

Americans with an additional level of accountability when it comes to job-killing regulations from government agencies.

Madam Speaker, it's time we stand up for small business owners, and it's time we do all that we can to remove the barriers Washington is putting in their way. Let's come together as a Congress and help get America back to work again.

□ 1230

OPPOSITION TO THE REINS ACT

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, later today the House will vote on the REINS Act. This is a terrible piece of legislation that will make it next to impossible to protect Americans' health or the environment. It would allow either Chamber of Congress to stop efforts to keep our water and air clean or to protect the public from unsafe food—by simply doing nothing.

This bill sets up a congressional approval requirement that is a recipe for more gridlock. It would mean more bureaucracy and more delay, generating uncertainty for businesses and weaker rules to protect consumers.

Sherwood Boehlert, the former Republican chairman of the House Science Committee and one of our most thoughtful former colleagues, recently wrote a scathing piece in *The Hill* about the REINS Act. He said the bill would result in "a virtual shutdown of the system that will leave the public exposed."

Madam Speaker, the REINS Act is an outrageous effort to throw out a system that has protected American families and communities for more than 100 years. I urge my colleagues to join me in voting down this irresponsible and misguided legislation.

VOTER SUPPRESSION

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

Mr. PETERS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to oppose nationwide efforts to suppress voter turnout for the 2012 election, including State legislation imposing strict photo ID requirements. These new regulations would disproportionately burden seniors, people with disabilities, the poor, and minorities.

In Michigan, we have seen aggressive purges of voter rules, which can disenfranchise low-income voters who have moved to a new address. Half a million Michiganders don't have a driver's license or State ID. How are they supposed to make their voices heard if these rules are passed?

Let's be clear. These efforts are about one thing and one thing only: silencing voters.

America is a beacon of democracy, and to limit voter access is hypo-

critical and wrong. Madam Speaker, I don't have to tell you about the shameful times in America's history where power and intimidation were used to prevent Americans from voting. We must learn from our past.

Fight voter suppression efforts in the courts, in State legislatures, here in Washington, and, most importantly, on election day.

REMEMBERING PEARL HARBOR

(Ms. HANABUSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HANABUSA. December 7, 1941, "a date which will live in infamy," are the words of President Roosevelt.

I represent Pearl Harbor. On this day, let us not forget the brave people who gave their lives at Pearl Harbor. On this day, let us not forget this act of unprovoked, dastardly aggression which propelled us into a war. On this day, let us not forget how the people of this Nation were unmatched in their evidence of loyalty and patriotism.

Let us remember because we need to be that people again to continue our fight to maintain our position as the greatest Nation in the world. Let us remember because we need to show the compassion to those who are in need in these days.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 2055, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 2055) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes, with a Senate amendment thereto, disagree to the Senate amendment, and agree to the conference requested by the Senate.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Speaker, I have a motion to instruct at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Dicks moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 2055, be instructed to recede to the Senate on the higher level of funding for the "Department of Veterans Affairs—Medical and Prosthetic Research" account.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XXII, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS) and the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DICKS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on the motion to instruct.

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

There was no objection.

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

The motion instructs conferees to provide the highest level of funding for medical and prosthetic research. This program helps the Department of Veterans Affairs develop cutting-edge treatments for veterans and their families. It is fully integrated throughout the medical community through partnerships with academic affiliates, nonprofits, and commercial entities, as well as other Federal agencies. It is unique because both the clinical care and research occur together.

The Medical and Prosthetic Research Program plays a vital role in advancing the health and care of our Nation's veterans. Some of the areas that the Medical and Prosthetic Research Program focus on include mental health research, prosthetics, traumatic brain injury, and posttraumatic stress disorder, or PTSD. The program has emphasized efforts to improve the understanding and treatment of veterans in need of mental health care.

We hear a lot about the casualties of war and soldiers who have sacrificed their lives in duty. However, over the past few years, the VA has begun to examine the psychological wounds of posttraumatic stress disorder. The motion will provide funding for the VA to care for veterans returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan who may suffer from depression, anxiety, and substance abuse.

Funding for medical and prosthetic research in the House-reported bill was inadequate, and during floor consideration the House majority agreed to increase funding by \$22 million. While I was pleased to see this increase, I believe we need to do more.

The Senate-passed bill funds this program at the FY2011 enacted level, which is \$51 million higher than the House-passed level. I believe the higher funding levels should be maintained because of the impact this research can have on the everyday life of our Nation's veterans.

