

of the difficulty of veterans in obtaining financing. This bill helps to address that problem. Our military is one of this country's strongest resources and I believe wholeheartedly, that we owe it to our servicemen and service-women to assist these protectors of our country and Constitution in their time of need.

This bill does not provide assistance without conditions. Those who are eligible to participate in the program must seek and subsequently maintain a job, pay a reasonable rent and remain drug and alcohol free. These safeguards in determining eligibility will protect the program from potential abuses.

In conclusion, I want to applaud Representative STUMP for introducing this bill and urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Veterans Transitional Housing Opportunities Act of 1998. These quarter of a million veterans served this country when we needed them, it is now our turn to serve them.

Mr. STUMP. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. EVANS. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STUMP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3039, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1300

AUTHORIZING MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY PROJECTS AND MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY LEASES FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR FISCAL YEAR 1999

Mr. STUMP. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3603) to authorize major medical facility projects and major medical facility leases for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 1999, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3603

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

SECTION 1. AUTHORIZATION OF MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY PROJECTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may carry out the following major medical facility projects, with each project to be carried out in the amount specified for that project:

(1) Alterations to facilitate consolidation of services in buildings 126 and 150, and demolition of seismically unsafe building 122 at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Long Beach, California, in an amount not to exceed \$23,200,000.

(2) Construction and seismic work at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, San Juan, Puerto Rico, in an amount not to exceed \$50,000,000.

(3) Outpatient clinic expansion at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Cen-

ter, Washington, D.C., in an amount not to exceed \$29,700,000.

(4) Construction of a psychogeriatric care building and demolition of seismically unsafe building 324 at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Palo Alto, California, in an amount not to exceed \$22,400,000.

(5) Construction of an ambulatory care addition and renovations for ambulatory care at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Cleveland (Wade Park), Ohio, in an amount not to exceed \$28,300,000, of which \$7,500,000 shall be derived from funds appropriated for a fiscal year before fiscal year 1999 that remain available for obligation.

(6) Construction of an ambulatory care addition at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Tucson, Arizona, in an amount not to exceed \$35,000,000.

(7) Construction of an addition for psychiatric care at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Dallas, Texas, in an amount not to exceed \$24,200,000.

(8) Outpatient clinic projects at Auburn and Merced, California, as part of the Northern California Healthcare Systems Project, in an amount not to exceed \$3,000,000, to be derived only from funds appropriated for Construction, Major Projects, for a fiscal year before fiscal year 1999 that remain available for obligation.

(b) CONSTRUCTION OF PARKING FACILITY.—The Secretary may construct a parking structure at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Denver, Colorado, in an amount not to exceed \$13,000,000, of which \$11,900,000 shall be derived from funds in the Parking Revolving Fund.

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY LEASES.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may enter into leases for satellite outpatient clinics as follows:

(1) Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in an amount not to exceed \$1,800,000.

(2) Daytona Beach, Florida, in an amount not to exceed \$2,600,000.

(3) Oakland Park, Florida, in an amount not to exceed \$4,100,000.

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 1999—

(1) for the Construction, Major Projects, account \$205,300,000 for the projects authorized in section 1(a); and

(2) for the Medical Care account, \$8,500,000 for the leases authorized in section 2.

(b) LIMITATION.—(1) The projects authorized in section 1(a) may only be carried out using—

(A) funds appropriated for fiscal year 1999 pursuant to the authorization of appropriations in subsection (a);

(B) funds appropriated for Construction, Major Projects, for a fiscal year before fiscal year 1999 that remain available for obligation; and

(C) funds appropriated for Construction, Major Projects, for a fiscal year before fiscal year 1999 for a category of activity not specific to a project.

(2) The project authorized in section 1(b) may only be carried out using funds appropriated for a fiscal year before fiscal year 1999—

(A) for the Parking Revolving Fund; or

(B) for Construction, Major Projects, for a category of activity not specific to a project.

SEC. 4. THRESHOLD FOR TREATMENT OF PARKING FACILITY PROJECT AS A MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY PROJECT.

