

Calendar No. 181

105TH CONGRESS }
1st Session }

SENATE

{ REPORT
{ 105-87

AUTHORIZING SUPPLEMENTAL EXPENDITURES BY THE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

SEPTEMBER 25, 1997.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. SPECTER, from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs,
submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. Res. 126]

Authorizing supplemental expenditures by the Committee on
Veterans' Affairs.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

The text of the resolution as reported is as follows:

RESOLUTION

Authorizing supplemental expenditures by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

Resolved, that section 18(b) of Senate Resolution 54, 105th Congress, agreed to February 13, 1997, is amended by striking out "\$1,123,430" and inserting in lieu thereof "\$1,698,430".

INTRODUCTION

In a letter dated February 3, 1997, the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs conveyed the Committee's biennial budget request to the Committee on Rules and Administration. Included was a request for \$1,653,020 of non-recurring funds to conduct a 12-month special investigation into the mysterious ailments that plague the Nation's Persian Gulf War veterans. Included among the questions that needed to be answered are:

Whether attempts by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to treat Gulf War veterans have been compromised by a lack of information concerning veterans' exposures to chemical and biological agents;

Why do so many veterans who have sought medical assistance report that treatment is ineffective;

Why has scientific research, to date, been inconclusive;

To what extent were Gulf War veterans given experimental and unproven medications and vaccines, and to what extent have those substances, by themselves or in synergy with other environmental factors, been harmful; and

Why have so many veterans been denied compensation when no one seems to question the validity of their claims of illness.

By letter dated March 19, 1997, the Committee on Rules and Administration advised all Senate committees that the total of non-recurring requests for the first year of the biennial budget period exceeded the projected available total of special reserves. Due to this funding shortfall, all committees were instructed to reconsider their non-recurring needs and to resubmit a revised request.

Accordingly, in a letter dated March 21, 1997, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs submitted a revised request of \$1,250,000 of non-recurring funds for the 12-month investigation, a reduction of over \$400,000.

In its letter dated April 11, 1997, the Committee on Rules and Administration informed the Committee on Veterans' Affairs that it had approved \$575,000 in special reserves "for obligations incurred through September 30, 1997, under authority of section 22 of S. Res. 54, agreed to February 13, 1997, as amended." Further, it was stated that the Committee on Rules and Administration "will entertain a supplemental request from your committee in accordance with Rule XXVI, paragraph (9)(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate for additional funding that your committee considers necessary. This request, however, must be effective October 1, 1997, or thereafter, in order to obligate funds that will then be available in the FY-98 Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill."

Accordingly, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs unanimously agreed on September 24, 1997, to report a supplemental funding resolution for an additional \$575,000 of non-recurring funds to support the Committee's Special Investigation Unit on Persian Gulf War Illnesses from October 1, 1997, through the conclusion of the investigation on or about March 31, 1998. Inclusive of this supplemental request, the total budget for this effort will be \$1,150,000, which is over \$500,000 less than the Committee's initial estimate, and \$100,000 less than the revised request.

CHANGES IN EXISTING RESOLUTION MADE BY S. RES. 126 AS
REPORTED

Existing resolution language proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in italic, and existing resolution language in which no change is proposed is shown in roman:

S. RES. 54

* * * * *

RESOLUTION

Authorizing biennial expenditures by committees of the Senate
Resolved,

SHORT TITLE

SECTION 1. This resolution may be cited as the "Omnibus Committee Funding Resolution for 1997 and 1998."

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COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

SEC. 18. (a) * * *

(b) The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 1997, through September 20, 1998, under this section shall not exceed ~~[\$1,123,430]~~ \$1,698,430, of which amount (1) not to exceed \$250,000, may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, as amended); and (2) not to exceed \$3,000, may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, as amended).

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