

AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE PRINT

116-57

OFFERED BY MR. PERLMUTTER OF COLORADO

Subtitle B of title XXXI is amended by adding at the end the following:

1 **SEC. ____ . SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE ENERGY EMPLOY-**
2 **EES OCCUPATIONAL ILLNESS COMPENSA-**
3 **TION PROGRAM.**

4 It is the sense of Congress that—

5 (1) the Energy Employees Occupational Illness
6 Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA) was en-
7 acted as part of the Fiscal Year 2001 Defense Au-
8 thorization Act (Public Law 106-398) to ensure
9 fairness and equity to the civilian men and women
10 who, since the commencement of the Manhattan
11 Project, have performed duties uniquely related to
12 the nuclear weapons production and testing pro-
13 grams of the Department of Energy (DOE) and its
14 predecessor agencies and were made ill from expo-
15 sure to toxic substances related to such work;

16 (2) as part of EEOICPA, Congress provided for
17 a system of efficient, uniform, and adequate com-
18 pensation and health care to assist the defense nu-

1 clear workers who were employed by the DOE, its
2 contractors, and certain private vendors;

3 (3) as part of reforms to this program enacted
4 as part of the Fiscal Year 2005 Defense Authoriza-
5 tion Act (Public Law 108–375), Congress created
6 the Office of the Ombudsman for the Energy Em-
7 ployees Occupational Illness Compensation Program
8 (although such Office is within the Department of
9 Labor, the Office of the Ombudsman is independent
10 of the other officers and employees of the Depart-
11 ment of Labor engaged in activities related to the
12 administration of the provisions of EEOICPA);

13 (4) the Office of the Ombudsman provides guid-
14 ance and assistance to claimants navigating the
15 claims application process and prepares an annual
16 report to Congress with—

17 (A) the number and types of complaints,
18 grievances, and requests for assistance received
19 by the Ombudsman during the preceding year;
20 and

21 (B) an assessment of the most common
22 difficulties encountered by claimants and poten-
23 tial claimants during the preceding year;

24 (5) claimants rely on the Office of the Ombuds-
25 man in the Department of Labor to provide impar-

1 tial advice and guidance in navigating what can be
2 a challenging claims process, and its operations
3 should be continued;

4 (6) Congress has reauthorized the Office of the
5 Ombudsman on a bipartisan basis as part of the Na-
6 tional Defense Authorization Act on multiple occa-
7 sions, including most recently in the Fiscal Year
8 2020 Defense Authorization Act (Public Law 116-
9 48); and

10 (7) the Office of the Ombudsman is critical to
11 the successful implementation of EEOICPA.

