



Legislative Bulletin.....June 4, 2013

Contents:

Amendments to H.R. 2216 (Part I) —FY 2014 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

NOTE: The following Legislative Bulletin contains information on the three amendments pre-printed in the Congressional Record on June 3, 2013, and other potential amendments not pre-printed that may be offered.

The RSC Staff will make every attempt to provide RSC Member offices with up-to-date amendment information. If your boss will definitely offer an amendment, please give the RSC a preview of the text so that we can accurately describe your amendment in a timely manner. Due to the hurried nature of floor consideration, amendment analysis will be sent in multiple Legislative Bulletins, with analysis of amendments not pre-printed in the Congressional Record and offered just prior to a vote coming very close to the actual vote.

Order of Business: The amendments to H.R. 2216, the FY 2014 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, are scheduled to be considered on Tuesday, June 4, 2013, under an open rule. The rule ([H.Res.243](#)) waives all points of order against consideration of the bill and provisions in the bill. The rule also provides for the bill to be read for amendment by paragraph and under the five minute rule. The rule ***provides priority for recognition to Members who have pre-printed their amendments in the Congressional Record*** and provides for one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

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SUMMARY OF AMENDMENTS PREPRINTED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

June 3, 2013

- 1. Griffith (R-VA).** The underlying bill requires that the Department of Defense report to Congress any repair or maintenance expenditure in excess of \$35,000 for a general or flag officer family housing unit. The amendment (on page 18, line 8) strikes “\$35,000 per unit” and inserts “\$15,000” per unit, thus lowering the threshold that triggers a reporting requirement. ***Passed by voice.***
- 2. Farr (D-CA). Withdrawn.**
- 3. Rothfus (R-PA).** The amendment specifies that none of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to pay a performance award under

U.S.C. Title 5, Section 5384 (to read the code, [click here](#)). This prohibition of performance bonuses is a reaction to the unacceptably long wait times and backlogs currently facing veterans seeking disability benefits. *Passed by voice.*

SUMMARY OF AMENDMENTS *NOT PRE-PRINTED* IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

1. **Broun (R-GA).** This amendment eliminates the \$38.5 million of funding to the North American Treaty Organization (NATO) for the planning, design, and construction of a new NATO's headquarters and places that appropriated amount into the Spending Reduction Account. [NATO](#) is the formal alliance of North American and European countries committed to the goals set forth in the North Atlantic Treaty of April 4th, 1949. Current headquarters of NATO are in Brussels, Belgium. At the 50th Anniversary Summit in 1999, it was agreed that a new NATO headquarters would be constructed in Brussels "to meet the requirements of the Alliance in the 21st Century." Location, [Design and cost analysis](#), along with other progress has been complete since 2007.
2. **Amodei (R-NV).** This amendment directs \$44 million allocated for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Mandatory Overtime Initiative to VA Regional Offices that are experiencing a large backlog of VA veterans' disability claims of greater than one year. According to the Amendment sponsor, the VA has over 600,000 backlogged claims as of the end of March 2013 largely concentrated in Regional Offices of thirteen states. On May 15, 2013, the VA announced a new overtime initiative to address processing these backlogs by mandating overtime that reports indicate will cost \$44 million to reduce 50,000 claims. Testimony from a VA official explained this mandatory initiative, which requires VA regional offices who have met their performance goals to shoulder the burden of reducing the backlog, "doesn't make any sense." The Amendment does not affect any VA Regional Office's general operating budget.
3. **King (R - IA).** This amendment prohibits any funds from being used to implement, administer, or enforce the wage requirements in US Code [Chapter 31, Title 40, Subchapter IV](#) for the nearly \$10 billion worth of federal construction projects funded in the bill. Commonly known as the Davis-Bacon Act, it requires contractors and subcontractors performing federally funded or assisted contracts to pay their laborers and mechanics no less than local prevailing wages and to provide fringe benefits. It applies to work on Federal or District of Columbia contracts, and applies to construction projects from federal agencies through grants, loans, loan guarantees, and insurance. According to the Amendment Sponsor, studies show that Davis-Bacon inflates the cost of construction projects by between 9% and 37%, depending on how wage-intensive those projects are and yet such projects are no more efficient or higher quality than non-Davis-Bacon projects.

NOTE: RSC Legislative Bulletins are for informational purposes only and should not be taken as statements of support or opposition from the Republican Study Committee.