

answered "present" 1, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 499]

YEAS—392

Abercrombie	DeLay	Jones (OH)
Ackerman	DeMint	Kanjorski
Akin	Deutsch	Kaptur
Alexander	Diaz-Balart, L.	Keller
Allen	Diaz-Balart, M.	Kelly
Andrews	Dicks	Kennedy (MN)
Baca	Dingell	Kennedy (RI)
Bachus	Doggett	Kildee
Baird	Dooley (CA)	Kilpatrick
Baker	Doolittle	Kind
Baldwin	Doyle	King (IA)
Ballance	Dreier	King (NY)
Ballenger	Duncan	Kingston
Barrett (SC)	Dunn	Kirk
Bartlett (MD)	Edwards	Kleczka
Barton (TX)	Ehlers	Kline
Bass	Emanuel	Knollenberg
Beauprez	Engel	Kolbe
Becerra	English	LaHood
Bell	Etheridge	Lampson
Bereuter	Evans	Langevin
Berkley	Everett	Lantos
Berry	Fattah	Larsen (WA)
Biggart	Feeney	Larson (CT)
Bilirakis	Ferguson	Latham
Bishop (GA)	Fletcher	LaTourette
Bishop (NY)	Foley	Leach
Bishop (UT)	Forbes	Levin
Blackburn	Ford	Lewis (CA)
Blumenauer	Fossella	Lewis (GA)
Blunt	Frank (MA)	Lewis (KY)
Boehrlert	Franks (AZ)	Linder
Boehner	Frelinghuysen	LoBiondo
Bonilla	Frost	Lowe
Bonner	Gallegly	Lucas (KY)
Bono	Garrett (NJ)	Lucas (OK)
Boozman	Gerlach	Lynch
Boswell	Gibbons	Majette
Boucher	Gilchrest	Maloney
Boyd	Gillmor	Manzullo
Bradley (NH)	Gingrey	Marshall
Brady (PA)	Gonzalez	Matheson
Brady (TX)	Goode	McCarthy (MO)
Brown (OH)	Goodlatte	McCarthy (NY)
Brown (SC)	Gordon	McCollum
Brown, Corrine	Goss	McCotter
Brown-Waite,	Granger	McCreery
Ginny	Green (TX)	McDermott
Burgess	Green (WI)	McGovern
Burns	Greenwood	McHugh
Burr	Greenwood	McInnis
Burton (IN)	Grijalva	McIntyre
Buyer	Gutiérrez	McKeon
Calvert	Gutknecht	McNulty
Camp	Hall	Meehan
Cannon	Harris	Meek (FL)
Cantor	Hart	Meeks (NY)
Capito	Hastings (FL)	Menendez
Capps	Hastings (WA)	Mica
Capuano	Hayes	Michaud
Cardin	Hayworth	Miller (FL)
Cardoza	Hefley	Miller (MI)
Carson (IN)	Hensarling	Miller (NC)
Carson (OK)	Herger	Miller, Gary
Carter	Hill	Mollohan
Case	Hinches	Moore
Castle	Hinojosa	Moran (KS)
Chabot	Hobson	Moran (VA)
Chocola	Hoeffel	Murphy
Clay	Holden	Murtha
Clyburn	Holt	Musgrave
Coble	Hoolley (OR)	Myrick
Cole	Hostettler	Napolitano
Collins	Houghton	Neal (MA)
Cooper	Hoyer	Nethercutt
Costello	Hulshof	Neugebauer
Cox	Hunter	Ney
Cramer	Hyde	Northup
Crane	Inslee	Norwood
Crenshaw	Isakson	Nunes
Crowley	Israel	Nussle
Cubin	Issa	Oberstar
Culberson	Istook	Obey
Cummings	Jackson-Lee	Olver
Cunningham	(TX)	Ortiz
Davis (AL)	Jefferson	Osborne
Davis (FL)	Jenkins	Ose
Davis (TN)	John	Otter
Davis, Jo Ann	Johnson (CT)	Owens
Davis, Tom	Johnson (IL)	Oxley
Deal (GA)	Johnson, E. B.	Pallone
DeGette	Johnson, Sam	Pascrell
DeLauro	Jones (NC)	Pastor