Section 8109(i)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking out "\$3,000,000" and inserting "\$4,000,000".

SEC. 5. PROCEDURES FOR NAMING OF PROPERTY BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§ 530. Procedures for naming property

"(a) If the Secretary proposes to designate the name of any property of the Department other than for the geographic area in which that property is located, the Secretary shall conduct a public hearing before making the designation. The hearing shall be conducted in the community in which the property is located. At the hearing, the Secretary shall receive the views of veterans service organizations and other interested parties regarding the proposed name of the property.

"(b) Before conducting such a hearing, the Secretary shall provide reasonable notice of the proposed designation and of the hearing. The notice shall include—

"(1) the time and place of the hearing;

"(2) identification of the property proposed to be named;

"(3) identification of the proposed name for the property;

"(c) (1) If after a hearing under subsection (a) the Secretary intends to name the property involved other than for the geographic area in which that property is located, the Secretary shall notify the congressional veterans' affairs committees of the Secretary's intention to so name the property and shall publish a notice of such intention in the Federal Register.

"(2) The Secretary may not designate the property with a name for which a notice was published in the Federal Register pursuant to paragraph (1) until the end of a 60-day period of continuous session of Congress following the date of the submission of notice under paragraph (1). For purposes of the preceding sentence, continuity of a session of Congress is broken only by an adjournment sine die, and there shall be excluded from the computation of such 60-day period any day during which either House of Congress is not in session during an adjournment of more than three days to a day certain.

"(3) Each notice under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

"(A) An identification of the property involved.

"(B) An explanation of the background of, and rationale for, the proposed name.

"(C) A summary of the views expressed by interested parties at the public hearing conducted in connection with the proposed name, together with a summary of the Secretary's evaluation of those views."

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 529 the following new item:

"530. Procedures for naming property."

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 530 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall take effect as of January 1, 1998.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STUMP) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. Stump).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. STUMP. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3603, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

(Mr. STUMP asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STUMP. Madam Speaker, H.R. 3603 authorizes a total of \$205 million in major medical construction projects throughout the United States. It also authorizes \$8.5 million in VA's medical care account for leasing facilities. All of these projects will be funded from this increase at the top of the VA's priority list of construction projects.

Madam Speaker, let me mention one of the provisions contained in this bill. After the bill reported out of the Committee, we became aware of a controversy regarding the VA Secretary's authority to name VA facilities. In order to avoid circumstances like this in the future, we have added this provision establishing a public hearing procedure to be followed by the Secretary if he decides to name a facility other than for the geographic area in which it is located. This provision would be retroactive until January 1 of this year.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I am pleased to rise in support of H.R. 3603, a bill to authorize VA's major medical construction and lease projects for fiscal year 1999.

I want to commend my colleague, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STUMP), the Chairman of the Committee, for supporting a completely bipartisan process. The projects VA identified as the highest priorities comprise those we recommended for funding for fiscal year 1999.

I believe the bill will allow VA to fund projects that are consistent with VA's efforts to ensure patient safety and accommodate more care on an outpatient basis.

We have been cautious stewards, and the projects authorized in this bill are of vital importance to VA and the veterans that rely on them for their care. I recommend support for adoption of the major medical construction projects contained in H.R. 3603, as amended; and I urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

While VA has significantly reduced its reliance on outpatient bed care, VA providers will continue in the foreseeable future to need beds in a variety of settings. Remaining beds must be housed in modern, safe and accessible facilities. Two projects redress systemic, seismic problems in the San Juan, Puerto Rico and Long Beach, California facilities and both were requested by the Administration.

Other selected projects allow VA to continue moving more expensive hospital bed care to outpatient care settings. Some projects consolidate VA's activities and allow it to become more cost effective. In addition, the Committee is authorizing funds for three major leases for outpatient facilities. These leases will allow VA to take advantage of the community's excess capacity and become more accessible to its

users. These projects are not only consistent with recent trends in VA health care, they are consistent with the direction of modern medicine.

