

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3230, a bill introduced by the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. LABRADOR), to name the post office at 915 Center Avenue in Payette, Idaho, in honor of Harmon Killebrew.

Harmon Clayton Killebrew was born in Payette, Idaho, in 1936. He began his career playing major league baseball in 1954. He played over 22 seasons with multiple teams, and when he retired in 1975, he had the fifth most home runs in major league history.

Killebrew was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1984. In 1976, Killebrew cofounded the Danny Thompson Memorial, an annual golf tournament that raises money for cancer research.

Sadly, on March 17, 2011, at the age of 74, Killebrew passed away. He left an incredible legacy, one we continue to honor with this bill.

I thank the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. LABRADOR) for introducing this bill and look forward to hearing more from him about Killebrew in a few minutes.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues in consideration of H.R. 3230, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 915 Center Avenue in Payette, Idaho, as the Harmon Killebrew Post Office Building.

A member of the Washington Senators, Minnesota Twins, and Kansas City Royals, Harmon Killebrew excelled in major league baseball for 22 years. During that time, he notched an impressive 2,086 hits, played in 13 All-Star games, and tallied nine seasons with over 100 RBIs.

In fact, I can remember as a kid rooting for the Orioles that we didn't want Harmon Killebrew coming up to the plate.

Harmon retired in 1975 in fifth place for career home runs. He was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1984.

Mr. Speaker, we should pass this bill to honor Harmon Killebrew's accomplishments to the great American pastime.

I urge the passage of H.R. 3230, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. LABRADOR), the sponsor of this bill.

Mr. LABRADOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3230, a bill that honors Idaho's greatest athlete and one of our great humanitarians.

H.R. 3230 names the post office in Payette, Idaho, after Harmon Killebrew, a Hall of Fame baseball player who later built an incredible legacy of charitable work.

Idahoans take great pride in Harmon Killebrew's success, and rightfully so. Killebrew's career began in 1954 when Herman Welker, the U.S. Senator from Idaho, tipped off the owner of the Washington Senators, Clark Griffith, about the 17-year-old slugger.

Griffith sent a scout, who almost didn't get to see Killebrew play. After a night of rain, groundkeepers burned gasoline to make the field playable. Killebrew did his part by hitting a ball 435 feet into a Payette beet field.

Immediately signed as a \$12,000 bonus baby, Killebrew debuted a few weeks later. During his 22-year career with the Washington Senators, Minnesota Twins, and Kansas City Royals, he hit 573 home runs, more than all but four major league players at the time of his retirement.

He was the American league's most valuable player in 1969, hitting 49 home runs and driving in 140 runs. He played in 13 All-Star games and was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1984.

Killebrew built his strength lifting 10-gallon milk cans on Idaho dairies and leveraged his work ethic into legendary status. For fans across America, Killebrew was beloved for remaining the down-to-Earth farm kid who signed a major league contract before turning 18.

Twins teammate, Rich Reese, called him "one of the classiest people I've ever met in my life. . . . he treated people with respect, even with the stature that he had."

Asked what he liked to do for fun, Killebrew once said, "Well, I like to wash dishes, I guess." In the off season, he worked feeding cows, selling men's clothing, and reading gas meters.

After retirement from baseball, he sold insurance, ran a car dealership, and worked as a broadcaster.

In 1976, Killebrew helped found the Danny Thompson Memorial Golf Tournament in Sun Valley, Idaho, now called the Killebrew-Thompson Memorial. The event benefits cancer research.

The Harmon Killebrew Foundation, founded in 1998, with his wife, Nita, has built more than a dozen Miracle League fields designed for kids with disabilities, including one named for him in Payette. The baseball and football fields at Payette High School are also named for Killebrew.

Killebrew died of cancer in 2011 at age 74 after entering into hospice care, a treatment he had advocated for for years. At his memorial service, his wife read a tribute from a fan: "Harmon is an extraordinary, beautiful, loving, compassionate human being, who also happens to be a legendary baseball player."

