

points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

(Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 565 is a standard, traditional rule for consideration of the conference report for the fiscal year 2006 Departments of Transportation, Treasury, Housing and Urban Development, the Judiciary, District of Columbia, and Independent Agencies appropriations conference report. The rule waives all points of order against the conference report and against its consideration.

The underlying legislation before us, Mr. Speaker, makes appropriations for the departments that I have mentioned. The bill is fiscally sound. It represents our commitment to provide the necessary resources for programs and projects throughout the Nation ranging from transportation to housing and the judiciary and the Executive Office of the President and the District of Columbia.

It is well-known that our transportation infrastructure is the backbone of the economy. Obviously, its continued strength is essential to economic growth, and the bill ensures that we continue to have a reliable and stable transportation infrastructure that will help the economy continue to grow.

The bill includes almost \$37 billion in funds for our highway system, an increase of \$1.6 billion. These funds will serve the American people by contributing to a fast, safe, efficient, accessible and convenient highway system that meets the vital national interests and enhances the quality of life.

The underlying legislation includes \$13.8 billion for the Federal Aviation Administration. Included in this amount is \$25 million to hire and train 595 new air traffic controllers. This is a vitally important aspect of this legislation and is critical as air traffic controllers begin to retire, and, nevertheless, air traffic continues to increase.

Certainly in my district, home to Miami International Airport, the third largest international airport in the country, we are very well aware of how important the air traffic controllers are. Without an increase in the number of air traffic controllers, MIA would not be able to continue its projected growth to serve as really the hub of the Americas.

Housing and Urban Development is funded at \$34 billion. That is an in-

crease of \$2.1 billion over last year. The funds will permit the Department to administer programs that assist the public with housing needs, economic and community development, fair housing opportunities, and will also empower low- and moderate-income residents toward self-sufficiency. Under HUD, the bill includes funding for such important programs as Tenant Based Rental Assistance, also known as section 8, and other important programs.

H.R. 3058, Mr. Speaker, provides \$5.8 billion for the Judiciary. It is an increase of 6 percent. This will fully fund the Judiciary's request for security improvements at Federal facilities and will enable the courts, obviously, to continue to effectively carry out their duties to guarantee the rule of law.

This is a good bill, Mr. Speaker. I think it is essential to our continued commitment to our transportation needs and the needs obviously encompassed, dealt with, by the other departments that we are funding today.

I want to thank Chairman LEWIS, Chairman KNOLLENBERG and everybody who has worked so hard on this legislation. I know it has been a tough, tough bill, and it has required a lot of work. I urge my colleagues to support both the rule and the underlying legislation.

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

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

(Ms. MATSUI asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, we are considering a rule for H.R. 3058, which will appropriate funding for a broad section of the Federal Government, including the Departments of Transportation, Treasury, Housing and Urban Development, as well as the Federal judiciary and the District of Columbia. I commend all the conferees and particularly Chairman KNOLLENBERG and Ranking Member OLVER for their dedication to completing the conference report on this sprawling piece of legislation. It is a tremendous challenge to achieve consensus on such a broad range of priorities, and I believe this bill reflects outstanding leadership, considering the allotted resources for the job.

I was particularly pleased with the final funding for Amtrak, especially when you consider where we started. While the original House bill provided funds at a level that would have decimated the Nation's passenger rail system, the conference report funding level will allow Amtrak to continue running its current operations. In my hometown of Sacramento, Amtrak is heavily relied upon, and I know my constituents will be relieved that the conferees have provided this funding.

From the housing portion of the bill, I would like to highlight the importance of the Community Development

Block Grant Program. CDBG is a highly effective program that provides the resources to improve, energize and revitalize communities across the Nation. Like hundreds of cities across the country, in Sacramento CDBG has enabled transformative improvements to downtown and the rest of the city. I thank the appropriators for recognizing the vital nature of CDBG in providing this funding.

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Another vital community resource funded in this bill is the housing choice voucher program known as section 8. This program allows low-income families, senior citizens and citizens with disabilities to obtain affordable housing.

On several occasions, my constituents have told me that were it not for these vouchers, they would have faced the fear and uncertainty associated with not knowing if tomorrow you have someplace to call home. It is clear that this program makes a difference in people's lives. I hope that when we come back next year and start to put together the FY 2007 budget, we will remember the positive impact that these programs have on the lives of our constituents and all Americans.

Even though we will again face limited resources, I hope that when the time comes to construct the budget, we will begin by determining who truly needs the government's help the most and which programs are most effective at delivering positive results. If we make that our top priority, I am sure this Congress and the Nation will be satisfied with the results.