Mr. STUMP. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILMAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STUMP) for yielding me the time.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in strong support of this measure, legislation authorizing major medical construction projects and facility leases for the VA in fiscal year 1999 throughout our country.

I commend the distinguished chairman, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STUMP), for his work in bringing this measure to the floor at this time and for his committee's work.

One of the most important responsibilities that we have as a Nation is to provide proper medical care for our veterans. As our veterans population ages, the need for medical care becomes even more acute. This legislation will allow the Department of Veterans Affairs to fund nine high-priority medical projects throughout our Nation and to lease three medical facilities.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to join in supporting this worthy legislation, which will provide improved health care for our veterans.

Mr. EVANS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE).

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS) for yielding me the time.

I rise today in support of this legislation because it addresses the critical needs of medical centers throughout the country. In Denver, for example, the need for a new parking structure has increased with the expansion of programs provided by the VA Medical Center, especially outpatient programs and the increasing employment necessitated by the programs.

Currently, the lack of available parking impedes access to care. Less than 400 parking spaces are available on the grounds; and many patients, some of whom it is difficult to walk far, have to park up to five blocks away from the medical center.

H.R. 3603 addresses this problem. It provides for construction of a multi-level structure to house 700 parking spaces, and it includes a horizontal connection to the existing medical center. Consequently, it will enhance our ability to provide timely, efficient health care to the veterans, the many veterans, in the Denver metropolitan area.

I thank the Ranking Member, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), and the Chairman of the Committee, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STUMP), for their leadership and assistance in providing this important funding.

Mr. STUMP. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS), chairman of the Subcommittee on Health.

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STUMP), chairman of our full committee, for yielding me the time.

I rise in support of H.R. 3603, which, of course, is the construction authorization bill.

Madam Speaker, the VA health care system is going through a period of needed change toward providing care more efficiently and improving veterans' access to care. With our encouragement, VA has opened many community-based clinics to bring medical care closer to all of our veterans.

Nevertheless, Congress expects VA to continue to provide hospital and nursing home care for veterans in VA medical centers across this country. Like the veterans themselves, many of these facilities are aging, are having problems in construction. We cannot turn our backs on our veterans, and we should not turn our backs on the hospitals on which they depend. We must face the fact that some of these facilities require major renovations to meet patient care, safety and, of course, privacy requirements.

The VA's major construction budget is the vehicle to address those needs. Yet, despite the fact that many VA hospitals need significant construction work, the administration's fiscal year 1999 budget proposes to fund construction work at only two VA medical centers. This is unclear to me why. The administration even failed to request any funding for three projects that VA itself has indicated is their top priority.

Madam Speaker, this bill will remedy this failure. In proposing \$205 million for major medical construction, H.R. 3603 would authorize what the committee believes is both a more appropriate level of construction funding than the \$84 million proposed by the President and a more appropriate mix of needed construction projects.

With this legislation, Congress would set a course towards remedying some of the most pressing construction needs in the entire VA system. These include projects to provide badly needed outpatient clinic capacity at some of VA's busiest medical centers, improve psychiatric care and renovation of seismically unsafe facilities.

As Memorial Day approaches, we must not only remember our veterans but take steps, like the passage of this legislation this afternoon, to honor the commitments to our veterans. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3603.

Mr. EVANS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON).

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this bill.

Much of my career was spent working with veterans at the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Dallas,

and I know full well the strides that they have attempted to make to improve services.

The Veterans Integrated Service Network 17 serving North, Central and South Texas, has sought major construction assistance for over 10 years to replace its 58-year-old mental health facility at the Dallas VA Medical Center.

The North Texas VA Mental Health Enhancement Project was originally authorized in 1996, and I am very pleased that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs saw fit to include this vital project in the major construction authorization bill for 1999.

The Veterans Integrated Service Network 17 has the highest concentration of combat veterans in the U.S., as well as the highest proportion of POWs and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder treatment programs.

