

Whereas Ruth Brown, a rhythm and blues singer and songwriter known as Miss Rhythm, was one of Atlantic Records's first recording and performing stars;

Whereas Ruth Brown's elegant voice made her a hit from the 1940s onward with such songs as "So Long" and "Teardrops from My Eyes";

Whereas Ruth Brown's career spanned the post-World War II era through the Civil Rights Movement to the 21st century, a period which also saw the genre music move into the American mainstream;

Whereas Ruth Brown helped found the Rhythm and Blues Foundation in 1988 to recognize, promote, and preserve rhythm and blues music;

Whereas Ruth Brown worked with Congress to advance the cause of copyright royalty reform so that rhythm and blues artists could receive deserved copyright royalties from their music;

Whereas Ruth Brown's talent was recognized with a Tony Award for Best Actress in a Musical in "Black and Blue" in 1989, a Grammy Award for her album "Blues on Broadway" in 1989, induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1993, and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Blues Foundation in 1999;

Whereas Ruth Brown's autobiography, "Miss Rhythm," received the Ralph J. Gleason Music Book Award; and

Whereas Ruth Brown is survived by 2 sons, 4 siblings, 3 grandchildren, and a multitude of cousins, nieces, nephews, friends, and admirers: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) honors the life of Ruth Brown;

(2) recognizes Ruth Brown for her efforts toward reforming the copyright royalty system on behalf of rhythm and blues recording artists;

(3) commends Ruth Brown for her success in ensuring that rhythm and blues recording artists would receive deserved copyright royalties; and

(4) expresses its deepest condolences to Ruth Brown's family and friends.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on House Resolution 1090 currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to join with my friend, Ranking Member CONYERS, in support of this resolution to honor the life of Ruth Brown, a pioneering rhythm and blues singer who passed away last month. Ruth Brown was a well-known performer who paved the road for other R&B artists. In the 1950s she topped the R&B charts with a series of hits that helped establish Atlantic Records as a leading recording label for pop singers.

□ 1545

The label became known as "the house that Ruth built." That means Yankee Stadium is not the only "house that Ruth built."

Ruth Brown's style and singing ability influenced numerous other well-known musical artists, including Bonnie Raitt and Little Richard. Later in her career, she was awarded Tony and Grammy honors and was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

But Ruth Brown's most enduring contributions and her most remarkable qualities might have been her persistence and passionate desire for justice. During her last two decades, she devoted herself to the cause of collecting unpaid royalties for musicians, spending much of her time working with Congress to promote copyright royalty reform. She also helped establish a nonprofit foundation in Philadelphia to help finance medical care for needy musicians.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) for introducing this resolution, and I join him in urging the Members of the House to support this resolution to honor the extraordinary life and accomplishments of Ruth Brown and to extend the House's deepest sympathy to her family and friends.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman, JIM SENSENBRENNER, for his very personal remarks about Ruth Brown and I thank him and our colleagues, CHARLES RANGEL, JERRY NADLER, BARBARA LEE and BOBBY SCOTT, who all recognize the accomplishments of rhythm and blues singer Ruth Brown, who passed away on November 17, 2006. She was not only a great artist of contemporary music, but a fighter who reformed copyright royalty payments for recording artists.

She had a great talent, as has been described, and became one of Atlantic Records' first recording stars. For that, she was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and received a 1999 Lifetime Achievement Award from The Blues Foundation. She had an autobiography, "Miss Rhythm," and received the Ralph Gleason Award for Music.

Aside from her outstanding singing career, though, Ruth Brown came to the attention of the Congress because she was a tireless advocate for the rights of other musicians and artists in the rhythm and blues category. She worked with us to advance the cause of copyright royalty reform so that rhythm and blues artists could at last receive the royalties that they deserved from their music. She also helped found the Rhythm and Blues Foundation in 1988 to recognize, promote and preserve rhythm and blues music. The important work of this foundation continues to this day. She came to the Hill and worked with not only the Judiciary Committee, but

with the Congressional Black Caucus as well.

The resolution we introduce today acknowledges the important contributions to American culture and recognizes Ruth Brown for her efforts to reform the royalty system and expresses the House's deepest condolences to the Ruth Brown family and friends. We remember her as a wonderful, beautiful musician, but also as a dedicated fighter for justice in the copyright field that is within our jurisdiction.