Payne	Sabo	Tauzin
Pearce	Sanchez, Linda	Taylor (MS)
Pelosi	T.	Taylor (NC)
Peterson (MN)	Sanchez, Loretta	Terry
Peterson (PA)	Sandlin	Thomas
Petri	Saxton	Thompson (MS)
Pickering	Schrock	Thornberry
Pitts	Scott (GA)	Tiahrt
Platts	Scott (VA)	Tiberi
Pombo	Sensenbrenner	Tierney
Pomeroy	Serrano	Toomey
Porter	Sessions	Towns
Portman	Shadegg	Turner (OH)
Price (NC)	Shaw	Turner (TX)
Pryce (OH)	Shays	Udall (NM)
Putnam	Sherman	Upton
Quinn	Sherwood	Van Hollen
Radanovich	Shimkus	Velazquez
Rahall	Shuster	Visclosky
Ramstad	Simmons	Vitter
Regula	Simpson	Walden (OR)
Rehberg	Skelton	Walsh
Renzi	Slaughter	Wamp
Reyes	Smith (MI)	Watt
Reynolds	Smith (NJ)	Weiner
Rodriguez	Smith (TX)	Weldon (FL)
Rogers (AL)	Smith (WA)	Weldon (PA)
Rogers (KY)	Snyder	Weller
Rogers (MI)	Solis	Wexler
Rohrabacher	Souder	Whitfield
Ros-Lehtinen	Spratt	Wicker
Ross	Stearns	Wilson (NM)
Rothman	Stenholm	Wilson (SC)
Roybal-Allard	Strickland	Wilson (SC)
Royce	Stupak	Wolf
Rush	Sullivan	Wu
Ryan (OH)	Sweeney	Wynn
Ryan (WI)	Tancredo	Young (AK)
Ryun (KS)	Tanner	Young (FL)

NAYS—30

Berman	Jackson (IL)	Sanders
Conyers	Kucinich	Schakowsky
Davis (CA)	Lee	Schiff
DeFazio	Lofgren	Stark
Delahunt	Markey	Tauscher
Eshoo	Matsui	Thompson (CA)
Farr	Millender-	Waters
Filner	McDonald	Watson
Flake	Miller, George	Waxman
Harman	Nadler	
Honda	Paul	

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Ruppersberger

NOT VOTING—11

Aderholt	Hoekstra	Rangel
Davis (IL)	Janklow	Udall (CO)
Emerson	Lipinski	Woolsey
Gephardt	Pence	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington) (during the vote). Members are advised there are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 2019

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN THE EN-GROSSMENT OF H.R. 2622, FAIR AND ACCURATE CREDIT TRANS-ACTIONS ACT OF 2003

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, on a gratifying endorsement of my oratorical skills, the Chairman of the full committee has asked that I ask unanimous consent that in the engrossment of the bill, H.R. 2622, the Clerk be authorized to correct section numbers, punctuation, and cross references and to make such other technical and conforming changes as may be necessary to reflect the actions of the House.

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

There was no objection.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. OSE. Mr. Speaker, on September 4, I recorded a "yes" vote on rollcall vote No. 463. My vote should have been "no."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. WAMP. Mr. Speaker, on September 4, I recorded a "yes" vote on rollcall vote No. 463 ordered on the previous question for H. Res. 351. My vote should have been "no."

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1472

Mr. WAMP. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1472.

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

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 1588, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2004

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. EDWARDS moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 1588 be instructed to agree to the provisions contained in sections 606 and 619 of the Senate amendment (relating to the rates of pay for the family separation allowance and imminent danger pay).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 7(b) of rule XX, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS) and a Member of the opposing party each will control 30 minutes.

Mr. MCHUGH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to control the time in opposition.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York (Mr. MCHUGH) will control the time in opposition.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS).