The Dallas Medical Center is the primary veterans' mental health provider in the network, serving approximately 7,000 veterans with mental health needs each year. The Dallas VA has done an extraordinary job streamlining its mental health programs to better serve Texas veterans with mental health needs. But the age, limited space, and poor physical condition of the 1930s-era mental health facilities have severely limited its ability to treat many veterans seeking mental health services. Some of these buildings are literally crumbling around our veterans. All are functionally obsolete.

Our veterans really do deserve better. The mental health enhancement project will consolidate all mental health inpatient and outpatient programs currently scattered around VA campus in makeshift sites into one new building located adjacent to the clinical building. This will allow the Dallas VA to expand its outpatient programs and reduce its inpatient nursing beds.

As important, veterans will be able to go to one location for mental health and medical services rather than being run all over the campus.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this bill.

I know that this project, as essential as it is and just beginning to get some attention, I know how important the rest of them are, and I hope we can support all of them.

Mr. EVANS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ).

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. Madam Speaker, I thank the distinguished ranking member, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), for yielding me the time.

I rise in support of H.R. 3603.

On February 9, 1971, the aftershocks of an earthquake in California were felt all the way to Washington. A shift in the San Andreas Fault caused the destruction of the San Fernando Veterans Administration Hospital in Sylmar, California, resulting in the death of 46 patients. With a great sense of urgency, the U.S. Congress convened

hearings and eventually established the Chartered Committee on Safety.

The Veterans Administration initiated a comprehensive assessment of every VA medical center in the system. The studies revealed that 68 medical centers were located in at-risk geographic areas where major or moderate earthquakes may occur. Of these, 39 facilities were found to be in need of seismic strengthening and compliance with seismic codes.

Despite the fact that Puerto Rico is located in one of the most seismically active zones in the United States and that the potential for loss of life ranks very high in the event of an earthquake, seismic corrections and strengthening at the Puerto Rico VA Medical Center initially were not prioritized in the highest-risk group.

VA studies in 1990 confirmed the high seismicity of the site and urged that the San Juan Medical Center warranted inclusion in this group. San Juan was then added to the inventory of high-risk facilities and scheduled last.

VA studies anticipate that in an earthquake, without seismic corrections, Building 1, the main hospital, would sustain serious structural damage, possibly collapsing and resulting in a loss of life.

After a decade of delays, this center, which happens to be one of the busiest, if not the busiest, VA hospital centers in the United States, will finally receive the necessary funds in fiscal year 1999 to guarantee the safety of the American veterans in Puerto Rico.

San Juan's VA Medical Center is currently the only remaining hospital identified as the highest priority need that still remains in the at-risk inventory group. The President's budget for fiscal year 1999 requests \$50 million for this project as part of the VA's major medical construction project. A two-story, 155-bed medical and surgical building that includes a 15-bed spinal cord injury center will be constructed to correct seismic deficiencies at the Medical Center.

I want to thank the Chairman, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STUMP), and the Ranking Member, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LANE), and all of the members of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs who have recommended that this project be authorized.

I urge the Members of the U.S. Congress to approve this much-needed VA construction bill without further delays. The American veterans and their families in Puerto Rico deserve to receive treatment in a healthy, safe environment that poses no unnecessary health, safety or life-threatening risks, just like any other veteran in any other State of the Union. I urge approval of this bill.

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

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

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

In closing, let me thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), the Ranking Member of the full committee, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ), the Chairman and Ranking Member of the subcommittee, for all their hard work in putting this bill together.

This is a bipartisan bill, and I urge all Members to support it.

Mr. HORN. Madam Speaker, I rise to day in strong support of H.R. 3603, the VA Major Medical Facility Projects Authorization bill. This bill authorizes \$205 million for major medical facility projects across the country, \$140 million more than the President requested in his budget.

Along with the other worthy projects in this bill, \$23 million is dedicated to the consolidation of clinical and administrative services into a seismically upgraded building at the Long Beach VA Medical Center. Providing a broad range of inpatient, outpatient, and home care services for veterans throughout Southern California, the Long Beach VA has been recognized for the integral role it plays in Southern California's health care system. The Long Beach Center has also achieved national prominence in the field of spinal cord injury and the rehabilitation of paraplegic and quadriplegic patients.

