

□ 1315

Let's not forget that this MILCON-VA bill is \$800 million for military construction over what President Biden requested in his budget request for FY24. It is also at the President's requested level of FY24. Maybe instead of attacking these numbers, my Democratic colleagues should be attacking their far-left Democratic President who wanted numbers below what the Republicans wrote for these numbers, and, again, we are fully funding Biden's requested VA numbers.

It is simple that a "no" vote on this is a vote against our veterans, and that is absolutely horrifying. Our country has sent generations of heroes around the globe to defend our freedoms and the freedoms of others. It is essential that we now take care of those who took care of us.

For those reasons, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the previous question and "yes" on the rule.

The material previously referred to by Mr. NEGUSE is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 614 OFFERED BY
MR. NEGUSE OF COLORADO

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 8. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution, the House shall proceed to the consideration in the House of the resolution (H. Res. 178) affirming the House of Representatives' commitment to protect and strengthen Social Security and Medicare. The resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and preamble to adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means or their respective designees.

SEC. 9. Clause 1 (c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H. Res. 178.

Mr. RESCHENTHALER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

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

Mr. NEGUSE. Mr. 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 are postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1330

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro

tempore (Mr. D'ESPOSITO) at 1 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 614;

Adoption of House Resolution 614, if ordered; and

The motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 3395, if ordered.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4366, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2024; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF S.J. RES. 9, PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE RELATING TO "ENDANGERED AND THREATENED WILDLIFE AND PLANTS; LESSER PRAIRIE-CHICKEN; THREATENED STATUS WITH SECTION 4(D) RULE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTINCT POPULATION SEGMENT AND ENDANGERED STATUS FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTINCT POPULATION SEGMENT"; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF S.J. RES. 24, PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE RELATING TO "ENDANGERED AND THREATENED WILDLIFE AND PLANTS; ENDANGERED SPECIES STATUS FOR NORTHERN LONG-EARED BAT"

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 614) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4366) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the joint resolution (S.J. Res. 9) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service relating to "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Lesser Prairie-Chicken; Threat-

ened Status With Section 4(d) Rule for the Northern Distinct Population Segment and Endangered Status for the Southern Distinct Population Segment"; and providing for consideration of the joint resolution (S.J. Res. 24) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service relating to "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Species Status for Northern Long-Eared Bat", on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 208, nays 191, not voting 35, as follows:

[Roll No. 367]

YEAS—208

Aderholt	Foxx	Mast
Alford	Franklin, C.	McCarthy
Allen	Scott	McCaul
Amodei	Fulcher	McClain
Armstrong	Gaetz	McClintock
Arrington	Gallagher	McCormick
Babin	Garbarino	McHenry
Bacon	Garcia, Mike	Meuser
Baird	Jimenez	Miller (IL)
Balderson	Gonzales, Tony	Miller (OH)
Banks	Gooden (TX)	Miller (WV)
Barr	Gosar	Miller-Meeks
Bean (FL)	Granger	Mills
Bentz	Graves (LA)	Molinaro
Bergman	Graves (MO)	Moolenaar
Bice	Green (TN)	Mooney
Biggs	Griffith	Moore (AL)
Boebert	Grothman	Moore (UT)
Bost	Guest	Moran
Brecheen	Guthrie	Murphy
Buchanan	Hageman	Nehls
Buck	Harris	Newhouse
Bucshon	Harshbarger	Norman
Burchett	Hern	Nunn (IA)
Burgess	Higgins (LA)	Oberholte
Burlison	Hill	Ogles
Calvert	Hinson	Owens
Cammack	Houchin	Palmer
Carey	Hudson	Pence
Carl	Huizenga	Perry
Carter (GA)	Hunt	Pfleger
Chavez-DeRemer	Issa	Posey
Ciscomani	Jackson (TX)	Reschenthaler
Cline	James	Rodgers (WA)
Cloud	Johnson (LA)	Rogers (AL)
Clyde	Johnson (OH)	Rogers (KY)
Cole	Johnson (SD)	Rosendale
Collins	Jordan	Rouzer
Comer	Joyce (PA)	Roy
Crane	Kean (NJ)	Rutherford
Crawford	Kelly (MS)	Santos
Crenshaw	Kelly (PA)	Scalise
Curtis	Kiggans (VA)	Schweikert
D'Esposito	Kiley	Scott, Austin
Davidson	Kim (CA)	Self
De La Cruz	Kustoff	Simpson
DesJarlais	LaHood	Smith (MO)
Diaz-Balart	LaLota	Smith (NE)
Donalds	LaMalfa	Smith (NJ)
Duarte	Lamborn	Smucker
Duncan	Langworthy	Spartz
Dunn (FL)	Latta	Stauber
Edwards	LaTurner	Steel
Ellzey	Lawler	Stefanik
Emmer	Lee (FL)	Steil
Estes	Lesko	Steube
Ezell	Letlow	Stewart
Fallon	Loudermilk	Strong
Feenstra	Lucas	Tenney
Ferguson	Luetkemeyer	Thompson (PA)
Finstad	Luna	Tiffany
Fischbach	Luttrell	Turner
Fitzgerald	Mace	Valadao
Fitzpatrick	Malliotakis	Van Duyn
Fleischmann	Mann	Van Orden
Flood	Massie	Wagner