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, my motion would instruct the conferees working on the Defense authorization bill to recede to the Senate bill on section 606 and 619. Specifically, Section 606 would make permanent the increase of military separation pay from \$100 per month to \$250 a month. Section 619 would make permanent the increase to hostile fire and imminent danger special pay from \$150 a month to \$225 a month.

Mr. Speaker, what we are really talking about here is that in the past year, Congress voted to show respect to our

service men and women making tremendous sacrifices fighting the global war on terrorism, service men and women, who are in all parts of the globe from South America to Europe to Asia to the Middle East, to virtually every section of the globe. What we are saying is that when they leave their family for 6 months or 12 months and when they are put into a hostile situation, a country ought to thank them as a serviceman or woman and we ought to thank their family not just with our words of rhetoric, but with our deeds here in the House, and this is why we gave in effect a \$225 increase to those service men and women under the threat of hostile action, serving also away from their families.

Now \$225 a month may not mean a lot to some Americans, but to our hardworking, dedicated, patriotic service men and women, it is oftentimes the difference between paying their bills that month or not while their loved ones are split because of service to country.

What the House version of this bill would do is not provide certainty to these service men and women serving in Nations such as Liberia today, serving in Kosovo and Bosnia, that their income each month will not be cut. The Senate version actually would provide certainty and say to them we respect what they are doing, we are not going to cut their pay. I think it would be tragic that at a time when our service men and women and their families are making incredible sacrifices on behalf of our country for us to leave any uncertainty that hundreds of thousands or them, or tens of thousands of them could actually have a pay cut during a time of war, during our fight against global terrorism.

So what this motion to instruct is all about is respect to our service men and women about certainty so that they do not have to worry, while they are worrying about the very lives of their loved ones in combat situations and hostile situations, they do not have to worry also about their monthly income being cut by the same government that is thanking them daily in speeches here on the floor of the House.

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

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

Let me say, I think it is fair to state from the outset that all of us in this distinguished body, the House of Representatives, are very strongly committed to ensuring an adequate, fair and really just level of compensation for those service members that my friend, and he is my friend and my colleague, from Texas, has so adequately and so appropriately mentioned, as they are bearing the leadership, as they are literally putting their lives in harm's way.

Just yesterday, I had the very sad but high honor of attending a funeral for a 24-year-old specialist from my district, from the 10th Mountain Divi-

sion who was killed in Afghanistan, and I think that any suggestion that this House would ever support any cut in diminution to the pay and to the support that we have been giving these troops would be a very, very wrong-headed suggestion. I do not believe any of us support that, and I know I certainly do not, and I commend the gentleman from Texas for bringing this forward.

I have been to Iraq. I have seen the conditions firsthand. I have been to Uzbekistan. I have been to Afghanistan. I know what these young men and these young women and these brave men and women are going through, and certainly they are serving proudly and we must not, we should not and I feel very confidently that we will not allow these troops to suffer a loss of income and the history of how we have implemented these increases to the supplemental pay is the imminent danger pay and to the family separation pay is well-known, well-stated, and we do need to take action in the bill referred to in the gentleman's motion to instruct to ensure that there is no diminution of those pays and to that support.

Having said that, there is a difference of approach. There is a difference as to how we focus this. The reality is, and I am stating this just for the record, Mr. Speaker, rather than to express any opposition to my friend's motion, is that under the Senate's proposal, we are not just dealing, for example, on family separation pay, with those who are in places like Bosnia and Kosovo, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Korea, Iraq. In fact, under the Senate's approach, if someone from my State of New York were deployed to one of the training centers for 30 days or more, they, too, would receive the separation pay, and it is the Department's position, given the difference in the cost of how the approach that they would prefer and how the approach the Senate prefers would be significant, about I believe \$280 million, that that they wish to target it more precisely.