Given the seismically unstable location of the Medical Center, it is critical that all acute patient care facilities are located in seismically safe buildings. This legislation ensures that. Not only does this project protect the health and safety of the Long Beach VA employees and its patients, it also makes efficient use of scarce government funds. This project will avoid a cost of \$34 million for additional seismic corrections and save \$5.6 million in annual recurring operating expenses. Now that is a project worth investing in.

As we honor those who have served and sacrificed their lives for our country over the Memorial Day weekend, it is fitting that today the House is considering legislation to fulfill our continuing obligation to our nation's veterans. Their service on our nation's behalf stands as a model of courage and commitment. We cannot afford to forget them.

Mr. WELLER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my dismay at a provision that was slipped into H.R. 3603, the bill to authorize major medical facility projects for the Department of Veteran's Affairs. This provision was included specifically to undo the naming of the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery near Joliet, Illinois in my congressional district. It came to my attention today, that a section was added to the bill which would set up new procedures for the naming of national veterans cemeteries and other properties of the VA. I was appalled to learn that this provision is retroactive to January 1, 1998! This is obviously intended to invalidate the decision of Secretary Togo West to name the cemetery after Abraham Lincoln. This provision is an outrage! It is a direct assault on the wishes of the veterans in Illinois. I would like to note that the naming of the cemetery as the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery was endorsed by the Illinois State American Legion, VFW, Amvets, Disabled American Legion and American Ex-POWs. Clearly the veterans—those who will be buried there—want this name. Clearly, this provision was inserted into the bill to go

against the wishes of the veterans. Abraham Lincoln created the national cemetery system. Illinois is the "Land of Lincoln." This name is not only appropriate for the cemetery in Joliet, it is the only name endorsed by the veterans—those who sacrificed for their country. I will fight to have this retroactive provision changed. I submit a copy of my statement to appear in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS,
DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS,
Springfield, IL, May 21, 1997.

Hon. JERRY WELLER,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN WELLER: The Department of Illinois, Veterans of Foreign Wars, takes great pride in supporting the introduction of legislation naming the new Veterans Cemetery at the former Joliet Arsenal the "Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery".

In naming the 982 acre site after President Abraham Lincoln, we not only acknowledge the role he played in creating the National Cemetery System, but also honor the memory of the courageous men and women who answered our nation's call to defend democracy and freedom.

The Department of Illinois, Veterans of Foreign Wars certainly commend the Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Defense, Congress and the local communities for their vision and initiatives in acquiring a portion of the former Joliet Army Ammunition Plant, and the beautiful Hoff Woods site for use as the new National Cemetery to serve the veterans and families of this mid-west region.

We certainly appreciate your introducing this most important legislation in the House of Representatives and look forward to the passage of same.

With warmest personal regards and best wishes, I remain

Sincerely,

DONALD HARTENBERGER,
Department Commander.

THE AMERICAN LEGION,
DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS,
Bloomington, IL, April 10, 1997.

Hon. JERRY WELLER,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE WELLER: The American Legion, Department of Illinois, takes great pride in supporting the introduction of legislation naming the new veterans cemetery at the former Joliet Arsenal the "Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery."

On Saturday, April 5, 1997 at Normal, Illinois, our state Executive Committee approved a resolution commending the Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Defense, Congress and the local communities for their vision and initiatives in acquiring a portion of the former Joliet Army Ammunition Plant, and the beautiful Hoff Woods site, for use as the new National Cemetery to serve the veterans and families of this mid-west region.

A copy of the approved resolution is attached and we respectfully urge the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the United States Congress to confirm the designation of the former Joliet Arsenal as the "Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery" to honor all veterans and President Abraham Lincoln, who first established the National Cemetery system.

Sincerely,

VINCENT A. SANZOTTA,
Department Adjutant.