Walberg
Waltz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)

Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)

Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NAYS—191

Adams
Aguilar
Allred
Auchincloss
Balint
Barragán
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bowman
Boyle (PA)
Brown
Brownley
Budzinski
Bush
Caraveo
Carbajal
Carson
Carter (LA)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cherfilus-
McCormick
Chu
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crockett
Crow
Cuellar
Davids (KS)
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
Dingell
Doggett
Escobar
Eshoo
Espallat
Evans
Fletcher
Foushee
Frankel, Lois
Frost
Garamendi
Garcia (IL)

Garcia (TX)
Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gomez
Gonzalez,
Vicente
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Grijalva
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyer
Hoyle (OR)
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jackson (NC)
Jackson Lee
Jacobs
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kamlager-Dove
Keating
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (NJ)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Landsman
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Lee (PA)
Leger Fernandez
Levin
Lieu
Lofgren
Lynch
Magaziner
Manning
Matsui
McBath
McClellan
McCollum
McGarvey
McGovern
Meeks
Menendez
Mfume
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Mullin
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Nickel
Norcross

Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone
Panetta
Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Peltola
Peters
Pettersen
Pingree
Pocan
Porter
Pressley
Quigley
Ramirez
Ross
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan
Salinas
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schiff
Schneider
Scholten
Schrier
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sherman
Sherrill
Slotkin
Smith (WA)
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Stansbury
Stanton
Stevens
Strickland
Swalwell
Sykes
Takano
Thanedar
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tlaib
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Underwood
Vargas
Vasquez
Veasey
Velázquez
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Wild
Williams (GA)

NOT VOTING—35

Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Cárdenas
Carter (TX)
DeLauro
Foster
Fry
Gallego
Garcia, Robert
Good (VA)
Greene (GA)
Huffman

Joyce (OH)
Kaptur
Kelly (IL)
Lee (NV)
Meng
Nadler
Perez
Phillips
Raskin
Rose
Salazar
Schakowsky

Sessions
Sewell
Timmons
Titus
Trahan
Trone
Van Drew
Wexton
Williams (NY)
Wilson (FL)
Wittman

□ 1351

Mr. KHANNA changed his vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So the previous question was ordered.
The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. TIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on today's Previous Question. Had I been present, I would have voted “yea” on rollcall No. 367.

Stated against:

Ms. LEE of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall No. 367 on H. Res. 614, my vote was not successfully registered. Had my vote been registered, it would have been a “nay.”

