

Over the years, Jack has held many leadership positions, including senior patrol leader in his Boy Scout troop and a Sea Scout National Quarterdeck, a representative on the Sea Scout National Committee. He is an Eagle Scout and has been recognized as the 2018 Northeast Region Sea Scout of the Year.

Jack's dedication and discipline are two traits that will lead to his success at the U.S. Naval Academy. Jack is a proven leader. I wish him the best in this exciting new chapter of his life.

□ 0915

RECOGNIZING JOE JOYCE

(Mr. ROSE of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROSE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember all those who we have lost to the coronavirus, and one man in particular who is close to my heart and the hearts of thousands of people in my district.

Joe Joyce may best be known for his bar in Bay Ridge, J.J. Bubbles, but the truth is he served our community much more than cold beer. His generous spirit touched countless lives on both sides of the Verrazzano.

Joe was an Army veteran who served in Vietnam, and after he returned home his service continued. He worked as a phys ed teacher for disabled students on Staten Island, supported the Special Olympics, and would offer up his bar to host fundraisers for any organization who asked. That was one thing that never changed over the 42 years Joe was in business. As soon as you walked into J.J. Bubbles you were family.

Today, we remember and think of Joe's family: his wife, Jane; his children, Eddie, Kristin, Kevin; and his six grandchildren. Joe's loss can be felt all throughout my district, but his gift to all of us was his unique ability to bring people of all stripes together, and that is a gift we need now more than ever.

QUALITY HEALTHCARE FOR VETERANS

(Mr. WATKINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WATKINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of S. 3084, the Competitive Pay for Leaders in Veterans Healthcare Act. This legislation was introduced by my good friend and fellow Kansan, the chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Senator JERRY MORAN.

Our Nation's veterans deserve the best care possible. We must ensure that the VA can recruit and retain high-quality talented leaders. The Competitive Pay for Leaders in Veterans Healthcare Act is less about the leaders, actually, it is more about the veterans as the quality of their care is the

direct result of the quality of the VA leadership.

Mr. Speaker, that is why I support the Competitive Pay for Leaders in Veterans Healthcare Act and encourage my colleagues to do the same. No one fights harder for our veterans than President Trump. He has always made us a top priority, and I am glad that he and the VA Secretary will support this measure, and I look forward to its passage.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

VETERANS' COMPENSATION COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2020

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6168) to increase, effective as of December 1, 2020, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6168

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' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2020".

SEC. 2. INCREASE IN RATES OF DISABILITY COMPENSATION AND DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION.

(a) RATE ADJUSTMENT.—Effective on December 1, 2020, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall increase, in accordance with subsection (c), the dollar amounts in effect on November 30, 2020, for the payment of disability compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation under the provisions specified in subsection (b).

(b) AMOUNTS TO BE INCREASED.—The dollar amounts to be increased pursuant to subsection (a) are the following:

(1) WARTIME DISABILITY COMPENSATION.—Each of the dollar amounts under section 1114 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION FOR DEPENDENTS.—Each of the dollar amounts under section 1115(1) of such title.

(3) CLOTHING ALLOWANCE.—The dollar amount under section 1162 of such title.

(4) DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION TO SURVIVING SPOUSE.—Each of the dollar amounts under subsections (a) through (d) of section 1311 of such title.

(5) DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION TO CHILDREN.—Each of the dollar amounts under sections 1313(a) and 1314 of such title.

(c) DETERMINATION OF INCREASE.—Each dollar amount described in subsection (b) shall be increased by the same percentage as the

percentage by which benefit amounts payable under title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq.) are increased effective December 1, 2020, as a result of a determination under section 215(i) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)).

(d) SPECIAL RULE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may adjust administratively, consistent with the increases made under subsection (a), the rates of disability compensation payable to persons under section 10 of Public Law 85–857 (72 Stat. 1263) who have not received compensation under chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 3. PUBLICATION OF ADJUSTED RATES.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish in the Federal Register the amounts specified in section 2(b), as increased under that section, not later than the date on which the matters specified in section 215(i)(2)(D) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)(2)(D)) are required to be published by reason of a determination made under section 215(i) of such Act during fiscal year 2021.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVID P. ROE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous materials on H.R. 6168.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 6168, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2020 increases veterans' disability compensation at the same rate as the annual Social Security increase. This puts a little extra money in the pockets of our disabled veterans and their families to make sure VA benefits keep pace with inflation.

While this increase may be a small one, it is an essential one that veterans and their families rely on us passing each year. In my time as chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, I have had the opportunity to speak to and know many veterans. Many of them highlight this bill as a priority for them and their families.

The cost-of-living adjustment, or COLA, is vital for ensuring that veterans' benefits do not decline due to changes in the economy. For veterans with service-connected disabilities, this annual change is an assurance to them and their families that their benefits will remain consistent. It is a guarantee we make to them and a great source of comfort to many veterans and their families.

