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:

SEC. ___. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE ENERGY EMPLOYEES OCCUPATIONAL ILLNESS COMPENSATION PROGRAM.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA) was enacted as part of the Fiscal Year 2001 Defense Authorization Act (Public Law 106–398) to ensure fairness and equity to the civilian men and women who, since the commencement of the Manhattan Project, have performed duties uniquely related to the nuclear weapons production and testing programs of the Department of Energy (DOE) and its predecessor agencies and were made ill from exposure to toxic substances related to such work;

(2) as part of EEOICPA, Congress provided for a system of efficient, uniform, and adequate compensation and health care to assist the defense

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

(3) as part of reforms to this program enacted as part of the Fiscal Year 2005 Defense Authorization Act (Public Law 108–375), Congress created the Office of the Ombudsman for the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program (although such Office is within the Department of Labor, the Office of the Ombudsman is independent of the other officers and employees of the Department of Labor engaged in activities related to the administration of the provisions of EEOICPA);

(4) the Office of the Ombudsman provides guidance and assistance to claimants navigating the claims application process and prepares an annual report to Congress with—

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

(B) an assessment of the most common difficulties encountered by claimants and potential claimants during the preceding year;

(5) claimants rely on the Office of the Ombudsman in the Department of Labor to provide impar-
tial advice and guidance in navigating what can be
a challenging claims process, and its operations
should be continued;

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

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