Mr. ROBERT GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on rollcall 367. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay” on rollcall No. 367.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution, as amended.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. NEGUSE. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 217, noes 206, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 368]

AYES—217

Aderholt
Alford
Allen
Amodei
Armstrong
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Barr
Bean (FL)
Bentz
Bergman
Bice
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Boebert
Bost
Brecheen
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burchett
Burgess
Burlison
Calvert
Cammack
Carey
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chavez-DeRemer
Ciscomani
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Cole
Collins
Comer
Crane
Crawford
Crenshaw
Curtis
D'Esposito
Davidson
De La Cruz
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donalds
Duarte
Duncan
Dunn (FL)
Edwards
Ellzey
Emmer
Estes
Ezell
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Finstad
Fischbach

Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flood
Foxy
Franklin, C.
Scott
Fry
Fulcher
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garbarino
Garcia, Mike
Gimenez
Gonzales, Tony
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hageman
Harris
Harshbarger
Hern
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Hinson
Houchin
Hudson
Huizenga
Hunt
Jackson (TX)
James
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Kean (NJ)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kiggans (VA)
Kiley
Kustoff
LaHood
LaLota
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Langworthy
Latta
LaTurner
Lawler
Lee (FL)
Lesko
Letlow
Loudermilk
Lucas

Luetkemeyer
Luna
Luttrell
Mace
Malliotakis
Mann
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCauley
McClain
McClintock
McCormick
McHenry
Meuser
Miller (IL)
Miller (OH)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Mills
Molinaro
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Moran
Murphy
Nehls
Newhouse
Norman
Nunn (IA)
Oberholte
Ogles
Owens
Palmer
Pence
Perry
Pfluger
Posey
Reschenthaler
Rodgers (WA)
Rodgers (AL)
Rodgers (KY)
Rosendale
Rouzer
Roy
Rutherford
Salazar
Santos
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Self
Sessions
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smucker
Staubert
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Steube
Stewart

Strong
Tennet
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Turner
Valadao
Van Drew

Van Duyne
Van Orden
Wagner
Walberg
Waltz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup

Westerman
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NOES—206

Adams
Aguilar
Allred
Auchincloss
Balint
Barragán
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bowman
Boyle (PA)
Brown
Brownley
Budzinski
Bush
Caraveo
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson
Carter (LA)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cherfilus-
McCormick
Chu
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crockett
Crow
Cuellar
Davids (KS)
Davis (IL)
Davis (NC)
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
Dingell
Doggett
Escobar
Eshoo
Espallat
Evans
Fletcher
Foster
Foushee
Frankel, Lois
Frost
Garamendi
Garcia (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Robert

Golden (ME)
Goldman (NY)
Gomez
Gonzalez,
Vicente
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Grijalva
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyer
Hoyle (OR)
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jackson (NC)
Jackson Lee
Jacobs
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (NJ)
Krishnamoorthi
Landsman
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Lee (PA)
Leger Fernandez
Levin
Lieu
Lofgren
Magaziner
Manning
Matsui
McBath
McClellan
McCollum
McGarvey
McGovern
Meeks
Menendez
Meng
Mfume
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Mullin
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Nickel
Norcross
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone

Panetta
Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Peltola
Perez
Peters
Pettersen
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Porter
Pressley
Quigley
Ramirez
Raskin
Rose
Ross
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan
Salinas
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Scholten
Schrier
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sherman
Sherrill
Slotkin
Smith (WA)
Sorensen
Soto
Spanberger
Spartz
Stansbury
Stanton
Stevens
Strickland
Swalwell
Sykes
Takano
Thanedar
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tlaib
Tokuda
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Underwood
Vargas
Vasquez
Veasey
Velázquez
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Wild
Williams (GA)

NOT VOTING—11

Gallego
Huffman
Issa
Kim (CA)

Kuster
Lynch
Sewell
Trone

Wexton
Williams (NY)
Wilson (FL)

□ 1358

So the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted "NO" on rollcall No. 368.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. WEXTON. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I was not able to be present for roll call votes 367 and 368 today. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall No. 367 and "nay" on rollcall No. 368.