So it is with great regret that we acknowledge the contributions of the late Ruth Brown.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1090.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds of those voting having responded in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

STOLEN VALOR ACT OF 2005

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 1998) to amend title 18, United States Code, to enhance protections relating to the reputation and meaning of the Medal of Honor and other military decorations and awards, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 1998

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 "Stolen Valor Act of 2005".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Fraudulent claims surrounding the receipt of the Medal of Honor, the distinguished-service cross, the Navy cross, the Air Force cross, the Purple Heart, and other decorations and medals awarded by the President or the Armed Forces of the United States damage the reputation and meaning of such decorations and medals.

(2) Federal law enforcement officers have limited ability to prosecute fraudulent claims of receipt of military decorations and medals.

(3) Legislative action is necessary to permit law enforcement officers to protect the reputation and meaning of military decorations and medals.

SEC. 3. ENHANCED PROTECTION OF MEANING OF MILITARY DECORATIONS AND MEDALS.

(a) EXPANSION OF GENERAL CRIMINAL OFFENSE.—Subsection (a) of section 704 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking "manufactures, or sells" and inserting "purchases, attempts to purchase, solicits for purchase, mails, ships, imports, exports,

produces blank certificates of receipt for, manufactures, sells, attempts to sell, advertises for sale, trades, barter, or exchanges for anything of value”.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF CRIMINAL OFFENSE RELATING TO FALSE CLAIMS ABOUT RECEIPT OF DECORATIONS AND MEDALS.—Such section 704 is further amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (c);

(2) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

“(b) FALSE CLAIMS ABOUT RECEIPT OF MILITARY DECORATIONS OR MEDALS.—Whoever falsely represents himself or herself, verbally or in writing, to have been awarded any decoration or medal authorized by Congress for the Armed Forces of the United States, any of the service medals or badges awarded to the members of such forces, the ribbon, button, or rosette of any such badge, decoration, or medal, or any colorable imitation of such item shall be fined under this title, imprisoned not more than six months, or both.”; and

(3) in paragraph (1) of subsection (c), as redesignated by paragraph (1) of this subsection, by inserting “or (b)” after “subsection (a)”.

(c) ENHANCED PENALTY FOR OFFENSES INVOLVING CERTAIN OTHER MEDALS.—Such section 704 is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) ENHANCED PENALTY FOR OFFENSES INVOLVING CERTAIN OTHER MEDALS.—If a decoration or medal involved in an offense described in subsection (a) or (b) is a distinguished-service cross awarded under section 3742 of title 10, a Navy cross awarded under section 6242 of title 10, an Air Force cross awarded under section 8742 of section 10, a silver star awarded under section 3746, 6244, or 8746 of title 10, a Purple Heart awarded under section 1129 of title 10, or any replacement or duplicate medal for such medal as authorized by law, in lieu of the punishment provided in the applicable subsection, the offender shall be fined under this title, imprisoned not more than 1 year, or both.”.

(d) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Subsection (c) of such section 704, as so redesignated, is further amended—

(1) by inserting “ENHANCED PENALTY FOR OFFENSES INVOLVING” before “CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR”; and

(2) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ‘Congressional Medal of Honor’ means—

“(A) a medal of honor awarded under section 3741, 6241, or 8741 of title 10 or section 491 of title 14;

“(B) a duplicate medal of honor issued under section 3754, 6256, or 8754 of title 10 or section 504 of title 14; or

“(C) a replacement of a medal of honor provided under section 3747, 6253, or 8747 of title 10 or section 501 of title 14.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 1998 currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 1998, the Stolen Valor Act, which expands existing law prohibiting the fraudulent use of military decorations or medals.

The men and women of our Armed Forces risk their lives every day to preserve America's freedom. They sacrifice for our liberties with courage, patriotism and humility. They do not seek fame or celebrity status when told that they are heroes, and they often respond, “I am just doing my job.”

While we can never fully pay our military heroes our debt of gratitude, America honors their service and sacrifice with military decorations and medals such as the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star, the Navy Cross, and our Nation's highest military decoration, the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Unfortunately, the significance of these medals is being devalued by phony war heroes who fabricate their honors and military careers. They do so for greed and selfishness, and disrespect the service and sacrifice of our military heroes, as well as the honor they uniquely deserve. Federal law enforcement authorities have responded to these imposters by launching a dozen investigations currently underway.

In Illinois, one man attended numerous Marine Corps functions, military funerals and fund-raisers, posing as a retired Marine Corps colonel. He claimed to have been awarded the Purple Heart eight times, the only marine to have obtained such a distinction, as well as the Navy Cross. It turns out he never served a single day as a Marine.

