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Daily

Floor Briefing

THURSDAY, MARCH 22

The House will meet at 10:00 a.m. for legislative business.
Last vote expected in the early afternoon.

Suspension (1 bill):

H.R. 802 - The Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Act

Bill Subject to a Rule (1 bill):

H.R. 247 - Tornado Shelters Act

The House will also take the recorded vote rolled from yesterday.

H.R. 1099 - Coast Guard Personnel and Management Safety Act of 2001

Suspension (1 bill):

Floor Situation

On Tuesday, the Rules Committee granted a rule allowing for the consideration of H.R. 802 under suspension of the rules. It is debatable for 40 minutes, may not be amended, and requires a two-thirds majority vote for passage.

Summary

H.R. 802 authorizes the president to award, and present in the name of Congress, a Medal of Valor to a public safety officer for extraordinary valor above and beyond the call of duty. It establishes (1) a National Medal Office within the Department of Justice; (2) a permanent Medal of Valor Review Board; (3) and

criteria and procedures for recommending nominees for the medal. The review board will be composed of 11 members appointed by Congress and the president. Its members will serve four-year terms and must be persons with knowledge or experience in the field of public safety, including firefighting, law enforcement and emergency services.

According to this legislation, each year the board must select candidates for the medal from among those applications received by the National Medal Office. These names must then be presented to the Attorney General for approval. The bill requires the Attorney General to consider suggestions received by the Department of Justice regarding the design of the medal, and consult with the Institute of Heraldry within the Department of Defense regarding the appropriate design, shape, size, and color of the medal. Finally, H.R. 802 authorizes appropriation of the necessary amounts to carry out this act.

H.R. 802 was introduced Mr. Smith of Texas on February 28, 2001. The measure was referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary and approved by voice vote on March 8, 2001. A nearly identical bill, H.R. 46, was approved by the House by a vote of 412-2 on April 13, 1999. At press time, a CBO cost estimate was unavailable.

For additional information, contact the Judiciary Committee: 5-3951

Bill Subject to a Rule:

Floor Situation

On Tuesday, the Rules Committee granted an open rule with one hour of debate that makes in order a substitute printed in the *Congressional Record* as base text. The rule also makes the substitute open to amendment at any point and permits a motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Summary

H.R. 247 amends the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 to authorize communities to use community development block grant (CDBG) funds for construction of tornado-safe shelters in manufactured home parks. Currently, CDBG funds cannot be used to construct storm shelters in manufactured housing communities although they can be used to construct storm shelters in low-to-moderate income housing communities and apartment buildings. The bill adds no new federal mandates and does not authorize additional funds. H.R. 247 was introduced by Mr. Bachus on January 30, 2001. The measure was referred to the Financial Services Committee, but was not considered. At press time, a CBO cost estimate was unavailable.

For additional information, contact Mr. Bachus' office: 5-4921

At press time, the *Office of Committee Relations* was aware of the following amendment:

Mr. Traficant may offer an amendment expressing the sense of Congress that all equipment and products purchased with funds made available for activities authorized by this act should be American-made (to the greatest extent practicable). In addition, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall provide any entity using funds made available by this act a notice that all products used should be American-made (to the greatest extent practicable).
Staff Contact: Ester Ventus, 5-5261

Rolled Vote (1 bill):

H.R. 1099 contains provisions regarding vessel safety and personnel management policies of the United States Coast Guard. Specifically, the bill (1) authorizes the Coast Guard to promote certain high performing officers to improve officer retention; (2) raises the maximum civil penalty from \$1,000 to \$5,000 for the negligent operation of a recreational vessel or for interfering with the safe operation of a recreational vessel, and from \$1,000 to \$25,000 for negligent operation of a commercial vessel; (3) extends six Coast Guard advisory committees from 2000 to 2005; (4) authorizes the Coast Guard to accept up to seven excess patrol ships from the U.S. Navy for drug interdiction operations; and (5) authorizes the Coast Guard to borrow up to \$100 million from the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund for additional emergency oil spill cleanup removal. The bill was introduced by Mr. Young of Alaska on March 20, 2001. It was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, but was not considered.

For additional information, contact the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee: 5-9446

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