I am persuaded by what the gentleman says and I am not going to ask a single Member of this House on either side of the aisle to oppose this motion. I, in fact, would encourage them to support it, if for no other reason than to significantly demonstrate the agreement that we all hold amongst ourselves that our brave men and women in combat and those facing these hardships should not suffer any diminution, but just for the House's knowledge, the Department has perhaps a position that none of us agree with but a few or none or all, but a position that does have some merit in these very difficult financial times when they want to target these.

But I do want to say that as someone who has had, for the past two terms, the honor of serving as the chairman of first the Subcommittee on Military Personnel, and now the Subcommittee on Total Force, I will not support, and

I believe I can speak for the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) and all of the leadership of both the committee and the House, anything, anything that cuts by one cent the pay to our brave men and women who are serving in very dangerous places like Iraq and Afghanistan.

So in the spirit of what the gentleman is trying to accomplish, I would urge my colleagues to support this motion, to vote for it and certainly to join us as we go forward in trying to ensure that the brave men and women who are serving us are fairly and adequately compensated.

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

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), who is the ranking member of the House Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding me the time, and I rise in support of the motion to instruct the conferees, and I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS) for this motion to instruct.

This motion will direct the House conferees on the National Defense Authorization Act for next year to accept the Senate Defense authorization provisions that provide for a permanent increase in imminent danger and hostile fire special pay, as well as family separation allowance.

□ 2030

Under the Senate bill, section 606 would make permanent a \$75 increase in the family separation allowance, and section 619 would make permanent a \$125 increase in imminent danger and hostile fire special pay. By accepting the Senate provisions, servicemembers and their families would continue to receive increases that were originally included in the first Iraq war supplemental, but which will terminate on September 30 of this year.

The Department of Defense originally expressed concern about the cost to continue these special pays and allowances. However, recent public statements by officials within the Department indicate that the administration has reversed its position and now supports continuation of these important benefits, especially as American forces continue to face hostilities around the world, particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Our troops put their lives on the line every day. They do this for our country, particularly in Iraq, where guerilla warfare has become a daily occurrence. As of this morning, 179 servicemembers have given their lives in combat. Another 1,186 have been wounded in action. Additionally, another 110 have been killed, and 313 wounded in nonhostile action while deployed to that region. It would be fundamentally wrong, wrong to reduce imminent danger and hostile fire pay for these brave men and women.

Military families back home have recently been informed that longer deployments for our men and women in uniform will become the standard for the foreseeable future. The increase in family separation allowance authorized in the Senate bill is the least we can do to recognize the sacrifices of these servicemembers as well as their families. Almost all families face increased household costs while their servicemember is deployed. Mailing letters, packages for morale, making long-distance phone calls are just a few examples of the additional expenses that families incur while they were separated from a military member. Increasing imminent danger and increasing the hostile fire pay as well as the family separation allowance permanently is the right and honorable thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in support of this motion of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS) to instruct the House conferees.

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

There are no Members in this House in whom I hold higher regard on issues of concern of military men and women and their families than the gentleman who just spoke, the distinguished ranking member. Certainly nothing he said here this evening would in any way change my attitude and my perspective.

But I do think, again for the record, and in urging my colleagues still to vote for this motion, that another concern that the administration and the Department have expressed, and that I think at least merits our thoughts as we go forward, is that the Senate bill, as it is currently constructed and construed, actually treats two soldiers, to use one example, who are doing the exact same job, perhaps on the exact same patrol, whether it be in Sherkat in the mountains of Afghanistan, or be it on the streets of al Falusha, very, very differently. In the Senate bill, one member of that patrol would receive \$75 added pay, the other would receive \$250; and they are both exposed to the same danger. They are both exposed to the potential of the same fate.

So I think we have got to remember that there are legitimate differences of opinion here. However, the objective that we all have and we all, I think, need to pursue is that of paying and compensating these brave men and women to the highest extent possible.

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

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT), the distinguished senior member of the House Committee on Armed Services.