In St. Louis, Federal authorities arrested a man at a local Marine Corps event who claimed to be a decorated officer. He had previously been spotted at the annual Marine Corps Birthday Ball wearing a Navy Cross, two Silver Stars, four Bronze Stars and numerous other medals. He, too, never served a single day as a marine.

Perhaps the most egregious example of this fraud was perpetrated by a 10-year marine sergeant who secured \$66 million in security contracts from the military based upon fictitious combat experience in Panama and Somalia, with fabricated Silver Stars, Purple Hearts, Bronze Stars and Air Medals. Upon learning of the man's fraudulent combat record, the military revoked the contracts, but by this time he had already fled the country.

The FBI estimates that for every legitimate Navy SEAL team member, there are roughly 300 imposters. Moreover, there are roughly only 124 living recipients of the Medal of Honor, yet more than twice as many falsely claim to have received it.

The Stolen Valor Act enhances penalties for those who masquerade as decorated war heroes. It expands the existing prohibition against wearing,

manufacturing or selling military decorations or medals without legal authorization. The bill also imposes penalties for falsely representing one's self as the recipient of any medal or honor authorized by Congress for the armed services, and increases penalties for violations involving a Distinguished Service Cross, an Air Force Cross, a Navy Cross, a Silver Star, a Purple Heart or the Congressional Medal of Honor.

On September 7, the other body passed this bill by unanimous consent. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join Chairman SENSENBRENNER in supporting this measure, the Stolen Valor Act, introduced in both this body and the other body, which enjoys the widespread support of a long list of bipartisan cosponsors. In fact, here in the House the measure has a total of 110 Democratic and Republican cosponsors.

The legislation starts out by honoring the brave men and women who courageously serve our country. It also protects the precious medals that are awarded during the course of their service by establishing a new set of criminal penalties against anyone who fraudulently claims to be a medal recipient or displays a fake medal in his home or office.

Recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor, the Distinguished Service Award, the Silver Star and Purple Heart have made considerable sacrifices for our country and, as such, deserve a tremendous amount of our gratitude and respect. It can be said that this legislation represents just one of the many ways of saying thanks for a job well done.

The bill is supported by several of our military groups, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Military Order of the Purple Heart and the FBI Agents Association. I, too, strongly urge my colleagues to lend their unanimous support to this commonsense proposal.

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

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE).

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of S. 1998, the Stolen Valor Act. To many Americans, the collections of colored ribbons and bronze medals that adorn the uniforms of military personnel and veterans are difficult to comprehend. To those who have served, the rows of ribbons and medals serve as an unwritten resume. A quick glance can tell much: how many deployments at sea he has made, in what combat theaters she has served, or even the value placed upon his work by his superiors.

But even for those who did not serve, these decorations and awards have a

deeper meaning and value that far outweigh their monetary worth. In many instances, they symbolize overcoming an instinctual desire for self-preservation found in all of us and summoning a level of courage rarely found but highly coveted.

It is for this reason that some seek to bestow on themselves the symbols of honor and sacrifice earned by others. Regardless of their rationale, those that impersonate combat heroes dishonor the true recipients of such awards.

By passing the Stolen Valor Act this afternoon, we have a unique opportunity to return to our veterans and military personnel the dignity and respect taken by those who have stolen it and dishonor them.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR), the original author of this measure, who has worked on it with leaders in both the House and the other body for a considerable period of time.

(Mr. SALAZAR asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

□ 1600

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me thank Chairman SENSENBRENNER and Ranking Member CONYERS for allowing us to bring this important legislation forward. As you all know, Senator CONRAD from the Senate side, both his staff and my staff worked in a bipartisan effort to bring this important act forward.

This act would actually place a criminal penalty on those who falsely claim to have risked their lives for their country, and restoring honor to those who have truly earned it.

Last year, in Pueblo, Colorado, I met with Pam Sterner of Pueblo, who was attending Colorado State University in Pueblo, and also with Medal of Honor recipient Peter Lemmon of Colorado Springs.

Pam had recently completed a working paper on the issue of military medals fraud for a political science class at Colorado State University, Pueblo. With her research and with some of her language, we drafted the Stolen Valor Act of 2005.