Again, I thank the appropriators for their hard work and leadership this year on this conference report and throughout the year. I hope my colleagues will support the rule and the underlying bill.

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

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. 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 resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### PROVIDING FOR AN ADJOURNMENT OR RECESS OF THE TWO HOUSES

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 307) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 307

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), that when the House adjourns on the legislative day of Friday, November 18, 2005, or Saturday, November 19, 2005, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader*

or his designee, it stand adjourned until 2 p.m. on Tuesday, December 6, 2005, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; and that when the Senate recesses or adjourns on any day from Friday, November 18, 2005, through Wednesday, November 23, 2005, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand recessed or adjourned until noon on Monday, December 12, 2005, or Tuesday, December 13, 2005, or until such other time on either of those days, as may be specified by its Majority Leader or his designee in the motion to recess or adjourn, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. The Speaker of the House and the Majority Leader of the Senate, or their respective designees, acting jointly after consultation with the Minority Leader of the House and the Minority Leader of the Senate, shall notify the Members of the House and the Senate, respectively, to reassemble at such place and time as they may designate if, in their opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include tabular and extraneous material on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2528.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

#### CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2528, MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2006

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 564, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 2528) making appropriations for military quality of life functions of the Department of Defense, military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 564, the conference report is considered read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of November 17, 2005, Book II.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I do intend to be brief, but this is an important bill for our military and I would like to expand a little bit on some of the points within it.

But before I do that, I would like to describe the conference that we had with the Senate as successful. I would like to thank my ranking member, Mr. EDWARDS of Texas, who has been at my shoulder all the way through this process. We worked very, very closely together. We have had the same priorities and we have tried to work out any disagreements that we had along the way.

I would also like to thank Chairman LEWIS for his leadership and his forethought in realigning the jurisdiction of this subcommittee.

The House bill included the accounts for basic allowance for housing, facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization, environmental restoration and the Defense Health Program. This was designed as a first step toward examining military quality of life as a whole, from active duty through retirement.

We have received nothing but positive feedback from the senior non-commissioned officers all the way up to the four-star service chiefs. I would hope that our colleagues in the other body would take a look at what the House has done and follow suit, but for this year, while the subcommittee retains jurisdiction over these four accounts, the conference report before the House today does not contain that funding. The funding will be included in the Defense appropriations bill and will return to the Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs bill next year.

The conference report provides \$6.2 billion for military construction, including quality of life facilities such as child care centers, medical facilities and training facilities. It also provides \$4 billion for family housing construction and maintenance. This funding will continue moving toward the goal to eliminate inadequate family housing for our military, through both the privatization program and traditional construction. In addition, the bill includes \$1.7 billion to maintain readiness and transform the military through the base realignment and closure process, the Army's modularity initiative, and the global repositioning of our forces.

For the Department of Veterans Affairs, the agreement provides a total of \$22.547 billion for medical services. This amount includes the original budget request, plus \$1.1 billion to reverse policy proposals included in the

budget request, but not endorsed by the conference. These are \$496 million for long-term care; \$202 million for pharmacy copays; and \$454 million for enrollment fees.

In addition, the agreement provides for workload increases and corrections of errors as identified in the budget amendment submitted on July 14, 2005. A portion of these additional funds are only available upon submission of a revised budget amendment by the President which declares the funding an emergency. This is necessary for us to effectively provide these funds and still remain within our 302(a) allocation from the Budget Committee.

The conference agreement also includes a number of reporting requirements so that the committees will be fully informed about potential problems that the Department may encounter throughout the year of execution before it is too late.

Other significant changes to the budget request include:

The creation of an Information Technology Systems account to allow us to keep track of information technology programs at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

\$2.2 billion of medical services funding is fenced to be used only for specialty mental health care, a priority of many members of the committee and the House. We received testimony after testimony encouraging us to make sure that a minimum amount was provided for mental health care, and that is what we have done.

\$15 million for research into Gulf War Illness.

\$19 million over the President's request for medical and prosthetic research.

\$85 million for grants for State Extended Care facilities. This is \$85 million above the President's request.

We have fully funded the cost-of-living allowance of 4.1 percent for veterans compensation.

We also provide an increase of \$273 million for medical services for veterans returning from Iraq.

\$200 million is included to cover workload growth in priority 1-6 veterans.

\$600 million is provided to correct errors in the calculation of funding needed for long-term care.

Mr. Speaker, I will close by saying I think we have a good bill to put before the Congress. I am very grateful to our Appropriations Committee staff for their professional work and their patience as we worked through this process and for the late hours that they spent preparing the bill. I believe it is a bill everyone can support.