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

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time. I greatly respect the chairman of

the Subcommittee on Military Personnel, and I am grateful to see he has decided that he should support this resolution. I think it is timely, I think it is in order, and while the gentleman says that the pay level is fair and adequate, I would really argue that even with the increases, for the burdens these soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines bear, in hostile circumstances, this pay increment is really minimal.

Last year, when we did the Iraqi supplemental, providing \$79 billion for the war in Iraq and more for Afghanistan in the war against terror, \$63 billion was allocated to Iraq. And, naturally, we said with soldiers about to go in harm's way, surely we should increase the minimal amount that is being paid to them right now, which was \$100. That is all, \$100 a month for family separation pay, and \$150 for imminent danger pay. We increased those to \$250 for family separation pay and \$225 for imminent danger pay, but only for 1 year. Unless we act in the defense authorization bill to make this permanent law, as provided in the Senate authorization mark, then this will expire on September 30. And that would be a terrible calamity.

Nevertheless, the Pentagon this summer issued a reclaimer to the committees in conference indicating that they thought that these two increments were too costly to sustain and recommended that they either be dropped or reduced. They met with a firestorm of protest, including a published statement from me and the ranking member on our committee, that I thought it would be outrageous at this point in time to do it. So tonight we can seal the decision and make it permanent law that these levels of incremental pay will be provided to soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines who go in harm's way and are separated from their families. They get all the \$475.

The gentleman was saying he was in Iraq, and we all know when we go out in the field and we see these soldiers and sailors and airmen, we realize they do not work 8-hour days. They work 18-hour days, continually. And they never know whether danger might befall. The least we can do to help them is pay the way, particularly in the circumstances they now find themselves, doing duty they were not trained for. And a hard and bitter duty it is, in an inhospitable environment. The least we can do is to provide them this pay settlement.

Let me make one more argument, though, if this were not enough, and that is we can either pay now or pay later. Because if we do not provide these increments and somehow or another help our deployed troops bear the burdens that we have imposed upon them, then we are going to pay for it in terms of recruitment and retention just over the horizon. We are going to be paying big reenlistment bonuses. We will be losing E6 sergeants, with the kind of training we need for years to come. We are going to be risking real damage, long-term damage, particularly to our ground forces.

So it is only smart, not just fair, not just good policy, it is just smart personnel policy to continue these payments at the level that is established now in law and to make it permanent law.

Mr. MCHUGH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I thank the gentleman for his comments.

Very briefly, Mr. Speaker, so everyone understands, the House bill makes permanent the increases that the gentleman just mentioned for imminent danger pay from \$150 to \$225 and family separation pay from \$100 to \$250 a month. Not a single soldier, airmen, sailor, Marine, or even Coast Guard, if they happened to be deployed to that region, would ever lose a cent if they were assigned to Saudi, Kuwait, Iraq, Afghanistan under the House bill either.

There are some differences on the motion with respect to family separation pay and the application of imminent danger pay that I previously mentioned; but, again, none of us want to see those in direct harm's way lose that money. And I am very confident that under either bill that will not happen. I am very confident that under whatever agreement that comes out of this that that will not happen either.

If we do not have an agreement by October 1, I feel absolutely certain we will either move a separate piece of legislation or do the conference committee agreement retroactively. So we are all on the same page there.

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

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington State (Mr. LARSEN), who is a distinguished member of the House Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. Edward) for bringing this motion to instruct to the floor today.

Today, I met with Corporal Jeremiah Olsen, a soldier from Coupeville, Washington, which is in my district. Corporal Olsen will be awarded the Silver Star medal by the President for his heroic actions during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Corporate Olsen and his fellow servicemembers have fought bravely, and they have represented our country honorably in Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, and around the world on our behalf. They deserve our respect and our thanks. For this reason, I think it is important that we pass an extension of the pay increase that we authorized earlier this year.

In April, Congress provided a temporary increase in imminent danger pay and the family separation allowance that will both expire at the end of this month. In addition, we authorized a monthly increase for family separation allowance that helps military families pay rent, pay for child care, or

pay for other expenses while their loved ones are away. As a member of the Committee on Armed Services and as a representative of thousands of service men and women, it is my view that we need to do everything we can for our troops and their families.