Current law basically allows Federal law enforcement to prosecute individuals who physically wear medals on their person. The problem has been occurring where individuals are claiming to have earned these medals and there is no way for authorities to be able to prosecute these individuals. These frauds and these phonies have diminished the meaning and the honor of the recognitions received by our military heroes.

In addition to diminishing the meaning, on several occasions phonies have used their stature as a decorated war hero to gain credibility that allows them to commit more serious frauds.

B.G. Burkett's award winning book, "Stolen Valor," first exposed the prob-

lems of these medals fraud. The authors show that killers have fooled the most astute prosecutors and gotten away with murder. They show phony heroes who have become the object of national award-winning documentaries on national network television. They show liars and fabricators who have flooded major publishing houses with false tales of heroism which have become best-selling biographies.

Not only do the authors show the price of the myth has been enormous for society, but they spotlight how it has severely denigrated the service, patriotism, and gallantry of the best warriors America's ever produced.

The Stolen Valor Act, H.R. 3352, makes a language fix to the current Federal statute, to include making verbal and written claims to be the recipient of a military medal that they were not entitled to.

This bill expands penalties currently in effect for the Medal of Honor to apply to the so-called valor medals, including but not limited to the Distinguished Service Crosses of the respective military branches and the Purple Heart.

Our bill, H.R. 3352, a companion bill of Senate bill 1998, now has 110 cosponsorships with, as Ranking member CONYERS stated, 73 Democrats and 37 Republicans.

H.R. 3352 has been endorsed by numerous veterans and law enforcement organizations, including the Congressional Medal of Honor Society, the Military Order of the Purple Heart and the FBI Agents Association.

The Stolen Valor Act may well be the most sweeping legislation affecting military awards since the Medal of Honor review of 1917, during which this criteria for awarding our Nation's highest military award was strengthened. During the 1917 review, Congress began establishing a series of lesser awards which has evolved to become the Pyramid of Honor. This is a series of medals awarded to members of the military in increasing levels of importance and prestige.

Subsequent to this review of 1917, little had been legislated in regard to these awards beyond authorization of new awards or slight changes in the awards process. Additionally, the Stolen Valor Act of 2005 restores a precedent established by General George Washington. This was when he first instituted our first individual military award in 1782.

In his General Orders issued from his headquarters in Newburg, New York, on August 7, 1782, General Washington established the Badge for Military Merit, which in 1932 was revised as the Purple Heart. General Washington noted the following point with regard to military awards: "Should any who are not entitled to these honors have the insolence to assume the badges of them, they shall be severely punished."

The success of the Stolen Valor Act is notable because both Democrats and Republicans from both Houses have

worked together in a unique display of teamwork on behalf of our brave men and women in uniform.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to protect and honor those who have earned the right to wear these prestigious medals.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on Senate bill 1998, the Stolen Valor Act of 2005.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 1998, the Stolen Valor Act. I commend my colleague from Colorado for introducing this, Ranking Member CONYERS and Chairman SENSENBRENNER for this important bill, because it will strengthen the penalties for the misuse and misrepresentation of our Nation's highest military honors. I am a proud cosponsor of H.R. 3352, the House version of this bill. I thank Congressman SALAZAR and Senator CONRAD for working in a bipartisan spirit to make this legislation a reality.

I have had the opportunity during my time in Congress to present medals of valor to many veterans in my district. Though their service was many years ago, it is an inspiring experience to hear these veterans talk about their service to our Nation with great pride and also reflecting the humility of the generation it served. For many of those who lay their lives on the line for our country, there is no greater honor than the receipt of a medal honoring their bravery and sacrifice, reflecting the sentiment of a grateful Nation.

It is disturbing to me that people would illegitimately sell these medals or display them as a false symbol of their own valor. While our soldiers have valiantly defended our freedom on the battlefield, others have displayed false symbols of service, misleading our citizens, cheapening the symbol, and dishonoring the heritage, traditions and servicemembers who have had to live the reality of military service.

When General George Washington instituted our Nation's first military award, he set forth a number of principles to follow, including one that stated, "Should any who are not entitled to these honors have the insolence to assume the badges of them, they shall be severely punished."

Those who illegally wear, sell or produce decorations and medals should be punished. These actions are disrespectful to generations of our Nation's veterans and war heroes. The Stolen Valor Act will strengthen the punishment for those who falsely portray themselves as recipients of military decorations and medals.

Military decorations and medals honor our Nation's brave service men and women and inspire future generations to military service. They remind us of the great price of freedom, the excruciating time of separation, of loss, of pain, of sadness, and the joys of camaraderie that few can understand.