As our country deals with the novel coronavirus pandemic, and the severe economic effects it will have, it is more important than ever that we pass this yearly COLA increase so that veterans and their families trust that their benefits will not decline due to inflation.

I want to recognize the work of the Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee chair, ELAINE LURIA, for introducing H.R. 6168. I wholeheartedly support H.R. 6168, and urge all of my colleagues to do so as well.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVID P. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6168, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2020. The bill was introduced by Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee Chair ELAINE LURIA and Ranking Member MIKE BOST. I appreciate their leadership on this important issue.

The Department of Veterans Affairs provides compensation benefits to help fulfill our obligation to take care of the brave men and women who have been injured during their service to this great Nation.

H.R. 6168 would authorize a cost-of-living increase for veterans and their families next year, if Social Security recipients receive an increase. The annual COLA is necessary to help veterans and families afford their living expenses when prices go up.

Currently, many of our Nation's veterans may have been affected by this pandemic and are worried about how they are going to pay their bills. The last thing that should be on their minds is whether the value of their VA benefits will keep pace with inflation.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all Members to support H.R. 6168.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. LURIA), my good friend and the chairwoman of the Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee, the author of H.R. 6168, and a former naval commander.

Mrs. LURIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of my bipartisan bill, H.R. 6168, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2020.

During these trying times, I continue to keep our Nation's veterans at the top of my mind as they face unprecedented challenges due to the coronavirus pandemic. This bill will provide the economic relief and pay raise that our veterans have earned.

It is an honor to represent more than 102,000 veterans, the highest total of any district in Virginia, and one of the highest in the country. Our veterans put their lives on the line and deployed far from home to keep America safe. As a 20-year Navy veteran myself, I am proud to bring a bill to the floor that protects the benefits our veterans have earned from their service to our country.

H.R. 6168 provides cost-of-living increases for wartime disability compensation, compensation for depend-

ents, clothing allowance, dependency and indemnities compensation for spouses, and dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving children.

Congress must honor our commitment to those American heroes who served in harm's way so that we could live in peace at home. As we continue to fight this pandemic, I ask that we all keep in mind those who have kept us safe at home and abroad.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6168, and join me and Ranking Member MIKE BOST in protecting the earned benefits for our Nation's veterans.

Mr. DAVID P. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close. I appreciate the Members, Mrs. LURIA and Mr. BOST, bringing this important bill up. We pass it every year. I encourage all of my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I, too, urge all of my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 6168.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6168.

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.

MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2020

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 3414) to authorize major medical facility projects for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2020, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 3414

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 "Major Medical Facility Authorization Act of 2020".

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY PROJECTS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may carry out the following major medical facility projects in fiscal year 2020 at the locations specified and in an amount for each project not to exceed the amount specified for such location:

(1) Construction of an outpatient clinic and national cemetery in Alameda, California, in an amount not to exceed \$113,332,000.

(2) Realignment and closure of the Livermore Campus in Livermore, California, in an amount not to exceed \$311,730,000.

(3) Construction of a new medical facility in Louisville, Kentucky, in an amount not to exceed \$860,000,000.

(4) Construction relating to flood recovery of the medical center in Manhattan, New

York, in an amount not to exceed \$372,600,000.

(5) Construction of a spinal cord injury building with a community living center, including a parking garage, in San Diego, California, in an amount not to exceed \$230,840,000.

(6) Completion of construction of a medical facility project, including a parking garage, in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in an amount not to exceed \$307,000,000.

(7) Construction of a new critical care center in West Los Angeles, California, in an amount not to exceed \$75,790,000.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2020 or the year in which funds are appropriated for the Construction, Major Projects account, \$2,271,292,000 for the projects authorized in subsection (a).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVID P. ROE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on S. 3414.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 3414, the Major Medical Facility Authorization Act of 2020.

Each year the Department of Veterans Affairs submits an annual budget request to Congress, and then it is our job to authorize and appropriate the funding that VA needs to care for America's veterans and their families.

Within that larger funding request is VA's request for funds to replace and modernize its medical facilities. This year's major construction requests total \$2.27 billion, and will build a new critical care center in West Los Angeles, California; complete construction of a medical facility project in San Juan, Puerto Rico; construct a spinal cord injury center with a community living center in San Diego, California; complete flood recovery construction at the medical center in Manhattan, New York; and fully fund the medical facility replacement project in Louisville, Kentucky; as well as construct an outpatient clinic and a national cemetery in Alameda, California; and finally, realign the Livermore, California campus.

Mr. Speaker, with a major construction need that totals more than \$15 billion, this authorization takes needed steps to reduce the backlog of major construction projects.

It is no secret that VA's infrastructure is old. The average age of its facilities is 60. The Secretary of the VA himself, Secretary Wilkie, emphasized this point by making the statement: There are several VA facilities that Abraham Lincoln would recognize.