U.S. SUPPLY CHAIN SECURITY
REVIEW ACT OF 2023

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and passing the bill (H.R. 3395) to direct the Chairman of the Federal Maritime Commission to seek to enter into an agreement with a federally funded research and development center to evaluate foreign ownership of marine terminals at the 15 largest United States container ports, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

SOO LOCKS SECURITY AND
ECONOMIC REPORTING ACT OF 2023

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and passing the bill (H.R. 3399) to study the security of the Soo Locks and effects on the supply chain resulting from a malfunction or failure of the Soo Locks, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

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.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VET-
ERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED
AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 2024

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4366, and that I may include tabular material on the same.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 614 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 4366.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1415

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 4366) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes, with Mr. ISSA in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and the ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations, or their respective designees.

The gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GRANGER) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GRANGER).

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of H.R. 4366, a bill that would provide funding for military construction and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

During the last Congress, \$3 trillion was spent outside of the normal appropriations process. As spending soared, so did inflation. There was damage done to the economy, and the work of the Appropriations Committee changed significantly over those 2 years. That is why, earlier this year, I asked subcommittee chairs to evaluate all of the funding in the pipeline.

When the President's budget finally arrived, I directed them to review each agency budget line by line. I thank the subcommittee chairs for their work to identify ways to save hard-earned tax dollars.

These savings have allowed us to reduce overall spending without short-changing—which is most important—national defense, homeland security, and veterans.

The bill before us demonstrates our commitment to reduce overall spending and still honor our commitment to our veterans. This bill makes good on that promise by fully funding veterans healthcare. It will ensure our veterans get the medical treatment and benefits they deserve.

Specifically, the bill prioritizes our Nation's heroes by providing critical funding for our military bases and facilities, improving the quality of life of our servicemembers and their families,

and ensuring our veterans are appropriately honored in our cemeteries and battle monuments. The bill also prohibits funding to be used for biased and controversial programs.

Mr. Chair, I thank the Members and staff on both sides of the aisle for their hard work. This is a strong bill, and I look forward to supporting it.

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

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 4366, with great respect to both of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, Chairwoman GRANGER and Chairman CARTER, who are friends but with whom we strongly disagree on this legislation.

The FY 2024 military construction, veterans affairs, and related agencies bill is, sadly, not one that I can support.

Back in May, the subcommittee mark of the MILCON-VA bill cut the Cost of War Toxic Exposures Fund by \$14.7 billion in 2024 and completely eliminated the toxic exposures fund in 2025, less than a year after we passed the bipartisan Honoring our PACT Act that promises dedicated funding for veterans of all wars exposed to Agent Orange, burn pits, and other toxic substances.

This was in addition to the default on America act introduced in April by Republicans, which included a \$2 billion rescission to immediately cut critical funding for VA and include no protections for veterans funding. We pushed back hard on these cuts as Democrats, and we were successful.

Thankfully, as part of the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023, President Biden was able to undo that grievous harm by delivering the promise we all collectively made to our veterans by fully funding the toxic exposures fund.

However, the problems did not stop there, and Democrats made significant efforts to right the other major wrongs in this bill, but, unfortunately, to no avail.

The MILCON-VA bill is traditionally one of the more bipartisan bills—actually, so often that it is almost indistinguishable who is in the majority and who wrote those bills.

That is not the case, sadly, this year because it is riddled with partisan riders, coming out of the full committee on a party-line vote significantly worse off than where it started. Riders include preventing VA from implementing its interim final rule that provides access to abortions for the life or health of the mother and in the case of rape or incest, as well as abortion counseling to provide healthcare services for women who desperately need it, and, importantly, to ensure that veterans have equal access to healthcare regardless of what State they live in because they get their healthcare from a Federal agency.