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House of Representatives

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. FILNER. I thank the gentle lady, and I thank the leadership of Ms. *Woolsey* and Ms. *Lee* of the Progressive Caucus.

Madam Chair, I rise this morning as the Chair of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee in proud support of the Progressive Caucus budget.

Other budgets fund the war; this budget funds the warrior. I am going to repeat that: Other budgets fund the war; this budget funds the warrior.

Most of us in the Progressive Caucus are against the war in Iraq, but we are united in our view that when these young men and women come home and all the other young men and women who came home in the past, that they get all the care, the support, the honor, the dignity, the love that a grateful Nation can bestow.

We are united in saying we will honor those who come home. They have done everything we have asked, they have been brave and courageous, they have had incredible wounds

both physically and mentally, and we are going to give them the care, love, respect, and honor that they deserve.

This is the only budget before us today that says we will have what is called "mandatory funding" of veterans health care. Mandatory funding means we don't have to wait 5 months like the Republicans did last year when they didn't fund the Veterans Administration for the first 5 months of the fiscal year. Assured funding, mandatory funding, means that they will be funded on the first day of the fiscal year, and they will get automatic funding that doesn't have to go through a political fight.

We have a President that says support the troops, support the troops, support the troops. The speakers on the other side say support the troops, support the troops, support the troops. But when they get home, who is supporting them? Who is supporting these brave young men and women when they come back? We saw what happened at Walter Reed. We saw what

happened to Bob Woodruff when he had traumatic brain injury—and those who were less fortunate than he didn't get the treatment they needed. We heard about the young marine who went to a Minnesota hospital saying he had PTSD and was thinking about committing suicide, and they said he was number 28 on the waiting list, come back in a month. He went home and he committed suicide. That is not a Veterans Administration, that is not a country that is welcoming its troops home. It is time that we fund the warrior and not just the war. Vote for the Progressive Caucus budget.