

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 11 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1600

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FINE) at 4 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

VETERANS' COMPENSATION COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2025

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2392) to increase, effective as of December 1, 2025, 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. 2392

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 2025".

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

(a) RATE ADJUSTMENT.—Effective on December 1, 2025, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall increase, in accordance with subsection (c), the dollar amounts in effect on November 30, 2025, 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, 2025, 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.

SEC. 3. PUBLICATION OF ADJUSTED RATES.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish in the Federal Register the amounts specified in section 2(b), as increased under that section, 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 2026.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 2392. Each year, Congress passes the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act.

The legislation ensures that VA compensation benefits for veterans and their survivors keep pace with inflation and the cost of living. Millions of veterans and their loved ones depend on these benefits to pay for daily living expenses.

This bill would help them meet that need by increasing certain VA benefits to the same percentage as the annual Social Security cost-of-living adjustment increase.

I recognize this is something we could and should have taken up sooner, and there was real concern that if the shutdown dragged on, VA might not have had the staff in place to implement the COLA on time.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the sponsors of this bill, Senators MORAN and BLUMENTHAL, for their bipartisan work on this vitally important bill to ensure our veterans get their benefits. I also thank Representative LUTTRELL for his leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support S. 2392, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that we are considering S. 2392, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2025 today. I rise in strong support of the measure, and I thank Senator MORAN for introducing the bill and appreciate Representatives MORGAN LUTTRELL and MORGAN MCGARVEY for leading the House version.

We have a uniquely solemn charge on the Veterans' Affairs Committee: to serve those who have served. It is a task I take very seriously as do my colleagues.

We continually strive to deliver on the promise to America's service-women and -men as they become veterans; that we will take care of you just as you have taken care of us.

Because of this, I find it disheartening when I hear conversation gaining speed about veterans not deserving the benefits provided to them or of defrauding the compensation and pension system en masse: Project 2025, The Economist, The Wall Street Journal, and The Washington Post.

We have even heard this from some veterans themselves at recent congressional hearings that somehow veterans' benefits make them lazy and reward exaggeration, but I know, as does America, that this is a ridiculous notion.

I think Senator DUCKWORTH put it perfectly when she said: "Portraying disabled veterans as a group of takers who will happily never work again for \$3,100 a month is incredibly condescending and disrespectful to these heroic Americans."

Our veterans have sworn an oath to risk life and limb to protect our Nation. They are honorable and forthright, and they deserve whatever assistance they need post-service to live happy, healthy, productive lives. The sacrifices they make and wounds they take occur not just on the battlefield but in training and on the home front, as well.

These veterans don't just serve alone. Military families sacrifice right alongside their servicemember. Many are exposed to the same hazardous environments as those in uniform. They are left to care for that servicemember when their time is done, and they do so willingly and with courage.

Mr. Speaker, to denigrate them by suggesting the system of veterans' benefits is overgenerous is grossly insulting to me, and I am sure to Americans, as well. If anything, we know there are still a great deal of toxic exposures, locations, injuries, and illnesses that VA doesn't recognize or cover.

Too many veterans and their families are left waiting for help. If anything, we must be more generous, and that is why I am in strong support of this legislation. Raising the compensation owed to our veterans to adjust to the cost of living is a small-in-dollar amount but large-in-significance gesture to demonstrate to veterans and their families that we see them, we understand their plight, and we can and will do what we must to help them.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support our veterans and their families by supporting this legislation. On the heels of Veterans Day, when we honor those who have served and sacrificed for us, I urge every American to rededicate themselves to uplifting the veterans in all communities across this country.

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. LUTTRELL), who himself is a decorated veteran and knows these issues very well.

Mr. LUTTRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 2392.

First, I thank Senator MORAN and Senator BLUMENTHAL for leading this bill in the Senate. I also thank the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, Mr. MORGAN MCGARVEY, and Mr. TAKANO for joining me in co-leading the House companion of S. 2392.

As chairman of the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, I am dedicated to serving my fellow veterans. This legislation is necessary to ensure that benefits paid to veterans, who are disabled as a result of their military service, do not lose value because of economic change outside of their control.

Without their disability compensation benefits, veterans may not be able to afford the cost-of-living increase. Many disabled veterans and their families rely on their benefits to help pay for necessities like mortgage payments and groceries.

I know there are veterans in my district currently struggling to stay healthy and make ends meet. Personal finances and being able to pay your bills are a major source of stress and anxiety for so many veterans, survivors, and their families.

Mr. Speaker, passing this cost-of-living adjustment provides them with the peace of mind they deserve and access to benefits they are owed. I know many of my House colleagues are committed to serving their veteran constituents, which is why I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. KENNEDY), my good friend who serves on our Economic Opportunity Subcommittee and our Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 2392, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2025.

