

**AMENDMENT TO H.R. 2647, AS REPORTED
OFFERED BY MR. LIPINSKI OF ILLINOIS**

At the end of subtitle F of title V (page 155, after line 4), add the following new section:

1 **SEC. 563. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING THE RECOV-**
2 **ERY OF THE REMAINS OF MEMBERS OF THE**
3 **ARMED FORCES WHO WERE KILLED DURING**
4 **WORLD WAR II IN THE BATTLE OF TARAWA**
5 **ATOLL.**

6 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-
7 ings:

8 (1) On November 20, 1943, units of the United
9 States Marine Corps, supported by units of the
10 United States Army and warships and aircraft of
11 the United States Navy, conducted an amphibious
12 landing on the Island of Betio, Tarawa Atoll, in the
13 Gilbert Islands in the Pacific Ocean.

14 (2) The United States military forces faced an
15 entrenched force of 5,000 Japanese soldiers.

16 (3) The Tarawa landing was the first American
17 amphibious assault on a fortified beachhead in
18 World War II.

1 (4) Just 76 hours later, the American flag was
2 raised at Tarawa.

3 (5) More than 1,100 Marines and other mem-
4 bers of the Armed Forces were killed during the bat-
5 tle.

6 (6) Most of the Marines, soldiers, and sailors
7 who were killed during the battle were buried in
8 hastily dug graves and cemeteries on Tarawa.

9 (7) Between 1943 and 1946, the remains of
10 some of the Marines and other members of the
11 Armed Forces were disinterred and reinterred in
12 temporary graves by the Navy.

13 (8) After World War II, the remains of some of
14 these Marines and other members of the Armed
15 Forces were recovered and returned to the United
16 States for burial.

17 (9) Due to mistakes in reinterment, poor
18 records, as well as other causes, the remains of 564
19 Marines and other members of the Armed Forces
20 killed in the battle of Tarawa are in unmarked, un-
21 known graves.

22 (10) Since 1980, the Department of Defense
23 has recovered remains from some unmarked graves
24 that have been found through construction or other
25 activity on Tarawa.

1 (11) The remains of members of the Armed
2 Forces on Tarawa continue to be threatened by con-
3 struction or other land disturbing activity.

4 (12) Recent research has shed new light on the
5 locations of unmarked and lost graves of members of
6 the Armed Forces on Tarawa.

7 (13) It is the responsibility of the Federal Gov-
8 ernment to return to the United States for proper
9 burial and respect all members of the Armed Forces
10 killed at Tarawa who lie in unmarked and lost
11 graves.

12 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—In light of these findings,
13 Congress—

14 (1) reaffirms its support for the recovery and
15 return to the United States of the remains of mem-
16 bers of the Armed Forces killed in battle, and for
17 the efforts by the Joint POW-MIA Accounting Com-
18 mand to recover the remains of members of the
19 Armed Forces from all wars;

20 (2) recognizes the courage and sacrifice of the
21 members of the Armed Forces who fought on
22 Tarawa;

23 (3) acknowledges the dedicated research and ef-
24 forts by persons to identify, locate, and advocate for
25 the recovery of remains from Tarawa; and

1 (4) encourages the Department of Defense to
2 review this research and, as appropriate, pursue new
3 efforts to conduct field studies, new research, and
4 undertake all feasible efforts to recover, identify, and
5 return remains of members of the Armed Forces
6 from Tarawa.

