

**AMENDMENT TO THE RULES COMMITTEE PRINT
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At the end of title V, add the following new section:

1 **SEC. 5 ____ . SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING THE RECOV-**
2 **ERY OF THE REMAINS OF CERTAIN MEMBERS**
3 **OF THE ARMED FORCES KILLED IN THUR-**
4 **STON ISLAND, ANTARCTICA.**

5 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-
6 ings:

7 (1) Commencing August 26, 1946, though late
8 February 1947 the United States Navy Antarctic
9 Developments Program Task Force 68, codenamed
10 “Operation Highjump” initiated and undertook the
11 largest ever-to-this-date exploration of the Antarctic
12 continent.

13 (2) The primary mission of the Task Force 68
14 organized by Rear Admiral Richard E. Byrd Jr.
15 USN, (Ret) and led by Rear Admiral Richard H.
16 Cruzen, USN, was to do the following:

17 (A) Establish the Antarctic research base
18 Little America IV.

1 (B) In the defense of the United States of
2 America from possible hostile aggression from
3 abroad - to train personnel test equipment, de-
4 velop techniques for establishing, maintaining
5 and utilizing air bases on ice, with applicability
6 comparable to interior Greenland, where condi-
7 tions are similar to those of the Antarctic.

8 (C) Map and photograph a full two-thirds
9 of the Antarctic Continent during the classified,
10 hazardous duty/volunteer-only operation involv-
11 ing 4700 sailors, 23 aircraft and 13 ships in-
12 cluding the first submarine the U.S.S. Sennet,
13 and the aircraft carrier the U.S.S. Philippine
14 Sea, brought to the edge of the ice pack to
15 launch (6) Navy ski-equipped, rocket-assisted
16 R4Ds.

17 (D) Consolidate and extend United States
18 sovereignty over the largest practicable area of
19 the Antarctic continent.

20 (E) Determine the feasibility of estab-
21 lishing, maintaining and utilizing bases in the
22 Antarctic and investigating possible base sites.

23 (3) While on a hazardous duty/all volunteer
24 mission vital to the interests of National Security
25 and while over the eastern Antarctica coastline

1 known as the Phantom Coast, the PBM-5 Martin
2 Mariner “Flying Boat” “George 1” entered a
3 whiteout over Thurston Island. As the pilot at-
4 tempted to climb, the aircraft grazed the glacier’s
5 ridgeline and exploded within 5 seconds instantly
6 killing Ensign Maxwell Lopez, Navigator and Wen-
7 dell “Bud” Hendersin, Aviation Machinists Mate 1st
8 Class while Frederick Williams, Aviation Radioman
9 1st Class died several hours later. Six other crewmen
10 survived including the Captain of the “George 1’s”
11 seaplane tender U.S.S. Pine Island.

12 (4) The bodies of the dead were protected from
13 the desecration of Antarctic scavenging birds
14 (Skuas) by the surviving crew wrapping the bodies
15 and temporarily burying the men under the star-
16 board wing engine nacelle.

17 (5) Rescue requirements of the “George-1” sur-
18 vivors forced the abandonment of their crewmates’
19 bodies.

20 (6) Conditions prior to the departure of Task
21 Force 68 precluded a return to the area to the re-
22 cover the bodies.

23 (7) For nearly 60 years Navy promised the
24 families that they would recover the men: “If the
25 safety, logistical, and operational prerequisites allow

1 a mission in the future, every effort will be made to
2 bring our sailors home.”.

3 (8) The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command
4 twice offered to recover the bodies of this crew for
5 Navy.

6 (9) A 2004 NASA ground penetrating radar
7 overflight commissioned by Navy relocated the crash
8 site three miles from its crash position.

9 (10) The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Com-
10 mand offered to underwrite the cost of an aerial
11 ground penetrating radar (GPR) survey of the crash
12 site area by NASA.

13 (11) The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Com-
14 mand studied the recovery with the recognized recov-
15 ery authorities and national scientists and deter-
16 mined that the recovery is only “medium risk”.

17 (12) National Science Foundation and sci-
18 entists from the University of Texas, Austin, regu-
19 larly visit the island.

20 (13) The crash site is classified as a “perishable
21 site”, meaning a glacier that will calve into the
22 Bellingshausen Sea.

23 (14) The National Science Foundation main-
24 tains a presence in area - of the Pine Island Glacier.

1 (15) The National Science Foundation Director
2 of Polar Operations will assist and provide assets for
3 the recovery upon the request of Congress.

4 (16) The United States Coast Guard is pres-
5 ently pursuing the recovery of 3 WWII air crewmen
6 from similar circumstances in Greenland.

7 (17) On Memorial Day, May 25, 2009, Presi-
8 dent Barak Obama declared: “. . .the support of
9 our veterans is a sacred trust. . .we need to serve
10 them as they have served us. . .that means bringing
11 home all our POWs and MIAs. . .”.

12 (18) The policies and laws of the United States
13 of America require that our armed service personnel
14 be repatriated.

15 (19) The fullest possible accounting of United
16 States fallen military personnel means repatriating
17 living American POWs and MIAs, accounting for,
18 identifying, and recovering the remains of military
19 personnel who were killed in the line of duty, or pro-
20 viding convincing evidence as to why such a repatri-
21 ation, accounting, identification, or recovery is not
22 possible.

23 (20) It is the responsibility of the Federal Gov-
24 ernment to return to the United States for proper

1 burial and respect all members of the Armed Forces
2 killed in the line of duty who lie in lost graves.

3 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—In light of the findings
4 under subsection (a), Congress—

5 (1) reaffirms its support for the recovery and
6 return to the United States, the remains and bodies
7 of all members of the Armed Forces killed in the
8 line of duty, and for the efforts by the Joint POW-
9 MIA Accounting Command to recover the remains of
10 members of the Armed Forces from all wars, con-
11 flicts and missions;

12 (2) recognizes the courage and sacrifice of all
13 members of the Armed Forces who participated in
14 Operation Highjump and all missions vital to the
15 national security of the United States of America;

16 (3) acknowledges the dedicated research and ef-
17 forts by the US Geological Survey, the National
18 Science Foundation, the Joint POW/MIA Account-
19 ing Command, the Fallen American Veterans Foun-
20 dation and all persons and organizations to identify,
21 locate, and advocate for, from their temporary Ant-
22 arctic grave, the recovery of the well-preserved fro-
23 zen bodies of Ensign Maxwell Lopez, Naval Aviator,
24 Frederick Williams, Aviation Machinist's Mate 1ST

1 Class, Wendell Hendersin, Aviation Radioman 1ST
2 Class of the “George 1” explosion and crash; and
3 (4) encourages the Department of Defense to
4 review the facts, research and to pursue new efforts
5 to undertake all feasible efforts to recover, identify,
6 and return the well-preserved frozen bodies of the
7 “George 1” crew from Antarctica’s Thurston Island.