In the days after his death, his high school team, the Payette Pirates, made an improbable run for a State championship. Entering the district tournament with a losing record, the Pirates won four straight to reach the State title game. The team wore HK patches on their sleeves. "Harmon's

been with us the entire time," said one player. The Pirates finally lost to a 25-1 Fruitland team, taking home the second-place trophy.

"He is still touching people," said Nita Killebrew, who worked with my office on the bill and lives in Meridian. Killebrew's legacy of generosity lives on, and it is appropriate to honor his legacy with the legislation we are considering today.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for H.R. 3230. Through this bill, we will recognize one of Idaho's greatest stars, and we will advance the legacy of one of America's most charitable athletes.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I urge the passage of H.R. 3230 to name the post office in Payette, Idaho, for Harmon Killebrew, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3230.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### VETERANS PROVIDING HEALTHCARE TRANSITION IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 899) to amend title 38, United States Code, to ensure that the requirements that new Federal employees who are veterans with service-connected disabilities are provided leave for purposes of undergoing medical treatment for such disabilities apply to certain employees of the Veterans Health Administration, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 899

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Veterans Providing Healthcare Transition Improvement Act".

#### SEC. 2. DISABLED VETERAN LEAVE FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS IN VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 6329(d)(1) of title 5, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

"(1) the term 'employee' has the meaning given such term in section 2105, and includes—

"(A) an officer or employee of the United States Postal Service or the Postal Regulatory Commission; and

"(B) notwithstanding subsection (a) of section 7421 of title 38, an individual occupying a position listed in subsection (b) of such section;"

(b) APPLICABILITY.—With respect to a position listed in section 7421(b) of title 38, United States Code, the amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to any individual appointed to such a position on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 899, the Veterans Providing Healthcare Transition Improvement Act introduced by the junior Senator from Hawaii.

S. 899 is the Senate version of H.R. 2648 introduced by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS). In 2015, Congress enacted the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act. The Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act provides 104 hours of paid sick leave to newly employed veterans with a service-connected disability rating of 30 percent or more.

The sick leave is used to attend medical treatment related to the service-connected disability and must be used within 12 months of beginning employment. The law, however, did not explicitly apply to veterans hired into certain medical occupations at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

When the VA has applied the provisions of the act to these occupations, this bill would ensure new veterans hired in these positions continue to receive paid sick leave to treat their service-connected disability.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS) for sponsoring the House version of this bill and for his dedication to caring for our Nation's veterans. I would also like to thank Chairman DAVID ROE and his staff at the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs for working with us to bring this bill to the floor.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS,  
Washington, DC, June 19, 2018.

Hon. TREY GOWDY,  
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am writing to you concerning H.R. 2648, the "Veterans Transition Improvement Act," and its Senate companion, S. 899. There are provisions in the legislation that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

In the interest of permitting your committee to proceed expeditiously to floor con-

sideration of this legislation, I am willing to waive this committee's right to sequential referral. I do so with the understanding that by waiving consideration of the bills, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs does not waive any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bills which fall within its jurisdiction. I also request that you urge the Speaker to name members of this committee to any conference committee which is named to consider such provisions.

Please place this letter into the committee report on H.R. 2648 and into the Congressional Record during consideration of this legislation on the House floor.

Sincerely,

DAVID P. ROE, M.D.,  
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,  
Washington, DC, June 20, 2018.

Hon. DAVID P. ROE, M.D.,  
Chairman, Committee on Veterans' Affairs,  
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: On May 23, 2018, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform ordered reported H.R. 2648, the Veterans Transition Improvement Act with an amendment, by voice vote. The bill was referred primarily to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs with an additional referral to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. Based on our previous consultation, we intend to request S. 899—the Senate companion to H.R. 2648—be scheduled for floor consideration.

To expedite floor consideration, I ask that you forego further consideration of H.R. 2648. This in no way affects your jurisdiction over the subject matter of the bill, and it will not serve as precedent for future referrals. In addition, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I would support your request to have the Committee on Veterans' Affairs represented on the conference committee. Finally, I would be pleased to include this letter and any response in the bill report filed by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on H.R. 2648, as well as in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of S. 899, to memorialize our understanding.

Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

TREY GOWDY.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank Representatives STIVERS and TAKANO for their sponsorship of this much needed bipartisan bill, which would expand, as you heard, coverage of Representative STEPHEN LYNCH's Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act to newly hired healthcare veterans at the Veterans Health Administration.

Approximately one-third of VA's new hires are veterans. It is no surprise that veterans who leave military service want to continue to serve this country and the American people. We are grateful that these brave men and women, many of whom are wounded themselves, choose to devote their civilian careers to taking care of their fellow wounded warriors.

The bill would provide newly hired doctors, nurses, physician assistants, dentists, optometrists, and chiropractors at the VHA who have service-con-

nected disabilities with 104 hours of sick leave during their first year of employment to take care of their medical conditions.

This is a very good bill that I urge my colleagues to support, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS), the champion of this bill and the sponsor of its House companion.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 899, the Veterans Providing Healthcare Transition Improvement Act.

I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO), for helping me, being the lead Democrat on this. This is bipartisan and bicameral legislation. Senator HIRONO is the sponsor in the Senate. We are the sponsors in the House.

But, Mr. Speaker, it is great to have a veteran in the chair today. Mr. Speaker, as a brigadier general in the Ohio Army National Guard, I know firsthand the incredible sacrifices that our veterans have made in the service of our country. We owe it to them to provide them time when they come home to deal with the things they need to work on, their medical and other conditions.

In 2015, the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act was signed into law, which was great. It gave sick leave to people that are newly hired Federal employees, rather than waiting on that leave to accrue, if they had a disability rating, a service-connected disability rating of 30 percent or more. Unfortunately, that bill did not extend those benefits to title 38 employees.

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Those are VA employees, like physicians, physician assistants, registered nurses, chiropractors, podiatrists, optometrists, and dentists. They are healthcare providers themselves. It is no small number of employees. In fact, as we sit here, there are over 14,000 vacancies in title 38 jobs. That means up to 14,000 people can benefit from this bill.

Again, it is bipartisan. It is a simple change that allows these title 38 veteran employees to get leave to deal with their wounded warrior conditions rather than waiting for that leave to accrue over time. It is a bipartisan bill. I thank Mr. TAKANO for that.

A lot of veteran organizations have supported it: the National Association of VA Physicians and Dentists, the Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs, the American Legion, the VFW, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Disabled American Veterans, Association of the United States Navy, American Federation of Government Employees, National Federation of Federal Employees, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, AMVETS, and the Federal Managers Association.

I thank the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, the gentleman from North Carolina, the gentleman from Maryland, and the chairman from South Carolina for their hard work on this. I also want to thank the Veterans' Affairs Committee and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) for their expertise as they worked through this bill. I thank the sponsors of the Senate legislation, and I thank Representative TAKANO for joining me in this important effort.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense, bipartisan legislation.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO), one of the sponsors of this very, very important bill.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 899, the Veterans Providing Healthcare Transition Improvement Act, which extends paid sick leave benefits for veteran employees with service-connected disabilities in their first year of work at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

As the lead Democrat on this bill, I thank my colleague Representative STEVE STIVERS from Ohio for his bipartisan leadership on this issue. And let me hasten to add, I do enjoy the work that we do together as founders and co-chairs of the bipartisan Congressional Maker Caucus, bringing to the attention of the Congress advanced manufacturing technologies.

But back to the issue at hand.

Mr. Speaker, I also thank Senator MAZIE HIRONO for taking the lead on this important issue in the Senate.

Veterans who choose to provide their medical skills and expertise to serve other veterans at the Department of Veterans Affairs should not have to take a leave of absence to receive the care that they need. By improving the Wounded Warrior Federal Leave Act to extend benefits to wounded warriors working at the VA, we will help veterans who need to take time off to get their own medical care.

This will also help in hiring and recruiting what are known as title 38 employees at the VA. This group of employees includes physicians, physician assistants, registered nurses, chiropractors, podiatrists, optometrists, and dentists.

According to 2018 data from the Veterans Health Administration, there are over 14,000 title 38 vacancies nationwide. We must make it a priority to fill these vacancies to ensure that the VA is well staffed and capable of providing veterans with the services that they need. Extending benefits to title 38 employees at the VA can help with the recruitment and hiring of veterans who want to continue helping other veterans.