This Nation must get its fiscal house in order. However, even in an austere budget, we need to make room to fully fund our priorities. The Medical and Prosthetic Research Program is a high priority.

I'm sure that all of my colleagues would agree we can never repay America's veterans for the sacrifice they have made for our country. As a first installment, we should make a substantial investment in health care research for our veterans, and I urge a "yes" vote on the motion to instruct.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This motion to instruct is well-intentioned but unnecessary. The motion would urge adoption of the Senate-passed level for VA medical research, which is \$50 million above the House-passed level.

We all support our veterans and honor their service and sacrifice. We, of course, support the important research work the VA is doing for our veterans in fields such as traumatic brain injury and posttraumatic stress disorder. We provided a robust level of funding for this research in the House-passed version of the bill at a time when our overall funding targets were constrained. In fact, the House bill provided a total of \$531 million for VA medical research, an increase of \$22 million above what the White House and the VA requested. In addition, the VA still has \$71 million in unobligated research funding left over from previous years that could be put to use. So even without the increase, the program level would still be well above the 2011 level.

We all agree that medical research at the VA is undeniably important and we want to do the best that we can for our veterans, particularly those in need of medical assistance. On that, there's no difference between the ranking minority member and myself and between the members of the subcommittee.

□ 1240

I can reassure the Members that we will work with our House and Senate colleagues to determine the appropriate level for VA research to continue to support and honor the service of our veterans.

While this motion is not necessary, I understand and agree with its intent; and I will work with the ranking member. And with reservations, I will accept the motion at this time.

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

Mr. DICKS. I would ask for a vote on my motion to instruct, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to instruct.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. DICKS. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 1540, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2012

Mr. MCKEON. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Armed

Services, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 1540) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2012 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 a Senate amendment thereto, disagree to the Senate amendment, and agree to the conference requested by the Senate.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Speaker, I have a motion to instruct at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Smith of Washington moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 1540 be instructed to insist on the amendments contained in subtitle I of title V of the House bill (sections 581 through 587 relating to improved sexual assault prevention and response in the Armed Forces).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XXII, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This is a very important provision of the House bill dealing with better combating sexual assault within the military. Now, this is a significant problem that has been documented by many studies and many media reports. I want to particularly congratulate members of my committee, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. SPEIER, and Mrs. SUSAN DAVIS, who have taken a leadership role in this to try to implement policies to control sexual assault within the military. The provisions that we've put together in the House help move us forward towards addressing that issue, make sure that it takes on the importance that it deserves, and empower the military to make the decisions they need to better protect against sexual assault within the military.

I particularly applaud Ms. TSONGAS. This is her motion to stick to the House provisions in this area. I urge the conference committee to do that going forward.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCKEON. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER).

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I thank the gentleman for yielding. And, Madam Speaker, good afternoon.

Sexual assault in the military continues to be a serious problem. It impacts thousands of service women and men each year.

While I'm pleased with the recent improvements made by the Department of Defense, there remains much more to be done. It is vital that we do all we can to protect the men and women in the military who protect us.

I am very pleased that both the House and the Senate passed language improving the military's response to sexual assault in their respective versions of the National Defense Authorization Act.

□ 1250

Earlier this week, I, along with Representative TURNER and 45 colleagues, sent a letter to the House and Senate Armed Services Committees asking them to strongly consider the House-passed provisions dealing with military sexual assault.

The language contained in the House version makes necessary improvements to protect our service women and men. Specifically, the House-passed language strengthens the rights of sexual assault victims by clarifying victim access to legal counsel, and record maintenance and confidentiality, which are critically important. It also ensures expedited unit or station transfer when a servicemember has been victimized.

Imagine being a victim of rape, which one young soldier told me about at a hearing, while serving in the military, and every morning she had to salute her rapist. That's what the members of our Armed Forces have experienced and will continue to experience if we don't do something to change that situation.

The House-passed language also stresses the need for the NDAA to include comprehensive training and education programs for sexual assault prevention within the Department of Defense. The Senate version does not include this protection, which is part of H.R. 1709, the Force Protection and Readiness Act, which I introduced earlier this year.

I am pleased this motion to instruct conferees on the NDAA recognizes the importance of this issue, and I ask the conferees to seriously consider including the strongest possible language to prevent and appropriately respond to incidents of sexual assault in the military.

Mr. MCKEON. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Massachusetts will control the balance of the time.

There was no objection.

Ms. TSONGAS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

While one in six women will experience sexual assault in her lifetime, as