

cleanup activities, or even terrorism events like dirty bombs.

This bill builds on DOE's unique biological research expertise and capabilities, which actually led to the establishment of the successful Human Genome Project that paved the way toward breakthroughs in modern medicine today.

Mr. Speaker, the bill also authorizes a National Academies study to identify current scientific challenges in this area and to help guide the program's long-term research agenda well into the next decade.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2014, cosponsored by every Democratic member of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, includes very similar language to what we now see in H.R. 5544, so we have no objection to this bill and support its passage.

We also look forward to working with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle—and, of course, on the other side of the Capitol—on far more comprehensive, bipartisan legislation to reauthorize the America COMPETES Act, as is strongly recommended by many of the most respected industry and academic leaders and organizations across the country.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Georgia for his leadership and for his service in the Congress, and of course, we wish him well as that term comes to an end.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my good friend from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS). I heard her comments, and they are very nice comments. She and I have been friends and sometimes on the opposite sides of issues, but she is a very dear friend and a great lady, and I appreciate her well wishes. I thank you very much. I appreciate that.

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5544, the Low-Dose Radiation Research Act of 2014, will increase our understanding of low-dose radiation. This research is critical for physicians and decision makers to more accurately assess potential health risks in this area.

I thank my friend, Chairman of the Oversight Subcommittee, Dr. PAUL BROUN, for introducing this legislation.

Many Americans are exposed to a broad range of low doses of ionizing radiation. These range from cosmic background radiation to medically based procedures, which include X-rays and CT scans.

However, our current approach to radiation safety relies on an outdated assumption that because high doses of radiation are harmful that much lower radiation doses are also harmful.

This assumption is not based on a reliable scientific foundation and prevents patients from making informed decisions about diagnostic exams and can lead to overly restrictive regulations.

The Department of Energy's (DOE) Low Dose Radiation Research Program within the

Office of Science focuses on the health effects of ionizing radiation and resolving the uncertainties in this area that currently exist.

Unfortunately, this program has not been a priority at DOE over recent years and has seen systematic budget cuts.

H.R. 5544 ensures the continuance of this important research program.

This legislation also directs the National Academies to formulate a long-term strategy to resolve uncertainties of whether and to what extent low dose radiation may pose health risks to humans. The bill also stipulates that the Academies must consider the most up-to-date studies in this field of research.

And finally, the bill requires the Department of Energy to develop a five-year research plan that responds to the Academies' recommendations.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BROUN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5544, 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 OF FOREIGN WARS FEDERAL CHARTER AMENDMENT

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5441) to amend the Federal charter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States to reflect the service of women in the Armed Forces of the United States.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5441

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

#### SECTION 1. REFLECTION OF SERVICE OF WOMEN IN THE ARMED FORCES IN THE FEDERAL CHARTER OF THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES.

(a) ORGANIZATION.—Section 230101(a) of title 36, United States Code, is amended by striking “men” and inserting “veterans”.

(b) PURPOSES.—Section 230102(3) of such title is amended by striking “widows” and inserting “surviving spouses”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on H.R. 5441, the bill currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

The Veterans of Foreign Wars is one of our largest and most lauded veterans organizations. It has successfully fought for veterans' rights for over a century and its members provide millions of hours a year in community service.

Among its goals are to “assist worthy comrades” and to “perpetuate the memory and history of our dead and to assist their widows and orphans.” Our veterans from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan are in a better place because of activities of the VFW.

Membership in the VFW is open to Korean war veterans and veterans who have “served honorably as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States—in a foreign war, insurrection, or expedition in service that has been recognized as campaign-medal service; and is governed by the authorization of the award of a campaign badge by the United States Government or in an area which entitled the individual to receive special pay for duty subject to hostile fire or imminent danger.”

Membership does not require that a servicemember have engaged in actual combat, only that they served in a combat zone.

Congress provided the VFW with a Federal charter in 1936. Robert Wallace, executive director of the VFW's Washington office, has sent a letter to the Judiciary Committee requesting that its charter be amended to be gender neutral. This is in recognition, Mr. Speaker, of the many female members of the VFW and their invaluable contributions to our military.

Mr. Wallace stated that:

Today, our military consists of both men and women who honorably put duty and service before themselves. Consistent with the growing number of military women who serve at all levels, women are taking leadership roles throughout our organization. The VFW strongly believes that combat service, not gender, determines VFW membership eligibility. That is why we opened our membership to women over 35 years ago. However, our congressional charter does not reflect this reality.

As the Congressional Research Service reported last year, almost 300,000 “female servicemembers have been deployed for contingency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.” In approximately 12 years of combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, over 800 women have been wounded and over 130 have died. Women have been recognized for their heroism, two earning Silver Star medals.