I urge my colleagues to support the Stolen Valor Act and help preserve the integrity of our Nation's military honors.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, since this is likely the last piece of legislation the House Judiciary Committee will control time on the floor, I would like to take this moment and opportunity to reflect back on the good and outstanding work of JAMES SENSENBRENNER during his tenure as chairman of the House Judiciary Committee.

It has been my privilege to serve with Chairman SENSENBRENNER in my role as ranking member of the Judiciary Committee over these last three Congresses.

During that time, the Judiciary Committee has become one of the most active committees in the House, processing the second largest number of bills of any committee. It is rare a week goes by that this committee is not on the floor of the House considering frequently complex and significant legislation that impacts the lives of millions of Americans.

There is no question that Mr. SENSENBRENNER has led the committee firmly and fairly at all times during his chairmanship, but there are three things that I would like the record to reflect.

The first is his tireless advocacy for the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary. Our rule X jurisdiction ranges far and wide, and Chairman SENSENBRENNER has been a constant advocate in protecting our legislative prerogatives, and I can assure him that all the members of the Judiciary Committee are very grateful for the zeal in which he has conducted that part of his responsibility.

Secondly, the chairman has been a strong advocate for antitrust laws and for the concept of competition. Time and time again, we worked together to see that the interests of the American public were put ahead of any special interests.

Finally, I feel very personally affectionate toward the chairman for the critical role that he has played in the passage of voting rights legislation. It was the Voting Rights Act of 1965, why I initially joined the Judiciary Committee, that I participated in this vastly and hugely important piece of legislation. Mr. SENSENBRENNER was not there then, but it was when we got around to some reauthorizations that his commitment to this constitutional concept was as strong as mine.

In 1982, it was his role and commitment that helped get the extension of the bill through this body and the other body as well, but it was only last year that we were able to begin the work that got us through the current extension of legislation. The reason that this was important was that, first of all, we were able to have the work product of the Committee on the Judi-

ciary not only pass the House without amendment but the exact bill was passed in the other body as well, eliminating, of course, the necessity for a committee to work out any differences.

It was then that we realized that on this question of protecting the right of our citizens to vote, the cornerstone of our democracy, that Chairman JIM SENSENBRENNER and Ranking Member CONYERS could not be more closely working together, not that there were not huge problems that had to be worked out and resolved, not just between ourselves but between other Members of the committee and some of our colleagues not even on the committee. We were able to do that with dispatch. I quickly add the names of the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT) and the Constitutional Subcommittee ranking member, JERRY NADLER, as well and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT), who worked with us all together on this matter.

So I am pleased to make these remarks as his term expires. I look forward to him working on the Committee on the Judiciary in future sessions of Congress.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce there are no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of the time.

Mr. Speaker, I deeply appreciate the words of my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS).

This is kind of a tough act to follow, but I would like to state for the record that the Judiciary Committee, because it has such a vast jurisdiction and an awful lot of controversial legislation, that by working with Mr. CONYERS and the members of the minority, and having the majority and minority staff work together, we knew that there were some philosophical differences on many of the pieces of legislation that could not be bridged without a vigorous debate and votes both in committee and on the floor of the House of Representatives. But the cooperation and the respect and the trust that we had across the aisle were able to narrow those differences so that what we did debate were true differences in approach and true differences in policy.

I keep on telling the high school classes that I talk to about what really goes on here that 95 percent of the bills that we pass are worked out in committee, and the debate and votes on the floor merely ratify decisions that have been made earlier in committee. The problem is that compromise agreement, and I would even submit accomplishment, do not get any media attention. It is allegations of misconduct, actual knock out, drag down fights in those areas that we do have disagreements on that really monopolize the news media.

□ 1615

As a result, people get the wrong impression that all we do out here is fight

and argue amongst ourselves. And while we do a lot of that, and I think the framers of the Constitution intended the Congress of the United States to do that, the tremendous work product of the committee over the last 6 years I think has been due in large part by the trust and respect and agreement that we have had in working across the aisle.

And while I was sitting here listening to the debate, I was going through the calendars of the House of Representatives looking at the number of committee reports we filed, and I think it is somewhere in the 90 to 100 number range during this Congress. And a lot of these reports were really on controversial and complicated legislation where we needed to have a committee report to explain what the intent of Congress was, and that type of cooperation allowed us to have that tremendous output of work product.