The Senate-passed defense authorization bill provides an increase for all of our troops in imminent danger, increases the family separation allowance provisions, and makes these increases permanent. The House bill, in my opinion, does not go far enough. The motion to instruct conferees to accept the Senate provision is an important step forward toward providing our troops the compensations they deserve, and it provides it to all of our Armed Forces.

In my view, our women and men in the military are not paid enough as it is. Now that we are asking them to risk their lives away from their families and asking their families to bear the burden while they are away, we should not cut their pay off. Corporate Olsen and all the other service men and women deserve more than that.

So I urge my colleagues to pass this motion to instruct conferees and make it clear that this Congress supports our women and men in the Armed Forces and thanks them for their service.

Mr. MCHUGH. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE), who represents the very important installation at Fort Bragg and has done so so ably.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening in strong support of the Edwards motion to instruct conferees on the fiscal year 2004 Defense Authorization Act.

Specifically, I support the Senate provision on making the increase in imminent danger pay and family separation allowance permanent for all our armed service members and their families and applying the increase to all those in imminent danger no matter where they are serving. And let me tell my colleagues why.

In April, Congress passed the Emergency Wartime Supplemental Appropriations bill to fund military operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. I voted for that bill because I strongly support our men and women in the armed services.

□ 2045

This bill provided temporary increases in imminent danger pay and family separation allowances, but they are due to expire on September 30, 2003, less than 3 weeks from now.

Specifically, the bill we passed in April temporarily increased the imminent danger/hostile fire pay from \$150 to \$225 a month. It also temporarily increased the family separation allowance, which helps military families pay rent, child care and other expenses while the soldier is away from \$100 to \$250 a month.

I represent one of the largest military bases in this country, and when the call comes from the White House, it is the 9/11 post in this country. Both the House and Senate have passed defense authorization bills that deal with those expiring provisions, but the Senate-passed bill is superior to the House version in two key ways. First, the Senate provision makes permanent the increase in imminent danger and hostile fire pay and the family separation allowance. The Senate bill also provides increases for all of our armed services in imminent danger, whereas the House bill only covers those serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. That provision leaves our soldiers in dangerous places, and leaves them out, young men and women serving in Liberia, Kosovo and elsewhere.

When our soldiers are getting shot at for the sole reason they are wearing our Nation's uniform, it is indefensible to shortchange our soldiers serving in areas that may not be the political focus of this Congress or the administration.

As a congressman who represents Fort Bragg, Pope Air Force Base and the special operations soldiers that are called on daily to serve around the world, and many of the guard and reserve units who are now on duty, I strongly support the permanent increase in imminent danger and hostile fire pay and family allowances for our soldiers and their families. Our military personnel and their families right now are under enormous strain. They are stretched very thin. Our servicemen are being subjected to longer deployments and more frequent deployments than ever before.

Just 2 days ago it was announced that the deployment of reservists and National Guard in the combat theater have been extended from 6 months to 1 year. About half of our active duty Army is currently deployed abroad, up from 20 percent just 2 years ago.

Let me say I supported Operation Iraqi Freedom. I voted to authorize the President to conduct the operation and rid the world of Saddam Hussein, but now our servicemen are paying the price. We have now lost more soldiers lives since the President announced the end of the combat operation than suffered in combat. Our soldiers are serving in the war zone. They cannot speak for themselves on this vital issue. They are counting on their elected representatives in Congress to stand up for them. I intend to do so, and I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for the Edwards motion.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Edwards motion to instruct conferees on the FY 2004 Department of Defense Authorization Act. Specifically, I support the Senate provisions on making the increase in imminent danger pay and family separation allowance permanent for our armed services and their families and applying the increase to all those in imminent danger, no matter where they are serving.