H.R. 5441, introduced by Congressman JEFF MILLER, makes the changes sought by the VFW and is strongly supported by the organization. I commend Representative MILLER for introducing the bill.

The VFW's current charter provides that the VFW is a “national association of men who as soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen served this Nation in wars, campaigns, and expeditions on foreign soil or in hostile waters.”

H.R. 5441 would replace “men” with “veterans.” The current charter provides that one of the purposes of the

organization is “to perpetuate the memory and history of our dead and to assist their widows and orphans.” The bill would replace “widows” with “surviving spouses.”

I urge my colleagues to support this meritorious bill that reflects the valor of women in our Armed Forces.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, as has been said, this bill makes a small but important change to the Federal charter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. As has been mentioned, it would amend the charter to become gender neutral by replacing “men” with “veterans” and “widows” with “surviving spouses.” I think doing this aligns the charter with the actual makeup of the organization today, and I totally support the change.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States has been serving veterans of our Armed Forces for over 100 years and traces its roots to the Spanish-American War. Only men were permitted to serve in the military when the organization was chartered in 1936, and of course, we know, since that time, things have changed a great deal.

The role of women in the military has greatly expanded. In fact, two of our colleagues—Congresswoman TULSI GABBARD of Hawaii and Congresswoman TAMMY DUCKWORTH of Illinois—both served with both distinction and honor in our military services and now serve with us as colleagues in the House.

Women serve in varied roles throughout the Armed Forces, and they have made many important sacrifices for the country. Women in fact now make up almost 10 percent of the total veterans population, and the Department of Veterans Affairs predicts they will represent nearly 18 percent of veterans by the year 2040.

In recognition of these facts, the VFW opened its membership to women over 35 years ago, and they certainly deserve our commendation for doing so.

Generally, as has been said many times, it should be up to the organization, not Congress, to decide who may and may not be a member of that organization. That is one of the many reasons why Members on both sides of the aisle have long supported the committee's policy against creating new Federal charters.

Even so, there is no policy against amending existing charters, and if such amendments are needed to align the charter to actual reality, then there is no reason to prevent such an amendment.

In fact, I also support the reason for this change. The Veterans of Foreign Wars seeks this change because it “strongly believes that combat service, not gender, determines membership eligibility.” I could not agree more, and I can only applaud the VFW for initiating this change and coming to

the Judiciary Committee, seeking out the author of the bill and working with us in a bipartisan basis to get here today.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the author of the bill, and this was unanimously approved by the Judiciary Committee.

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

□ 1530

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER), a champion for veterans' rights and chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. I thank the gentleman from North Carolina for yielding the time. I also want to thank Chairman GOODLATTE and the ranking member for speeding this through the Judiciary Committee.

I rise in support of this piece of legislation, which is a simple bill, Mr. Speaker, designated to update the congressional charter of the VFW to reflect today's active duty and veteran population by changing, as we have already heard, the word “men” to “veterans” and the word “widows” to “surviving spouses.”

Women veterans have in fact been eligible as members of the VFW since 1978, but like many things, it sometimes takes a little time for paperwork to catch up. I think VFW Commander in Chief John Stroud said it best in describing why they have requested this change:

We are not changing our congressional charter because it's politically correct. We're changing it because being an eligible veteran is what's important to our great organization, not one's gender, and changing “widows” to “surviving spouses” is more representative of today's military.

Women do in fact comprise over 16 percent of today's military force, and obviously, that means that they are making up an ever-increasing share of America's 22 million veterans as they return to civilian life.

I ask my colleagues to join Chairman GOODLATTE, Ms. LOFGREN, and myself in supporting H.R. 5441.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman MILLER for his leadership in this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 5441, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5441, which will amend the Federal charter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States to reflect the service of women in the Armed Forces.

This legislation is a common-sense update of an 80-year-old charter to better reflect the makeup of the modern military—namely, the inclusion of women in prominent roles throughout several branches of the military. The Veterans of Foreign Wars is a premier Veterans Service Organization, with more than 2 million members of all ages across our great country.

All Veterans are heroes regardless of their gender, and this legislation reflects that equality in the formal charter of a remarkably successful organization that exists to support all Veterans, and their spouses.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5441, which amends the federal charter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) to reflect the service of women in the Armed Forces of the United States.

As approved by Congress in 1936, the VFW charter provides that the VFW is a “national association of men who as soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen served this Nation in wars, campaigns and expeditions on foreign soil or in hostile waters[.]”

The charter further provides that one of the purposes of the organization is “to perpetuate the memory and history of our dead, and to assist their widows and orphans[.]”