AMVETS,

ILLINOIS STATE HEADQUARTERS,
Springfield, IL, September 26, 1997.

Hon. JERRY WELLER,
Cannon House Office Bldg.,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN WELLER: Our last State Executive Committee Meeting, held at the Hilton Hotel, Springfield, Illinois, on September 12-14, 1997. At this meeting it was voted unanimously to endorse your legislation to name the Joliet National Cemetery as the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery.

Since Mr. Lincoln was instrumental in establishing the first National Cemetery, it is only befitting that he finally receives the honor of having a National Cemetery named after him.

Sincerely,

JERRY F. FOSTER,
Department Commander.

AMERICAN EX-PRISONERS OF WAR,
DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS,
Park Ridge, IL, October 21, 1997.

Hon. JERRY WELLER,
130 Cannon Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR HONORABLE WELLER: We the American Ex-Prisoners of War of the State of Illinois all agree to the naming of the veterans cemetery in Joliet, Illinois to be called Abraham Lincoln Veterans Cemetery.

Thank you for the American Ex-P.O.W.'s for their opinion on this matter.

Sincerely,

DONALD McCORMICK, Commander.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS,
DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS,
Oak Park, IL, October 28, 1997.

Hon. JERRY WELLER,
House of Representatives
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN WELLER: The Department of Illinois, Disabled American Veterans, strongly supports the introduction of legislation naming the new Veterans Cemetery at the former Joliet Arsenal the "Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery."

Mr. Lincoln, as we all know, was instrumental in establishing the first National Cemetery and it is only befitting that he receives the honor of having a National Cemetery named after him.

We certainly appreciate your introducing this most important legislation in the House of Representatives because now the veterans and their families in this Midwest region will have a place to rest which they truly deserve and are entitled to.

Sincerely,

GEORGE M. ISDALE, JR.,
Department Adjutant.

TED BUCK,
Department Commander.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my support for H.R. 3603, a bill to authorize major medical facility projects for the Veterans' Department.

The bill authorizes the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out major medical facility projects at Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers or outpatient clinics in 8 locations, including one in my home state of Texas. This bill is a result of members from both parties working together to ensure that facilities with the greatest need for construction work will receive the resources necessary to provide high quality care to our veterans.

I'm particularly pleased with the emphasis this bill gives to projects that will increase the VA's ability to provide outpatient care to veterans.

This bill effectively balances our fiscal responsibilities with the needs of these facilities and the veterans who depend on them.

This legislation also stays focused on health care's shifting emphasis from inpatient to ambulatory care by including a number of outpatient projects.

I join my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in supporting this legislation so the men and women who fought for our freedom will be provided with the best possible medical care.

Mr. STUMP, Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. EMERSON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. STUMP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3603, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1315

COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION ANTIPIRACY ACT

Mr. COBLE, Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2652) to amend title 17, United States Code, to prevent the misappropriation of collections of information, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2652

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 "Collections of Information Antipiracy Act".

SEC. 2. MISAPPROPRIATION OF COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION.

Title 17, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new chapter:

"CHAPTER 12—MISAPPROPRIATION OF COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION

"Sec.

"1201. Definitions.

"1202. Prohibition against misappropriation.

"1203. Permitted acts.

"1204. Exclusions.

"1205. Relationship to other laws.

"1206. Civil remedies.

"1207. Criminal offenses and penalties.

"1208. Limitations on actions.

"§ 1201. Definitions

"As used in this chapter:

"(1) COLLECTION OF INFORMATION.—The term 'collection of information' means information that has been collected and has been organized for the purpose of bringing discrete items of information together in one place or through one source so that users may access them.

"(2) INFORMATION.—The term 'information' means facts, data, works of authorship, or any other intangible material capable of being collected and organized in a systematic way.

"(3) POTENTIAL MARKET.—The term 'potential market' means any market that a person claiming protection under section 1202 has current and demonstrable plans to exploit or that is commonly exploited by persons offering similar products or services incorporating collections of information.