

The expanded reporting requirements allow for a more thorough determination of how successful this program is in rehabilitating patients suffering from TBI.

I am a doc. I know that, unless you measure something, it will not change. If we measure and find it doing well, hopefully, we expand; if not, we improve it.

It will also measure the satisfaction that the veteran and their family members have with the program. By expanding the definition of "assisted living," the bill also allows for more partnerships to take place with non-VA facilities so that veterans can receive the kind of care that serves their unique needs.

It is our duty as Members of Congress to care for our veterans and ensure they receive the best care available. I thank Chairman MILLER for working with me on this legislation.

I appreciate the opportunity to have it considered, and I urge all my colleagues to support it.

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN).

Ms. BROWN of Florida. I thank the ranking member. This is certainly a bill that I can support.

H.R. 4276 would improve the reporting requirement for the TBI assisted living pilot program so that we can better gauge its success and expansion of the definition of the community-based residential rehabilitation services so that veterans who have TBI have other residential and home-based assisted living options.

I think it is important for us to go back to what the first President of the United States said about any war that we participate in:

"The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justifiable, shall be directly proportional to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their country."

We are not just talking about this on Veterans Day, but about how we treat them and how we support them every day. I think this bill goes a long way to deal with some of the problems that they are experiencing after returning from the last two wars; so this is certainly a bill that I can support.

I want to say may God continue to bless America. I want to thank the veterans for their service—and not just thanking them, but this is really putting your money where your mouth is.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, we have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4276, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I too encourage all Members to support H.R. 4276, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4276, 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.

VETERANS' COMPENSATION COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2014

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2258) to provide for an increase, effective December 1, 2014, in 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:

S. 2258

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 "Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2014".

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

(a) RATE ADJUSTMENT.—Effective on December 1, 2014, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall increase, in accordance with subsection (c), the dollar amounts in effect on November 30, 2014, 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.—Each dollar amount described in subsection (b) shall be increased by the same percentage as the percentage by which benefit amounts payable under title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq.) are increased effective December 1, 2014, as a result of a determination under section 215(i) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)).

(d) SPECIAL RULE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may adjust administratively, consistent with the increases made under subsection (a), the rates of disability compensation payable to persons under section 10 of Public Law 85-857 (72 Stat. 1263) who have not received compensation under chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code.

(e) PUBLICATION OF ADJUSTED RATES.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish in the Federal Register the amounts specified in subsection (b), as increased under subsection (a), not later than the date on which the matters specified in section 215(i)(2)(D) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)(2)(D)) are required to be published by reason of a determination made under section 215(i) of such Act during fiscal year 2015.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) and the gentlewoman from Arizona (Mrs. KIRKPATRICK) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

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GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on S. 2258.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

As a senior member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I rise today in favor of S. 2258, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2014.

Mr. Speaker, it is timely that we consider this legislation today, having just observed last week the 13th anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks on our homeland, the catalyst for our efforts to fight terrorism.

Many of those who have sacrificed so much in recent and past conflicts aimed to protect America from harm are in continued and increased need. This is critical legislation that authorizes a cost-of-living adjustment for disabled veterans receiving disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs and other compensation for survivors of veterans who have died as a result of their services to our country.

The amount of the payment increases will be determined by the Consumer Price Index, which controls the cost-of-living adjustment for Social Security payments as well.

I would like to thank Congressman RUNYAN of New Jersey, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs within the Committee on Veterans Affairs, for introducing H.R. 4095, a companion bill to this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, last week the Senate passed S. 2258, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2014, which provides that veterans receive a cost-of-living adjustment beginning in December. Today, the House

can also act to ensure veterans continue to receive the support they deserve.

This is a bill that we must pass every year in order to ensure that the benefits we pay our veterans do not lose purchasing power because of inflation. Today we have the opportunity to pass this measure and send it to the President's desk.

This bill directs the VA to increase the rates of veterans' disability compensation, provide additional compensation for disabled veterans with dependents, ensure certain disabled veterans receive a clothing allowance, and increase dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses and children. These adjustments would be made effective December 1, 2014, and match the increase in Social Security benefits.

S. 2258 will assist the estimated 4.5 million veterans and survivors who receive these monthly benefits and often depend upon these payments to make ends meet. For some, it is their only source of income.