In April, Congress passed the Emergency Wartime Supplemental Appropriations bill to fund military operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. I voted for that bill because I strongly support our men and women in the armed services. This bill provided temporary increases in imminent danger pay and family separation allowances, but they are due to expire on September 30, less than 3 weeks from now.

Specifically, the bill we passed in April temporarily increased the imminent danger/hostile fire pay from \$150 to \$225 per month. It also temporarily increased the family separation allowance, which helps military families pay rent, child care and other expenses while soldiers are away, from \$100 to \$250 per month.

Both the House and Senate have passed defense authorization bills that deal with these expiring provisions. But the Senate-passed bill is superior to the House version in two key ways. First, the Senate provisions make permanent the increases in imminent danger and hostile fire pay and the family separation allowance. The Senate bill also provides increases for all of our armed forces in imminent danger, whereas the House bill only covers those serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. That limitation leaves out our soldiers in dangerous places like Liberia, Kosovo and elsewhere.

When our soldiers are getting shot at for the sole reason that they are wearing our Nation's uniform, it is indefensible to shortchange soldiers serving in areas that may not be the political focus of the administration or the Congress.

As the Congressman for Fort Bragg, Pope Air Force Base and many guard and reserve units, I strongly support a permanent increase in imminent danger and hostile fire pay and family allowances for our soldiers and their families. Our military personnel and their families right now are under enormous strain. They are stretched ordinarily thin. Our service members are being subjected to longer deployments and more frequent deployments than ever before. Just 2 days ago, it was announced that the deployment of Reservists and National Guard in the combat theater has been extended from 6 months to 1 year. About half of the active-duty Army is currently deployed abroad—up from 20 percent just 2 years ago.

Let me say that I support Operation Iraqi Freedom, and I voted to authorize the President to conduct the operation to rid the world of Saddam Hussein's evil rule. I am tremendously proud of our men and women in uniform who have demonstrated the American way of dealing with tyrants who terrorize their own region and threaten the peace and stability of the larger world. Saddam Hussein got what he deserved. But now our service members are paying the price. We have now lost more soldiers' lives since the President announced the end of combat than we suffered in that combat. Our soldiers serving in the war zone cannot speak for themselves on this vital issue. They are counting on their elected Representatives in Congress to stand up for them. I intend to do so, and I urge all my colleagues to join me in voting for the Edwards motion.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 7 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank my special friend and the gentleman from New York (Mr. MCHUGH),

the fellow co-chair of the House Army Caucus. The gentleman has been a real leader on military issues here in Congress. I want to thank the gentleman for asking his fellow Republican colleagues not to oppose this motion to instruct because as late as 2 hours ago, I heard that the House Republican leadership was actually going to oppose our effort to make it absolutely certain and clear we are not going to reduce family separation pay or imminent danger pay for servicemen and -women serving in all parts of the globe. I appreciate the gentleman not asking his colleagues to oppose this motion.

I understand and I respect as he said that there are differences of approaches. What I would like to make clear is the approach that we are trying to take in this motion to instruct. There are really four problems I would like to point out with the House language relative to the Senate language. First of all, in the House language, there is no permanence for the increased \$225 that a service member and his or her family can receive today in serving in very dangerous parts of the world. That pay could go away if we do not have the Senate language. They deserve clarity. They deserve certainty.

Secondly, under the House language, for a military soldier in Kosovo or Bosnia today, his family gets \$250 a month in family separation pay. That will drop to \$100 a month on October 1 of this year, just in a few days. People serving in areas that because of the terrorist activities around the world, because of heightened tension in countries such as Korea, Kosovo, and Bosnia, could actually have their military pay cut by the same government that is saluting them daily in floor speeches. I think that is wrong. I think that is a problem, a serious problem with the House language, and that is the second reason why I am asking my colleagues to join me in support of this motion to instruct.

