going into the championship this year, and the California Golden Bears went into the match with a 30-4 season. The two teams have dominated the championships, meeting for 4 consecutive years in the regionals, semis or finals.

This was Coach Russ Rose's fifth championship, and the ladies celebrated by giving their coach a ring for his thumb. He is the first coach in NCAA Division I women's volleyball history to win five national titles.

The most outstanding player was Deja McClendon. Blair Brown summed up the feelings of the team in this quote:

"We're thrilled to have four national championships, but the legacy we want to leave is the program's history, I guess. It's the tradition of working hard every day in practice and going hard, because that's how you get here."

Congratulations to the team, the coach, and the school for this outstanding record.

PASS THE 9/11 FIRST RESPONDERS BILL

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAYNE. This is my country! Land of my birth!

This is my country! Grandest on Earth!

I pledge thee my allegiance, America, the bold,

For this is my country to have and to hold.