

BILL ANALYSIS

H.C.R. 16
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Defense Affairs & State-Federal Relations
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The United States Merchant Marine is comprised of a fleet of ships that are used for commercial transport during peace time and as an auxiliary to the United States Navy during times of war, delivering both troops and supplies to the military, as well as goods for the welfare of the country, under hazardous conditions. The Merchant Marine is civilian except in times of war, when they are effectively considered military personnel governed under the provisions of the Merchant Marine Act of 1936.

World War II Merchant Marines suffered the highest casualty rate of any of the branches of service while they delivered tanks, food, aircraft, fuel, and other needed supplies to troops in every theater of the war. Unfortunately, the merchant mariners were excluded from the G.I. Bill of Rights that Congress enacted in 1945. Congress passed the Seaman Acts of 1988 which granted some, but not many, of the veterans rights to Merchant Marines.

House Concurrent Resolution 13 urges Congress to pass the Belated Thank You to the Merchant Mariners of World War II Act of 2005 which will provide each eligible veteran, or surviving spouse, a monthly benefit of \$1000. It also provides them with the Social Services that they are due by providing them the status of "veteran" under the Social Security Act.

ANALYSIS

HCR 13 urges the Congress of the United states to support the Belated Thank You to the Merchant Mariners of World War II Act of 2005.