The third problem I have with the House language and approach to this problem is that soldiers and troops receiving \$225 a month in imminent danger pay right now in countries such as Liberia, Bosnia and Kosovo could actually have their pay cut under the House language. I do not know how many of our colleagues have visited Liberia and Bosnia and Kosovo, but I think most Members would agree, as would the Department of Defense, that is a dangerous place to be right now and we should not have them have their imminent danger pay cut by \$75 a month while they are serving in those far reaches of the globe today, far away from their families.

The fourth point I would make is that I think it is better for the Department of Defense to continue deciding which countries should be designated as imminent danger or hostile fire

countries. I do not like the idea of Congress making that decision in an armed services bill. I do not think we are qualified to do that.

What my motion to instruct is really about is about two things: It is about certainty, certainty to our military families that they are not going to have their pay cut by as much as \$225 in the next several weeks. And it is about respect. It is about respecting the incredible sacrifices, the risk of limb and life that tens of thousands of our service members from all across America are facing today.

We should show that respect not just in our speeches, but in a vote on this motion to instruct.

I do want to clarify one point, and I want to be sure I am clear on this with my colleague from New York. He talked about, under the Senate language, two soldiers on patrol in the same place, one soldier could get more money than the other.

Unless I misunderstand the argument, the reason for that, and I want to be clear, one soldier is married and one soldier is not married, and this country pays family separation pay to married troops because they have families back home that have to pay extra perhaps baby-sitting costs, they have to pay extra telephone costs to their spouses, they have perhaps baby-sitting costs that could be very substantial, and certainly there is a reason why we provide family separation pay to troops that are married and have families whereas we do not provide family separation pay for troops that do not have spouses back home, children back home.

I think that is a logical consequence, and I think it is important for our servicemen and -women, perhaps they are watching this debate, to not be confused by that argument.

But again the key point is if we adopt the House language as presently written, we could have tens of thousands of American servicemen and -women and their families losing as much as \$225 a month in pay in the next several weeks. Under the Senate language, we send a clear message, a message they deserve to hear, that that is not going to happen.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, again let me commend the gentleman for his concern. It is a concern that I have had an opportunity to work with and admire and benefit from during all of my years in Congress and certainly in our shared chairs of the Army caucus. The gentleman is doing good and important work here.

For the record, I have been to Bosnia and Kosovo three times each, and things have gotten demonstrably better, but I do not think anybody would argue that is pleasant duty.

I do think it is important to have the administration and the Department's position on the record here, and the gentleman gave an explanation of the reason and the construct behind the differentials were for a man on patrol, a single man would receive \$75 in patrol to Crete or whatever, and the person next to him would receive \$250, and it is by definition of the family, but the Department is making the argument that is, given the circumstances, too great a discrepancy and that under some of the constructs and legal definitions of what constitutes a family that if you are, for example, a single parent, noncustodial parent, nevertheless you have certain responsibilities and out of fairness, you do not get family separation pay.

If you have a single soldier who is a substantial supporter of his elderly parents or her elderly parents, that does not meet the IRS definition technically of 50 percent support, you do not get family separation pay. So this is not just in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, an accounting measure by the Department to try to evade and avoid responsibility and equity in treating their soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and Coast Guardsmen differently or unfairly, but rather recognizing that definitions may not be as perfect as they should be.

They want to make some changes in other pays that go equally to both categories of families as well as single to make sure that they all receive more. We can disagree with that. The House bill did not develop, it did not embody that position, but I do not think it is accurate or entirely fair, and I am not suggesting that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS) did this, I do not think that their thoughts are really on point to suggest that the Department is being uncaring because I do not think that is their intent.

Their intent is to more precisely target where the merit exists and to try to not what they feel, whether we agree or not is irrelevant, but what they feel is a discriminatory approach.

Again, for the purposes of this House, for the purposes of the defense authorization bill, I think the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS) makes some excellent points, and obviously those who spoke in support of him underscore those points. As the chairman of the subcommittee with the most direct responsibility, I do not disagree with one sentence, one paragraph, one period in any of those sentences, or certainly the motivation of the gentleman's instruction.

In closing, I would urge my colleagues, as I have before, to join in support of the gentleman's motion.

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