

November 14, 2007

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Madam Speaker:

We are writing to urge you to complete work on the FY 08 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill before Congress adjourns for the Thanksgiving Day district work period.

Veterans Day has come and gone; yet a FY 08 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Conference Report remains stalled even though the measure funds important benefits critical to our veterans and troops now returning home from Iraq, such as housing and health care.

Almost five months ago, the House passed a bipartisan FY 08 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill. And more than two months ago, the Senate followed suit and immediately appointed conferees. However, instead of appointing House conferees, funding for Military Construction and Veterans Affairs was attached to a pork-laden Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations Conference Report.

Last week, in accordance with Senate rules, the measures were decoupled, and Rep. Roger Wicker (R-MS) immediately introduced the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs portion of the conference report as a stand-alone measure (H.R. 4104). Since then, 197 Republicans have co-sponsored H.R. 4104.

With that in mind, Madam Speaker, a formal conference is no longer necessary. We urge you to bring H.R. 4104 to the House floor before adjourning on Friday so that the Senate can follow suit and send it to the President's desk for his signature.

Our veterans and our men and women in uniform deserve all the support and resources this Congress can provide. We shouldn't leave town until we fulfill our promises and complete work on this critical bill.