Last Tuesday, we marked Veterans Day. Like many of our colleagues, I joined the western New York community to honor those who selflessly served our country and their family members who have carried the weight of that service with unwavering strength. I was reminded of their commitment to this country and how the liberties we enjoy today were paid for in duty, courage, sacrifice, and blood.

□ 1610

Yet, honoring their service demands more than just a simple thank-you. It requires us to live up to our moral obligation to support their health, homes, education, families, and futures.

These principles continue to guide me as a member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs because our veterans deserve only the best for their service. It pains me to hear stories of veterans who have to choose between having a roof over their head and putting food on the table because of the affordability crisis in this country.

The reason that is happening is clear. Current veterans' benefits are not keeping pace with the increased cost of living. That should cause alarm to every single Member of this body.

The benefits our veterans received after they served our country are not gifts or handouts. They are part of a sacred obligation to ensure that those who have defended our freedoms can live with dignity, security, and opportunity.

When veterans struggle to meet their basic needs, it is not just a personal burden. It is a national moral failure.

Ensuring that benefits keep up with the cost of living isn't just the right thing to do. It is the smart thing to do economically.

It promotes stability, reduces uncertainty, and allows veterans to remain active, contributing members of the community they helped to protect.

That is exactly why we need the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act. It will immediately make critical changes to veterans' benefits just in time for the holidays.

By adjusting the rate of these benefits to keep pace with inflation and align with annual increases from the Social Security Administration, our veterans will not have to choose between medication, housing, groceries, or utility bills.

Honoring and supporting our veterans should never be a partisan issue. It is a matter of national character. It makes good on the promise made to our military heroes when they answer the call to duty.

I will proudly be voting to support this legislation, and I urge all of my colleagues to do the same.

Let us honor veterans not only with ceremonies and speeches but with policies that uphold their well-being year-round.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Guam (Mr. MOYLAN), my good friend.

Mr. MOYLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill that ensures our veterans, including the thousands who call Guam home, receive the compensation adjustment they have earned through service and sacrifice.

Guam has one of the highest per capita veteran populations in the Nation, and these cost-of-living increases are essential for families facing high costs and limited healthcare options.

This legislation is simple, bipartisan, and just. It honors every servicemember who stood the watch, from the Indo-Pacific to every corner of the globe.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support our veterans and pass this bill.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MORRISON), my good friend who serves on our Subcommittee on Health and our Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs.

Ms. MORRISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 2392, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act.

This bipartisan legislation would provide a 2.8 percent cost-of-living increase for VA disability benefits, like disability compensation and clothing allowance, as well as survivor benefits, such as dependency and indemnity compensation.

Veterans and their families are entitled to and owed these benefits, and it is our responsibility in Congress to ensure that we continue to provide the utility and financial stability they deserve.

Affordability is a top concern for all of my constituents, including the veterans in my community. This adjustment is necessary to help ensure that our veterans and their families can keep pace with the cost of living.

As a cosponsor of this legislation and a member of the Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee, I am pleased that we are able to come together on a bipartisan basis to pass this bill that will do just that.

Mr. Speaker, I want to end by thanking the gentleman from Texas (Mr. LUTTRELL) and the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. MCGARVEY) for their leadership on this important bill. I also thank the chair and ranking member for their support, as well. I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this legislation.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am ready to close. I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, once again, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on S. 2392, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2025.

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, once again, I encourage all of our Members to vote "yes."

Mr. Speaker, I thank our veterans. This is the right piece of legislation and something that we need to do, and make sure we do every year, to make sure that those costs of living are covered for our veterans and their survivors.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 2392.

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.

EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES AND SUPPORT FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE JULY 4 FLOODING IN TEXAS, HONORING ACTS OF HEROISM, AND COMMITTING TO STAND WITH THOSE IMPACTED BY THESE FLOODS

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 782) expressing condolences and support for the victims of the July 4 flooding in Texas, honoring acts of heroism, and committing to stand with those impacted by these floods.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 782

Whereas, on July 4, 2025, catastrophic heavy rain and flash floods swept across the Texas Hill Country, causing devastating loss of life, widespread destruction of homes and infrastructure, and immeasurable heartbreak for families and communities throughout the region;

Whereas Governor Greg Abbott promptly issued a disaster declaration for the affected counties, ensuring that State resources and support were made immediately available to first responders and affected communities, and pledged continued collaboration with local leaders;

Whereas the flooding affected numerous counties, straining local resources and leaving thousands displaced or in need of urgent assistance;

Whereas the catastrophic floods are responsible for the tragic loss of at least 135 individuals, including at least 37 children, many of whom were attending summer camp in Kerr County, where counselors and campers alike faced unimaginable peril;

