Mr. Speaker, we have a moral obligation to support our

troops while they are in combat and when they come home; that is why in

this bill we fully fund our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. So a ``no''

vote against this bill is a vote against $3.1 billion to build better

barracks, housing and training facilities here at home for troops

returning from war.

We believe that supporting our veterans is a real cost of war, just

as real as guns, tanks and bullets. A ``no'' vote on this bill is a

vote against $1.8 billion and funding high priority health care

programs for our veterans, with a special focus on taking care of those

who need it the most, those suffering from traumatic brain injury,

PTSD, or a loss of arms and legs. Our veterans' sacrifices don't end

after they come home, and neither should our commitment to them.

A ``no'' vote on this bill is a vote against a $100 million for

contracting out health care services so that members of the Guard and

Reserves in rural areas can receive the timely health care that they

need and deserve. For some, that timely care can mean the difference

between good health and depression, for others the difference between

life and death. To prevent a Walter Reed Annex 18 tragedy from occurring in VA

hospitals, we fund $550 million to address serious maintenance and

repair needs at our VA facilities. A ``no'' vote on this bill is a vote

against that funding for veterans. The needs addressed in this bill are

real, the dollar amounts are fiscally sound, and our troops and our

veterans deserve no less.

A vote for this bill is a vote for better health care and housing for

America's heroes. By voting for this bill, we can honor and respect our

troops, our veterans and their families, not just with our words, but

with our deeds.

I urge a ``yes'' vote on this rule and a ``yes'' vote for our troops

on this conference report.