



Legislative Bulletin.....June 19, 2001

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H.R. 1291—21st Century Montgomery GI Bill Enhancement Act (Smith, Chris)

Order of Business: The bill is scheduled to be considered under a motion to suspend the rules on Tuesday, June 19th.

Summary: The bill would increase the monthly rate of basic educational assistance (for approved education programs pursued full-time) under the Montgomery GI Bill as follows:

For servicemen with a minimum three-year enlistment (*current law: \$650 per month*):

- \$800 during FY2002
- \$950 during FY2003
- \$1100 during FY2004

For servicemen with a two-year enlistment and four years in the Reserves (*current law: \$528 per month*):

- \$650 during FY2002
- \$772 during FY2003
- \$894 during FY2004

After 2004, the monthly rates would be adjusted using the Consumer Price Index.

The bill would also prohibit adjustments of educational assistance in fiscal years 2002, 2003, and 2004 using the Consumer Price Index. The increases proposed in the bill would take the place of any increases linked to the Consumer Price Index. Proponents of the bill argue that an accelerated increase in education benefits is necessary since education costs have risen faster than inflation in recent years. CBO estimates that by the year 2011 educational benefits would be 50% higher under this bill than under current law.

Cost to Taxpayers: The CBO reports that this bill would cost \$230 million in mandatory spending in FY2002, \$3.28 billion in mandatory spending in FY2002 through FY2006, and \$9.08 billion in mandatory spending in FY2002 through FY2011.

Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules?: The bill would adjust current law, as shown above.

Constitutional Authority: A committee report citing constitutional authority is unavailable.

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H. Con. Res. 163 — Recognizing the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day and expressing the sense of Congress that history be regarded as a means of understanding the past and solving the challenges of the future (Watts)

Order of Business: The concurrent resolution will be considered under suspension of the rules on Tuesday, June 19.

Summary: Reportedly on June 19th, 1865, 2 ½ years after the Emancipation Proclamation, Union Gen. Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas with the announcement that all slaves were to be freed.

According to the resolution, the African Americans who had been slaves in the Southwest celebrated June 19, known as Juneteenth Independence Day, as the anniversary of their emancipation, and celebrations have been held for 136 years to honor the memory of all those who endured slavery and especially those who moved from slavery to freedom.

In H.Con.Res. 163 the House resolves that:

Congress recognizes the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day, an important date in the Nation's history, and encourages the continued celebration of this day to provide an opportunity for all people of the United States to learn more about the past and to better understand the experiences that have shaped the Nation.

And states it is the sense of Congress that:

The celebration of the end of slavery is an important and enriching part of the history and heritage of the United States and Congress

Note: The provision (2)(C) referencing the National Association of Juneteenth Lineage will be dropped in the reported version of the resolution.

The Senate passed a similar resolution on April 10, 1997.

Cost to Taxpayers: None.

Constitutional Authority: A committee report citing constitutional authority is unavailable.

Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules: No.

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H. Con. Res. 154—Honoring the continued commitment of the Army National Guard combat units deployed in support of Army operations in Bosnia, recognizing the sacrifices made by the members of those units while away from their jobs and families during those deployments, recognizing the important role of all National Guard and Reserve personnel at home and abroad to the national security of the United States, and acknowledging, honoring, and expressing appreciation for the critical support by employers of the Guard and Reserve. (Collins)

Order of Business: The concurrent resolution will be considered under suspension of the rules on Tuesday, June 19.

Summary: On Dec 14, 1995 the Dayton Peace Accords were signed regarding the war in Bosnia. A NATO-led multinational force called the Implementation Force (IFOR) was started on Dec. 20, 1995 and given a one-year mandate to implement the military aspects of the peace agreement. In late 1995, the Clinton Administration said that IFOR would be deployed to Bosnia for only one year.

On Dec. 20, 1996, Stabilization Force (SFOR) was authorized to implement the military aspects of the peace agreement as the legal successor to IFOR. The Clinton Administration in late 1996 said that U.S. troops would stay until peace could be sustained without their presence.

In October 1999, the Army decided to mobilize and deploy divisions of the U.S. National Guard as part of SFOR. US presence in SFOR has dropped from 20,000 troops in 1996 to 3,6000 troops presently.

The concurrent resolution notes the “groundbreaking” Army decision of October 1999 to deploy the National Guard to Bosnia and calls it “an important milestone” to the Army’s commitment in Bosnia. The resolution notes the Bosnian service of the 49th Armored Division, Texas Army National Guard, and Army National Guard combat units from the 30th Enhanced Separate Brigade of North Carolina and the 45th Enhanced Separate Brigade of Oklahoma. It also notes that 1,200 soldiers of the 48th Infantry Brigade of Georgia deployed to Bosnia this month in the largest such deployment of National Guard personnel in support of the NATO peacekeeping mission in Bosnia.

The resolution recognizes that more than 1,200,000 citizen-soldiers comprise the National Guard and Reserve commit significant time and effort in executing their important role in the Armed Forces and resolves that Congress:

- (1) honors the continuing service and commitment of the citizen-soldiers of the Army National Guard combat units deployed in support of Army operations in Bosnia;
- (2) recognizes the deployment of the 48th Infantry Brigade in March 2001 as an important milestone in that commitment;
- (3) honors the sacrifices made by the families and employers of the members of those units during their time away from home;
- (4) expresses deep gratitude for the continuing support of civilian employers for the service of their employees in the National Guard and Reserve;
- (5) recognizes the critical importance of the National Guard and Reserve to the security of the United States; and
- (6) supports providing the necessary resources to ensure the continued readiness of the National Guard and Reserve.

Cost to Taxpayers: The concurrent resolution does not authorize funding though it resolves that Congress “supports providing the necessary resources to ensure the continued readiness of the National Guard and Reserve.”

According to a CRS report dated 3/28/01, from FY 1992 through FY 2000, the Department of Defense has spent \$10.57 billion for military missions in Bosnia. From FY 1992 to FY 1999, the United States has obligated over \$907 million in aid to Bosnia. In FY 2001, the United States expects to provide \$79.8 million in aid to Bosnia.

In GAO/NSIAD-00-162, the GAO reported that the "integration of Guard forces in peacekeeping missions such as Bosnia significantly increases the cost of these missions..."

Administration: During the Presidential campaign, Condeleeza Rice stated that Governor Bush would end U.S. participation in Balkans peacekeeping operations if elected. Since the election, Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld has urged a withdrawal of U.S. troops from peacekeeping duties, with specific references to the Balkans and the Sinai, and from the training of African troops for peacekeeping, although in early June he acknowledged that U.S. troops must be present in Kosovo. On February 4, 2001, Secretary of State Powell said that the United States had a commitment to peace in the Balkans and that NATO forces would have to remain in Bosnia and Kosovo for “years.” He said the United States was reviewing U.S. troop levels in Bosnia and Kosovo with the objective of reducing them over time, but stressed that the United States would act in consultation with its allies and was not “cutting and running.” In another statement on February 27, Powell said that U.S. and European forces in the Balkans “went in together, [and] we’ll come out together.”

Constitutional Authority: A committee report citing constitutional authority is unavailable.

Does the Bill Create New Federal Programs or Rules: No.

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