By replacing the terms “men” with “veterans” and “widows” with “surviving spouses,” H.R. 5441 modifies the VFW charter to make it gender-neutral and reflect the reality that women have and continue to serve in combat theaters in defense of the United States.

At the time the charter was created, only men were permitted to serve in the military. Today, both women and men are permitted to serve in the military and over the last few years, women have become more involved in combat operations.

For example, between September 2001 and February 28, 2013, 299,548 female service members have been deployed for contingency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan during which time more than 800 women have been wounded and over 130 have died.

As of February 29, 2013, 16,407 female members were currently deployed in contingency operation according to the Department of Defense.

Women have been tested in battle and proved their heroism, earning numerous awards and commendations, including two Silver Star medals.

The expansion of roles for women in the armed forces has evolved over decades.

Under a Defense Department policy promulgated in 1994 policy, women could not be assigned to units, below the brigade level, whose primary mission is to engage in direct combat on the ground.

The practical effect of this policy meant that women were barred from infantry, artillery, armor, combat engineers, and special operations units of battalion size or smaller.

On January 24, 2013, however, then-Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta rescinded that policy, thus enabling women to serve in combat units.

The leadership and rank and file of the VFW strongly supports changing the national charter to make it gender-neutral:

Today, our military consists of both men and women who honorably put duty and service before themselves. Consistent with the growing number of military women who serve at all levels, women are taking leadership roles throughout our organization. That is why we opened our membership to women over 35 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, according to the VFW practice, it is combat service, not gender, that determines VFW membership eligibility.

Over 2 million women veterans have courageously served our country and defended our

freedoms for over 100 years, and their countless contributions and sacrifices must not be overlooked.

In the 18th Congressional District of Texas, there are 29,757 veterans, 3,219 of which are women.

Women veterans fortified the crucial role of women in the military, and females currently serving in the military continue to break down barriers, such as:

Admiral Michelle Howard, the Navy's first female four-star admiral; Army General Ann E. Dunwoody, the U.S. military's first female four-star officer; Dr. Mary E. Walker, the only woman who has been awarded the Medal of Honor.

As Anne S. (Sosh) Brehm, 1st Lt., USA NC, a World War II veteran said, "Let the generations know that the women in uniform also guaranteed their freedom."

Each year, I participate in the Annual Women in the Military Wreath Laying Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery to honor all women who have defended America throughout history.

The Women in Military Service for America Memorial serves as a reminder of the patriotism and bravery of women who have served in the United States Armed Services, and also tells their stories of service, sacrifice, and achievement.

Women veterans have a passion for service and an unfathomable amount of bravery that is truly worthy and deserving of our recognition, admiration, and commendation.

H.R. 5441 modifies VFW's federal charter to reflect current practice and reality and, accordingly, I support the bill and urge all members to do so as well.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5441.

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.

## RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 32 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

## AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1422, EPA SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD REFORM ACT OF 2013; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4012, SECRET SCIENCE REFORM ACT OF 2014; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4795, PROMOTING NEW MANUFACTURING ACT; AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM NOVEMBER 21, 2014, THROUGH NOVEMBER 28, 2014

Mr. BURGESS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 113-626) on the resolution (H. Res. 756) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1422) to amend the Environmental Research, Development, and Demonstration Authorization Act of 1978 to provide for Scientific Advisory Board member qualifications, public participation, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4012) to prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency from proposing, finalizing, or disseminating regulations or assessments based upon science that is not transparent or reproducible; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4795) to promote new manufacturing in the United States by providing for greater transparency and timeliness in obtaining necessary permits, and for other purposes; and providing for proceedings during the period from November 21, 2014, through November 28, 2014, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

## REMOVING A USE RESTRICTION TO CERTAIN LAND IN ROCKINGHAM COUNTY, VIRGINIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5162) to amend the Act entitled "An Act to allow a certain parcel of land in Rockingham County, Virginia, to be used for a child care center" to remove the use restriction, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. FLEMING) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 378, nays 1, not voting 55, as follows:

[Roll No. 520]

