

## MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agreed to the following resolution:

S. RES. 160

Whereas the Senate has heard with profound sorrow and deep regret the announcement of the death of the Honorable Frank R. Lautenberg, late a Senator from the State of New Jersey: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the memorial observances of the Honorable Frank R. Lautenberg, late a Senator from the State of New Jersey be held in the Senate Chamber on Thursday, June 6, 2013, beginning at 2 p.m., and that the Senate attend the same.

*Resolved*, That paragraph 1 of Rule IV of the Rules for the Regulation of the Senate Wing of the United States Capitol (prohibiting the taking of pictures in the Senate Chamber) be temporarily suspended for the sole and specific purpose of permitting the Senate Photographic Studio to photograph this memorial observance.

*Resolved*, That the Sergeant at Arms be directed to make necessary and appropriate arrangements in connection with the memorial observances in the Senate Chamber.

*Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate communicate these resolutions to the House of Representatives, transmit an enrolled copy thereof to the family of the deceased, and invite the House of Representatives and the family of the deceased to attend the memorial observances in the Senate Chamber.

*Resolved*, That invitations be extended to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, and the members of the Cabinet, the Chief Justice and Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States, the Diplomatic Corps (through the Secretary of State), the Chief of Staff of the Army, the Chief of Naval Operations of the Navy, the Major General Commandant of the Marine Corps, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, and the Commandant of the Coast Guard to attend the memorial observances in the Senate Chamber.

The message also announced that the Senate has agreed to a concurrent resolution of the following title in which the concurrence of the House's requested:

S. Con. Res. 18. Concurrent Resolution providing for the use of the catafalque situated in the Exhibition Hall of the Capitol Visitor Center in connection with memorial services to be conducted in the United States Senate Chamber for the Honorable Frank R. Lautenberg, late a Senator from the State of New Jersey.

□ 1440

PROVIDING FOR THE USE OF THE CATAFALQUE IN THE EXHIBITION HALL OF THE CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER IN CONNECTION WITH MEMORIAL SERVICES TO BE CONDUCTED IN THE UNITED STATES SENATE CHAMBER FOR THE HONORABLE FRANK R. LAUTENBERG, LATE A SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table Senate Concurrent Resolution 18, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

S. CON. RES. 18

*Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring)*, That the Architect of the Capitol is authorized and directed to transfer the catafalque which is situated in the Exhibition Hall of the Capitol Visitor Center to the Senate Chamber so that such catafalque may be used in connection with services to be conducted there for the Honorable Frank R. Lautenberg, late a Senator from the State of New Jersey.

The concurrent resolution was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2014

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill under consideration and include extraneous material on the consideration of H.R. 2216, 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 243 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. 2216.

The Chair appoints the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1442

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. 2216) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes, with Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN 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.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. CULBERSON) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BISHOP) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. CULBERSON. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It is my privilege, along with my good friend from Georgia (Mr. BISHOP),

to present to the House for its consideration the 2014 appropriations bill for Military Construction and Veterans Affairs.

One of the most important obligations this Congress has is to ensure that our men and women in uniform have everything they need to do their job without worry. We think of ourselves on this subcommittee as the peace-of-mind committee for our military so that they can focus on their missions, standing on the walls of Rome, protecting our freedom, at the far corners of the world.

I think of all the appropriations bills we consider, we're honored to bring this one to the House first because of its importance to our men and women in uniform, to their families, and to our veterans who have served our Nation. We want to be sure, as I say, that they have no worries and that they don't ever have to look over their shoulder and be concerned that the United States Congress and the American people don't support them 110 percent, as we have done in this legislation, which my colleague from Georgia and I have drafted arm-in-arm.

This is a bipartisan bill that we present to the House today to ensure that the military construction needs of the armed services are fully met. We have also done our best to ensure that when our men and women in uniform retire and move into the Veterans Affairs system, they will have the best medical care possible and that this backlog of disability claims that's been plaguing us for a number of years will be cleared as rapidly as possible.

We've done this in a way that's also fiscally responsible. We have found every dollar we could that was left unspent from previous years and returned that to the taxpayers. At the same time, we make sure that our veterans and our men and women in uniform have everything that they need to do their job.

Our committee has also been very committed to ensuring that their families are taken care of and that the Defense Department schools on bases are the best that they can be and in the best condition that they can be in. I know all of us as parents are concerned about the quality of our kids' education. The last thing that a man or woman who's deployed at a United States base overseas—we don't want them to worry about the caliber of the school that their children are attending. So we've also placed emphasis on the ability of our military base commanders to contract with the State in which they're located to set up charter schools at their military bases if the base happens to be located in an area where the local schools can't provide the quality that they need.

We have in this appropriations bill, as I say, fully funded the Department of Veterans Affairs. Some of this money is advance appropriated. So while we've got a total funding level in this bill for 2014 of \$73.3 billion, that's