Veterans working at the VA already make incredible sacrifices to help their fellow veterans. Their paychecks

should not be one of them. This is why I urge my colleagues to stand with our veterans and support this legislation.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of S. 899, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 899, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "An Act to amend title 5, United States Code, to ensure that the requirements that new Federal employees who are veterans with service-connected disabilities are provided leave for purposes of undergoing medical treatment for such disabilities apply to certain employees of the Veterans Health Administration."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### ROUTE 66 CENTENNIAL COMMISSION ACT

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 66) to establish the Route 66 Centennial Commission, to direct the Secretary of Transportation to prepare a plan on the preservation needs of Route 66, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 66

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

##### **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

*This Act may be cited as the "Route 66 Centennial Commission Act".*

##### **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

*Congress makes the following findings:*

(1) Route 66 was the Nation's first all-paved highway under the U.S. Highway System connecting the Midwest to California and has played a major role in the history of the United States.

(2) Route 66 was the symbol of opportunity to hundreds of thousands of people seeking escape from the Dust Bowl in the 1930s, serving as a "road to opportunity" in the West and providing employment during the Great Depression, as thousands were put to work on road crews to pave the road.

(3) Route 66 was invaluable in transporting troops, equipment, and supplies across the country to the West, where the government established multiple industries and armed force bases during World War II. Upon the conclusion of the war in 1945, Route 66 was a key route taken by thousands of troops as they returned home.

(4) Route 66 symbolized the Nation's positive outlook during the postwar economic recovery in the 1950s and 1960s, serving as an icon of

*free-spirited independence and linking people across the United States. During this period, the tourist industry along Route 66 grew tremendously, giving rise to countless tourist courts, motels, service stations, garages, and diners.*

(5) Since June 27, 1985, when Route 66 was decommissioned as a Federal highway, the popularity and mythical stature of Route 66 has grown domestically and internationally, as the road has experienced a rebirth of interest and support.

(6) The year 2026 will be the centennial anniversary of Route 66, and a commission should be established to study and recommend to Congress activities that are fitting and proper to celebrate that anniversary in a manner that appropriately honors America's Mother Road.

##### **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT.**

*There is established a commission to be known as the Route 66 Centennial Commission (referred to in this Act as the "Commission").*

##### **SEC. 4. DUTIES.**

*The Commission shall have the following duties:*

(1) To study activities that may be carried out by the Federal Government to determine whether the activities are fitting and proper to honor Route 66 on the occasion of its centennial anniversary, including any of the activities described under section 8(b)(2)(B).

(2) To recommend to Congress the activities the Commission considers most fitting and proper to honor Route 66 on such occasion, to be carried out by the Department of Transportation and any other entity or entities within the Federal Government that the Commission considers most appropriate to carry out such activities.

(3) To plan and host, in cooperation with such partners, a conference on the U.S. Numbered Highway System, and assist in the activities of such a conference.

##### **SEC. 5. MEMBERSHIP.**

(a) NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.—*The Commission shall be composed of 19 members appointed as follows:*

(1) Three members, each of whom shall be a qualified citizen described in subsection (b), appointed by the President.

(2) Two members, each of whom shall be a qualified citizen described in subsection (b), appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Secretary of Transportation.

(3) One member, who shall be a qualified citizen described in subsection (b), appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Governor of Illinois.

(4) One member, who shall be a qualified citizen described in subsection (b), appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Governor of Missouri.

(5) One member, who shall be a qualified citizen described in subsection (b), appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Governor of Kansas.

(6) One member, who shall be a qualified citizen described in subsection (b), appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Governor of Oklahoma.

(7) One member, who shall be a qualified citizen described in subsection (b), appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Governor of Texas.

(8) One member, who shall be a qualified citizen described in subsection (b), appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Governor of New Mexico.

(9) One member, who shall be a qualified citizen described in subsection (b), appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Governor of Arizona.

(10) One member, who shall be a qualified citizen described in subsection (b), appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Governor of California.

(11) Three members, each of whom shall be a qualified citizen described in subsection (b), appointed by the President on the recommendation