YEAS—378

Adams	Bass	Boustany	Brownley (CA)	Graves (MO)	McGovern
Aderholt	Beatty	Brady (PA)	Burgess	Grayson	McHenry
Amash	Becerra	Brady (TX)	Bustos	Green, Al	McKeon
Amodei	Benishek	Braley (IA)	Butterfield	Green, Gene	McKinley
Bachus	Bentivoglio	Brat	Byrne	Griffin (AR)	McMorris
Barber	Berra (CA)	Bridenstine	Calvert	Griffith (VA)	Rodgers
Barletta	Bilirakis	Brooks (AL)	Camp	Grimm	McNerney
Barr	Bishop (UT)	Brooks (IN)	Capito	Guthrie	Meadows
Barrow (GA)	Black	Broun (GA)	Capps	Hahn	Meehan
Barton	Bonamici	Brown (FL)	Capuano	Hanabusa	Meeks
			Cárdenas	Harris	Messer
			Carney	Hartzler	Mica
			Carson (IN)	Hastings (FL)	Michaud
			Carter	Hastings (WA)	Miller (FL)
			Cartwright	Heck (NV)	Miller (MI)
			Cassidy	Heck (WA)	Miller, George
			Castor (FL)	Hensarling	Moran
			Castro (TX)	Higgins	Mullin
			Chabot	Himes	Mulvaney
			Chaffetz	Hinojosa	Murphy (FL)
			Chu	Holding	Murphy (PA)
			Clark (MA)	Holt	Nadler
			Clarke (NY)	Honda	Napolitano
			Clawson (FL)	Horsford	Neal
			Clay	Hoyer	Neugebauer
			Cleaver	Hudson	Noem
			Cohen	Huelskamp	Nolan
			Cole	Huffman	Norcross
			Collins (GA)	Hultgren	Nugent
			Collins (NY)	Hunter	Nunes
			Conaway	Hurt	Nunnelee
			Connolly	Israel	O'Rourke
			Cook	Issa	Olson
			Costa	Jackson Lee	Owens
			Cotton	Jeffries	Palazzo
			Courtney	Jenkins	Pallone
			Cramer	Johnson (GA)	Pascarelli
			Crawford	Johnson (OH)	Paulsen
			Crenshaw	Johnson, E. B.	Payne
			Crowley	Johnson, Sam	Pearce
			Cuellar	Jolly	Pelosi
			Culberson	Jones	Perlmutter
			Cummings	Jordan	Perry
			Daines	Joyce	Peters (CA)
			Davis (CA)	Kaptur	Peters (MI)
			Davis, Rodney	Keating	Peterson
			DeFazio	Kelly (IL)	Petri
			DeGette	Kelly (PA)	Pingree (ME)
			Delaney	Kennedy	Pittenger
			DeLauro	Kildee	Pitts
			DelBene	Kilmer	Pocan
			Denham	King (IA)	Poe (TX)
			Dent	King (NY)	Polis
			DeSantis	Kingston	Pompeo
			DesJarlais	Kinzing (IL)	Posey
			Deutch	Kirkpatrick	Price (GA)
			Diaz-Balart	Kline	Quigley
			Doggett	Kuster	Rahall
			Doyle	Labrador	Rangel
			Duffy	LaMalfa	Reed
			Duncan (SC)	Lamborn	Reichert
			Duncan (TN)	Lance	Renacci
			Edwards	Langevin	Ribble
			Ellison	Lankford	Richmond
			Ellmers	Larsen (WA)	Rigell
			Engel	Larson (CT)	Roe (TN)
			Enyart	Latham	Rogers (AL)
			Eshoo	Latta	Rogers (KY)
			Esty	Lee (CA)	Rogers (MI)
			Farenthold	Levin	Rokita
			Farr	Lewis	Rooney
			Fattah	Lipinski	Ros-Lehtinen
			Fincher	LoBiondo	Roskam
			Fitzpatrick	Loeb sack	Ross
			Fleischmann	Lofgren	Rothfus
			Fleming	Long	Roybal-Allard
			Flores	Lowenthal	Royce
			Forbes	Lowe	Ruiz
			Fortenberry	Luetkemeyer	Ruppersberger
			Foster	Lujan Grisham	Ryan (WI)
			Fox	(NM)	Salmon
			Frankel (FL)	Luján, Ben Ray	Sánchez, Linda
			Franks (AZ)	(NM)	T.
			Frelinghuysen	Lummis	Sarbanes
			Fudge	Lynch	Scalise
			Gabbard	Maffei	Schakowsky
			Gallego	Maloney	Schiff
			Garamendi	Carolyn	Schneider
			Garcia	Maloney, Sean	Schock
			Gerlach	Marino	Schrader
			Gibbs	Massie	Schweikert
			Gibson	Matheson	Scott (VA)
			Gingrey (GA)	Matsui	Scott, Austin
			Gohmert	McCarthy (CA)	Sensenbrenner
			Goodlatte	McCarthy (NY)	Serrano
			Gosar	McCaul	Sessions
			Gowdy	McClintock	Sewell (AL)
			Granger	McCollum	Shea-Porter
			Graves (GA)	McDermott	Sherman