It has been my honor to chair this committee for the last 6 years, but I can say one of the things that I am most proud of is the fact that, where it has been possible, I have been able to reach across the aisle and work with my friend from Michigan, and I think that he and I have each directed our respective staffs to do the same thing, and we can be proud of what we have done not only in this Congress but in the previous two Congresses. And although our roles will be kind of reversed in the next Congress, I look forward to continuing to build on that cooperation so that the country knows that the Judiciary Committee not only is the place to be at, but it is the folks that get things done.

So I thank you very much for your very, very good comments. You have been instrumental in putting together that record of accomplishment, and I think we can be proud of what the committee has done.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise in support of S. 1998, the Stolen Valor Act. I am extremely pleased that this body is able to consider this bill before we adjourn, because recent events in my district and across our nation have illustrated why Congress must act quickly to address the underlying issue of this bill.

Under current law, it is illegal to wear, manufacture, or sell military decorations without legal authorization. However, it is legal, but not ethical, to falsely represent oneself as having been awarded a decoration or medal of the United States Military.

This legislation will expand the prohibitions listed above to include conducting other transactions not already illegal without authorization, and falsely representing oneself as having been awarded any decoration or medal authorized by Congress for the Armed Forces or any of the service medals or badges. It also increases penalties for violations involving a Distinguished Service Cross, Air Force Cross, Navy Cross, Silver Star, or Purple Heart.

Every year around Veterans Day—a day where we honor our Nation's heroes for their service and sacrifice—numerous individuals come out of the woodwork to claim military decorations that were not awarded to them.

This is wholly disrespectful to those who have been legitimately awarded these high honors in the line of duty, and dilutes the significance attached to each lawfully awarded decoration.

This issue was brought to my attention by veterans in my district, upset about two recent cases of "stolen valor" in the state of Missouri. In this instance, a man spoke before a group at a Veterans Day event in Chillicothe, Missouri—in my district—and claimed a Navy Cross that he had not been awarded. A short while later, a man was arrested at a Marine Corps League meeting in Saint Louis, Missouri after claiming a number of decorations including the Navy Cross, which he was not awarded.

Mr. Speaker, the Stolen Valor Act provides a solution to address this growing fraud. One of the great privileges I have had in Congress is presenting veterans in my district with their rightfully earned honors and decorations. Many decorated veterans, when asked about their heroic actions, respond that they were just doing their duty. Mr. Speaker, it is our duty to protect the integrity of these decorations reserved to honor the heroic service and sacrifice of our nation's servicemembers. We cannot allow imposters to cheapen the value of these honors, and we cannot allow imposters to seek fame and fortune from falsehood. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the passage of S. 1998, the Stolen Valor Act.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KLINE). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 1998.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds of those voting having responded in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

VETERANS PROGRAMS EXTENSION ACT OF 2006

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6342) to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend certain expiring provisions of law administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, to expand eligibility for the Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 6342

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Veterans Programs Extension Act of 2006".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Extension of certain expiring provisions of law administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 3. Expansion of eligibility for Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance program.

Sec. 4. Deadline and permanent requirement for report on educational assistance program.

Sec. 5. Reauthorization of biennial report of Advisory Committee on Women Veterans.

Sec. 6. Parkinson's Disease research, education, and clinical centers and multiple sclerosis centers of excellence.

Sec. 7. Authorization of major medical facility leases.

Sec. 8. Technical and clerical amendments.

Sec. 9. Codification of cost-of-living adjustment provided in Public Law 109-361.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF CERTAIN EXPIRING PROVISIONS OF LAW ADMINISTERED BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) AUTHORITY FOR HEALTH CARE FOR PARTICIPATION IN DOD CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WARFARE TESTING.—Section 1710(e)(3)(D) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking "December 31, 2005" and inserting "December 31, 2007".

(b) GRANT AND PER DIEM GRANT ASSISTANCE FOR HOMELESS VETERANS.—Section 2011(a)(2) of such title is amended by striking "September 30, 2005" and inserting "September 30, 2007".

(c) TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION FOR SERIOUSLY MENTALLY ILL AND HOMELESS VETERANS.—Section 2031(b) of such title is amended by striking "December 31, 2006" and inserting "December 31, 2007".

(d) ADDITIONAL SERVICES FOR HOMELESS AND SERIOUSLY MENTALLY ILL VETERANS.—Section 2033(d) of such title is amended by striking "December 31, 2006" and inserting "December 31, 2007".

