

million veterans and survivors will receive these benefits in fiscal year 2015.

I have been chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee for nearly 2 years, but during that period I have learned several very important lessons. First and foremost, the cost of war is much greater than most Americans realize, and the cost of war does not end when the last shots are fired or the last missiles are launched. The cost of war continues until the last veteran receives all of the care and all of the benefits that he or she has earned. With this in mind, for those who claim that taking care of veterans is too expensive, if you are not prepared to properly provide the health care and other benefits that veterans have earned, then do not send them to war in the first place. Taking care of veterans is a cost of war.

As part of Congress's important responsibility of ensuring veterans and survivors receive all of the benefits to which they are entitled, we take steps to prevent these benefits from being diminished by the effects of inflation. Over the last several years there has been a lot of discussion about so-called entitlement reform. When people talk about entitlement reform what they really mean, in English, is cutting Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. The cuts to Social Security benefits were going to come in the form of a so-called chained CPI, which would have meant significant cuts in the cost-of-living adjustments that seniors received, that people with disabilities received, and, if you can believe it, that disabled veterans received.

The bottom line is that at a time when the wealthiest people in this country and the largest corporations are doing phenomenally well and enjoy many, many tax breaks, we should not balance the budget on the backs of some of the most vulnerable people in this country—including disabled veterans. I will continue to strongly oppose any proposal to adopt the chained CPI. Moving to a chained CPI would cut the benefits of more than 4 million disabled veterans and surviving spouses.

Congress's responsibility to ensure veterans and survivors receive all of the benefits to which they are entitled also requires that we ensure they receive their complete cost-of-living adjustment. For a number of years, VA rounded down cost-of-living adjustments. The negative impacts of the round-down were just one of the issues that were brought to my attention by the veterans service organizations. I am proud to say that passage of last year's cost-of-living adjustment ended this practice. This year's bill, sponsored by Senator BEGICH, would continue to ensure veterans receive the full adjustment to which they are entitled. To some, this is mere pennies, but I know these small amounts of money add up over time and make a significant contribution to the financial stability of millions of veterans and their survivors.

We have an obligation to ensure the benefits we provide veterans and their survivors do not erode over time. As the debate over spending and the national debt continues, we cannot forget the debt we owe to veterans and their families—after sacrificing for our well-being, the least we can do is ensure theirs. I commend the Senate's passage of S. 2258, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2014. It is another important step as we continue to work to honor our obligation to America's veterans and their surviving family members.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 2258) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2258

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 2014".

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

(a) RATE ADJUSTMENT.—Effective on December 1, 2014, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall increase, in accordance with subsection (c), the dollar amounts in effect on November 30, 2014, 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, 2014, 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.

(e) PUBLICATION OF ADJUSTED RATES.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish in the Federal Register the amounts speci-

fied in subsection (b), as increased under subsection (a), 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 2015.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL SAVE FOR RETIREMENT WEEK

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 542.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 542) supporting the goals and ideals of National Save for Retirement Week, including raising public awareness of the various tax-preferred retirement vehicles and increasing personal financial literacy.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 542) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions."

ORDER FOR RECORD TO REMAIN OPEN

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the RECORD remain open until 5 p.m. today for the purpose of submitting statements and introducing legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2014

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 2 p.m. on Monday, September 15, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 5:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; that at 5:30 p.m., the Senate proceed to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on S. 2199, as provided under the previous order; finally, that the filing deadlines for first-degree amendments to S. 2199, the Paycheck Fairness Act, be 3 p.m. Monday and second-degree amendments be 4 p.m. Monday.