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*House of Representatives*

## ENSURING THE RIGHTS OF INJURED AND AMPUTEE VETERANS!

**HON. BOB FILNER**

OF CALIFORNIA  
IN THE HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Speaker, the bill before us, H.R. 5953, is an important piece of legislation, establishing a bill of rights for injured and amputee veterans. This has been the subject of over a year of discussion in our committee and around the country with various groups and stakeholders, to try and refine the legislation to one that everyone can support.

There are not many of us who have not heard of the horrific battleground stories experienced by our young men and women who have served in Operation New Dawn and Operation Enduring Freedom. These stories reveal a gruesome and difficult war in which service members often sustain long-lasting emotional and physical injuries. Of these, none is more disheartening than the amputations undergone by service members as a direct result of the widespread use of roadside bombs, otherwise known as IEDs, Improvised Explosive Devices.

This class of injuries, which has spiked significantly since the onset of Operation New Dawn, requires special consideration within the Department of Veterans Affairs. After returning home,

these individuals must embark upon a long road to recovery that includes extensive rehabilitation and specialized treatment.

This bill instructs the VA to inform veterans and educate employees at each VA prosthetics and orthotics clinic that there is an Injured and Amputee Veterans' Bill of Rights. The bill requires the VA to monitor and resolve complaints from injured and amputee veterans alleging mistreatment.

I believe that this bill will do much to protect the rights of our injured and amputee veterans, as well as bolster the consistency of prosthetic and orthotic care throughout the VA health care system.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation. We have been working on this bill for a long, long time, and I am pleased that we have been allowed to bring these bills in this lame duck session to allow the VA to move into the 21st century in terms of treatment of our veterans who have undergone amputations.