(e) ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON HOMELESS VETERANS.—Section 2066(d) of such title is amended by striking "December 31, 2006" and inserting "December 31, 2007".

(f) GOVERNMENT MARKERS IN PRIVATE CEMETERIES.—Section 2306(d)(3) of such title is amended by striking "December 31, 2006" and inserting "December 31, 2007".

(g) ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE ALLOWANCE FOR WORK-STUDY.—Section 3485(a)(4) of such title is amended in subparagraphs (A), (C), and (F) by striking "December 27, 2006" and inserting "June 30, 2007".

SEC. 3. EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR SURVIVORS' AND DEPENDENTS' EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY.—Section 3501(a)(1) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking "means—" and inserting "means any of the following:";

(2) in each of subparagraphs (A) through (D), by capitalizing the first letter of the first word;

(3) in subparagraph (A)—

(A) by inserting after "a person who" the following: "as a result of qualifying service";

(B) by striking the comma at the end of clause (i) and inserting "or";

(C) by striking "or" at the end of clause (ii) and inserting a period; and

(D) by striking clause (iii);

(4) in subparagraph (B) by striking the comma at the end and inserting the following: "sustained during a period of qualifying service.";

(5) in subparagraph (C)—

(A) by inserting "or child" after "the spouse"; and

(B) by striking "or" at the end and inserting a period;

(6) in subparagraph (D)—

(A) in clause (i), by inserting before the comma the following: "sustained during a period of qualifying service"; and

(B) by striking the comma at the end and inserting a period;

(7) by inserting after subparagraph (D) the following new subparagraph:

"(E) The spouse or child of a person who—
 "(i) at the time of the Secretary's determination under clause (ii), is a member of the Armed Forces who is hospitalized or receiving outpatient medical care, services, or treatment;

"(ii) the Secretary determines has a total disability permanent in nature incurred or aggravated in the line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service; and

"(iii) is likely to be discharged or released from such service for such disability.";

(8) by striking "arising out of" and all that follows through the end.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 35.—Chapter 35 of such title is further amended as follows:

(1) Section 3501(a) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(12) The term 'qualifying service' means service in the active military, naval, or air service after the beginning of the Spanish-American War that did not terminate under dishonorable conditions."

(2) Section 3511 is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)(1)—

(i) by striking "Each eligible person" and inserting the following: "Each eligible person, whether made eligible by one or more of the provisions of section 3501(a)(1) of this title,";

(ii) by striking "a period" and inserting "an aggregate period"; and

(iii) by striking the second sentence;

(B) in subsection (b)—

(i) in paragraph (2)—

(I) by striking "the provisions of section 3501(a)(1)(A)(iii) or" and inserting "section"; and

(II) by striking "or" at the end;

(ii) in paragraph (3)—

(I) by striking "section 3501(a)(1)(D)" and inserting "subparagraph (D) or (E) of section 3501(a)(1)"; and

(II) by inserting "or" after the comma at the end; and

(iii) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following new paragraph:

"(4) the parent or spouse from whom such eligibility is derived based upon subparagraph (E) of section 3501(a)(1) of this title no longer meets a requirement under clause (i), (ii), or (iii) of that subparagraph,"; and

(C) by striking subsection (c).

(3) Section 3512 is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) by striking "an eligible person (within the meaning of section 3501(a)(1)(A) of this title)" and inserting "an eligible person whose eligibility is based on the death or disability of a parent or on a parent being listed in one of the categories referred to in section 3501(a)(1)(C) of this title"; and

(ii) in paragraph (6), by striking "the provisions of section 3501(a)(1)(A)(iii)" and inserting "a parent being listed in one of the categories referred to in section 3501(a)(1)(C)";

(B) in subsection (b)—

(i) in paragraph (1)(A)—

(I) by inserting after "section 3501(a)(1) of this title" the following: "or a person made eligible by the disability of a spouse under section 3501(a)(1)(E) of this title"; and

(II) by striking "or 3501(a)(1)(D)(ii) of this title" and inserting "3501(a)(1)(D)(ii), or 3501(a)(1)(E) of this title";

(ii) in paragraph (1)(B), by adding at the end the following new clause:

"(iii) The date on which the Secretary notifies the member of the Armed Forces from whom eligibility is derived that the member has a total disability permanent in nature incurred or aggravated in the line of duty in