Whereas communities across central Texas have endured loss of life, property, and security, with families mourning loved ones and neighborhoods forever changed by the disaster;

Whereas first responders from across Federal, State, and local governments, emergency personnel, and volunteers demonstrated extraordinary courage and selflessness, rescuing over 850 individuals from life-threatening situations;

Whereas, on July 6, 2025, President Donald Trump promptly signed a major disaster declaration, ensuring that Federal resources and support were made immediately available to first responders and affected communities, and pledged continued collaboration with State and local leaders;

Whereas Federal, State, and local leaders have worked tirelessly on the ground to coordinate relief efforts and provide leadership to the people of Texas and those impacted during this unprecedented tragedy;

Whereas stories of heroism emerged from the tragedy, such as the staff and counselors and older campers at camps such as Camp Mystic and Camp La Junta who guided children to safety, embodying the indomitable spirit of Texas;

Whereas neighbors, faith communities, and local and national organizations mobilized to provide shelter, food, and comfort to those affected, reflecting the compassion and resilience that defines Texas; and

Whereas the path to recovery will be long and challenging, requiring unity, empathy, and sustained support from all levels of government and every corner of Texas: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) mourns the profound loss of life and extends its deepest condolences to the families, friends, and communities forever changed by this tragedy;

(2) honors the courage and sacrifice of first responders, volunteers, and everyday Texans who risked their lives to save others and support their neighbors in need;

(3) encourages all relevant authorities to prioritize the rebuilding of critical infrastructure and public facilities damaged by the flooding, and to ensure access to assistance for all residents, especially the most vulnerable; and

(4) stands united with all those affected by the July 4 flooding, pledging ongoing support and remembrance as the process of healing and rebuilding continues.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN) and the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. FIGURES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material into the RECORD on H. Res. 782.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, this resolution also honors the brave first responders who risked their lives while rescuing over 850 souls.

It further pledges our commitment to stand in solidarity with the survivors of this unspeakable tragedy and the families who lost loved ones.

My own family has attended summer camps in the Hill Country for many generations, and my grandchildren were there only days before these tragic floods.

The July floods stole the lives of over 135 innocent people, including 37 children, some of them my own constituents in District 36.

It wreaked havoc on over 2,000 homes and businesses throughout Kerr County and inflicted \$1.1 billion worth of damage on the residences across the Hill Country. Just seeing the tremendous damage in person done by this disaster was an unbelievable experience.

I am very proud of the President's response. By swiftly issuing a major disaster declaration, FEMA has been able to approve \$38 million in individual assistance, as well as \$31 million in public assistance.

This tragedy prompted the Committee on Science, Space, and Tech-

nology, under my chairmanship, to pass the Weather Act Authorization. This legislation will improve emergency preparedness for communities nationwide and deliver vital enhancements to our forecasting capabilities, which is why it must be brought to the House floor soon.

While the Federal response has been both vigorous and robust, it is the duty of this Congress to offer solace and comfort to the people of Texas. This resolution today will do just that.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman and my good friend from Texas—this tragedy occurred in his district—Congressman CHIP ROY, for his able leadership on this bipartisan resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1620

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

Mr. Speaker, I, too, support H. Res. 782 to express condolences and support for the victims of the July 4 flooding in Texas and also to honor the acts of heroism and commit to stand with those impacted by the floods through the rebuilding.

The floods that tore through the Texas Hill Country were devastating beyond words. There were 135 lives lost, and many, many lives changed forever in terms of having to endure it, some of whom we had the privilege of seeing here in this House last July. Three souls are actually still missing. Families have been shattered, communities submerged, and more than 200 homes damaged. Businesses and infrastructure were crippled.

Before I go any further, I will take a moment to acknowledge a heart-breaking loss that my district felt with this that has touched the Mobile, Alabama, community deeply. We are grieving the tragic deaths of four members of the same family, the Santana family, a family of military veterans: Eddie, Sr., aged 69; Ileana, his wife, aged 66; Camille, their daughter-in-law, aged 38; and Mila Rose, just 5 years old. While visiting the Hill Country, they were caught in the floods on that tragic evening.

Only one member of that family, Eddie Santana, Jr., survived. I ask that we continue to hold him in our hearts and include his entire family in our prayers as they now face a future with unimaginable sorrow.

To all those grieving, I offer my most sincere condolences. The horror of this disaster is truly hard for any of us to comprehend. Yet, in the face of tragedy, we saw extraordinary courage. First responders across Texas, the U.S. Coast Guard, and volunteers from across the country sprang into action, risking their lives to save countless others. We are eternally grateful for their service and sacrifice.

Though the water has receded in Kerr County, the work is far from over. We must rebuild homes, restore infrastructure, and revive local businesses. However, we must also analyze our Federal