Without this annual COLA increase, veterans, their families and survivors, would see the value of their hard-earned benefits slowly erode. Providing for this cost-of-living increase is another important thing Congress can do to help veterans and their families that have already sacrificed so much for us.

I urge my colleagues to support S. 2258, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers at this time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. TITUS).

Ms. TITUS. I thank the gentlewoman from Arizona for yielding to me and for all her hard work on behalf of our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, as the ranking member of the Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee, I rise in support of S. 2258, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act.

Unlike Social Security COLA increases, Congress must act each year to provide veterans with the COLA increase that they earned and deserved.

I was proud to introduce the corresponding legislation in the House with our subcommittee chairman, JON RUNYAN. Together, we also introduced legislation to make this yearly adjustment automatic.

So today, the House will pass a number of bills that are designed to meet the bipartisan goal of ensuring our Nation's heroes receive all the benefits they have earned. But there is an important bill that has been blocked from consideration in the House. That bill is H.R. 2529, the Veteran Spouses Equal Treatment Act, which would provide all married veterans and their families access to Federal benefits that they deserve.

Last week in the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, only one Republican

had the courage to vote to provide access to VA benefits to legally married, same-sex couples, regardless of where they live, couples who received the benefits while they were in the military but lost them upon becoming veterans if they reside in certain States.

We heard all types of pitiful excuses. We heard that it was unconstitutional for Congress to force States to adopt Federal directives. That is ridiculous and intellectually dishonest. In fact, this House voted unanimously earlier this year to mandate that States provide instate tuition for veterans, a bill authored by the very Member who made the specious states' rights argument against H.R. 2529. And if you can even believe it, we heard process arguments as an excuse for not doing the right thing. I would remind my colleagues that they are the ones who make the process.

So when we vote today to adjust the COLA, remember that this increase is meaningless to thousands of our Nation's heroes in States like Texas, Florida, and North Carolina. They will not be receiving the benefits they earned and deserve. It is shameful and it is unfair.

So, Mr. Speaker, while I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2258, I would remind them of these facts and implore the Republican leadership to do the right thing and bring H.R. 2529 to the floor for a vote so all veterans will get the benefits they earned and deserve.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support S. 2258 and send this important bill to the President today.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I too urge all Members to support S. 2258, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, thank you, Chairman MILLER, for your work to bring this legislation to the floor of the House that is so important to so many veterans depending on VA compensation.

This legislation affects the benefits of all veterans, by raising the compensation they receive to allow them to continue to buy the products they need to live.

It is important to pass this clean bill to make sure that those who have sacrificed to protect the freedoms we hold most dear do not suffer in these tough economic times.

In the words of the first President of the United States, George Washington:

"The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional as to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their country."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 2258.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the

rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FEDERAL RESERVE TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2014

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 24) to require a full audit of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal reserve banks by the Comptroller General of the United States, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 24

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 "Federal Reserve Transparency Act of 2014".

SEC. 2. AUDIT REFORM AND TRANSPARENCY FOR THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 714 of title 31, United States Code, or any other provision of law, the Comptroller General shall complete an audit of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal reserve banks under subsection (b) of such section 714 within 12 months after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the audit required pursuant to subsection (a) is completed, the Comptroller General—

(A) shall submit to Congress a report on such audit; and

(B) shall make such report available to the Speaker of the House, the majority and minority leaders of the House of Representatives, the majority and minority leaders of the Senate, the Chairman and Ranking Member of the committee and each subcommittee of jurisdiction in the House of Representatives and the Senate, and any other Member of Congress who requests the report.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report under paragraph (1) shall include a detailed description of the findings and conclusion of the Comptroller General with respect to the audit that is the subject of the report, together with such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Comptroller General may determine to be appropriate.

(c) REPEAL OF CERTAIN LIMITATIONS.—Subsection (b) of section 714 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking the second sentence.

(d) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 714 of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (d)(3)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) by striking "or (f)";

(ii) in clause (i), by striking "or (f)"; and

(iii) in clause (ii), by striking "or (f)"; and

(B) in subparagraph (C), by striking "or (f)"; and

(2) by striking subsection (f).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.