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## House of Representatives

### UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE MEMORIAL FUND

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Oversight and the Committee on Ways and Means be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 4354) to establish the United States Capitol Police Memorial Fund on behalf of the families of Detective John Michael Gibson and Private First Class Jacob Joseph Chestnut of the United States Capitol Police, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, and of course I will not object, but under my reservation, I would yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS), the chairman of the Committee on House Oversight.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this bill establishes the United States Capitol Police Memorial Fund on behalf of the families of detective John Michael Gibson and Private First Class Jacob Joseph Chestnut.

I want to make sure people understand that this bill establishes by law an official fund in the United States Treasury. Because of that, it is not only permissible, but obviously appropriate, to use official House resources in support of and to solicit contributions to the memorial fund.

In addition to that, the reason the Committee on Ways and Means had jurisdiction over this measure is that those donations to this fund are considered charitable and are, therefore, tax deductible. In addition, there is a provision which says that Federal campaign committees may, in fact, donate funds to the memorial fund.

It is an appropriate gesture, structured in the appropriate way, that it is

a tax deduction and no tax would be levied against it.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding under his reservation.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his explanation.

Mr. Speaker, continuing under my reservation, many of us attended the funeral of Detective Gibson today, and tomorrow morning we will be attending the funeral of Officer Chestnut. It has been a sad week for all of us; in some ways, however, a very proud week as well when we consider the actions of these two brave and courageous men, and indeed, the actions of their colleagues on the Capitol Police Force and other emergency response teams that came to the Capitol to assist our own Capitol Police.

Mr. Speaker, as we drove from the church, there were literally thousands upon thousands of Americans who stood by the curb and watched the procession go by, waved, saluted, placed their hands on their hearts, in recognition of the contribution to their own welfare and the welfare of their country, that these two brave and courageous Americans had performed and the sacrifice they had made.

This will allow all of us, all Americans and indeed others, in a very tangible way to participate in showing to the families of Officer Chestnut and Detective Gibson that our words are not the only thing that we are prepared to raise on their behalf.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for this action.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOYER. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman's words are quite appropriate and timely in terms of the death of these two particular officers.

I do want to underscore that the establishment of this United States Capitol Police Memorial Fund is dedicated

on an even basis to the families of these two gentlemen for a 6-month period. It means that this fund will live beyond these two families' needs, and that it will become a perpetual memorial fund available to the Capitol Police; entirely appropriate for this occasion, but available in the future, unfortunately, if needed. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, obviously I am in strong support, as I know every Member of this House is, of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, continuing my reservation for just a minute, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland for yielding to me.

I would just like to mention at this point, there is another organization that has fulfilled a complementary role. That organization's name is Heroes, Incorporated. They responded immediately with cash assistance to the family and are also prepared to provide scholarship funds, as they have for every police officer killed in the District of Columbia, I think it is over 300 now, and dozens of children are receiving college scholarships as a result of this organization. This is a wonderful fund, and I mean nothing pejorative, and I wholly support it. But I think it might be appropriate to mention the fact that the Heroes also responded in a very generous fashion and deserve some credit for doing that as well.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman for his comments, and I would point out that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the majority whip, when he made his initial presentation, did, in fact, speak directly of Heroes and the wonderful work they had done, not only with respect to their immediate response for these two officers, but the

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work that they had done for so many other officers, and indicated as well that the Hero scholarship is probably the most generous scholarship that is given in America and will ensure that the children of Detective Gibson and Officer Chestnut will not need to worry about their educational expenses.

But I thank the gentleman for his very appropriate remarks.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to temporarily withdraw the bill.

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

There was no objection.

#### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CONVENTION CENTER AND SPORTS ARENA AUTHORIZATION ACT AMENDMENTS

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 4237) to amend the District of Columbia Convention Center and Sports Arena Authorization Act of 1995 to revise the revenues and activities covered under such Act, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the bill, as follows:

H.R. 4237

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

#### SECTION 1. REVENUES AND ACTIVITIES COVERED UNDER WASHINGTON CONVENTION CENTER AND SPORTS ARENA AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1995.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 101 of the District of Columbia Convention Center and Sports Arena Authorization Act of 1995 (DC Code, sec. 47-396.1) is amended by striking subsections (a) and (b) and inserting the following:

"The fourth sentence of section 446 of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act (DC Code, sec. 47-304) shall not apply with respect to the expenditure or obligation of any revenues of the Washington Convention Center Authority for any purpose authorized under the Washington Convention Center Authority Act of 1994 (D.C. Law 10-188)."

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION REGARDING REVENUE BOND REQUIREMENTS UNDER HOME RULE ACT.—Nothing in the District of Columbia Convention Center and Sports Arena Authorization Act of 1995 may be construed to affect the application of section 490 of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act to any revenue bonds, notes, or other obligations issued by the Council of the District of Columbia or by any District instrumentality to which the Council delegates its authority to issue revenue bonds, notes or other obligations under such section.

#### SEC. 2. WAIVER OF CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF WASHINGTON CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY FINANCING AMENDMENT ACT OF 1998.

Notwithstanding section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, the

Washington Convention Center Authority Financing Amendment Act of 1998 (D.C. Act 12-402) shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. DAVIS of Virginia asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4237, which we have just passed, is a bill that permits the District of Columbia to move forward with a financing plan for the purpose of building a new state-of-the-art convention center in downtown Washington.

This bill authorizes the Washington Convention Center Authority, an independent agency, to issue bonds and waive the 30-day waiting period for the D.C. City Council enactment to go into effect. Its passage this evening is important so they can get immediate Senate consideration and be signed by the President, and we can be in the ground and starting construction the 1st of September.

Our subcommittee has followed the effort to build a new convention center in downtown Washington with great interest. We think this is critical for the city to reestablish a tax base in downtown Washington, and working with the MCI Center, we will build, we think, a revitalization of the downtown area.

Over time it is estimated that the situation only gets worse in terms of attracting tourism if we were to go with the existing center. The District of Columbia's existing Convention Center is now only the 30th largest in the country, and it can accommodate only approximately 55 percent of national conventions and exhibition shows. That is a serious blow to the District's economy. A new convention center will provide much needed jobs for the city, and an increase in locally-generated local tax base revenue. It will boost morale for the entire region.

I want to thank the General Accounting Office and the General Services Administration for their respective roles in analyzing the development of the financing plan for the new Washington Convention Center. Their thorough analysis has reinforced our confidence in permitting the District to move forward with this project.

I also want to thank the District's Financial Control Board for their hard work and oversight on the development of this project. The Control Board is empowered to approve or disapprove all city borrowing, and this sign-off of the financial package I think gives everyone more confidence in its viability.

After reviewing information from both the proponents and opponents of the project, our committee has unanimously approved the project, and the Control Board has, in effect, reported to Congress that all aspects of the

project, including borrowing and costs, are compatible with the interests of the District of Columbia. The next step is for Congress to go ahead and pass this bill. Our action this evening is a giant step forward for the District.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

(Mr. MORAN of Virginia asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this legislation that moves the convention center forward for the District of Columbia. Frankly, having a world class convention center in the Washington metropolitan area is something that the entire region needs, and there are suburban jurisdictions that would have loved to have had this center within their jurisdiction. I can say, quite frankly, we had some great sites for it.

But the fact is, it belongs in the center city. Had the business community, the residential community, the political community not gotten their act together they might have lost this, but this is a credit to the fact that there is that kind of symbiotic relationship that is acting in a constructive manner today, particularly the hotel, the restaurant, and the tourism industry.

They deserve this convention center. Most importantly, the people of the District of Columbia deserve this convention center and all the economic benefits it will provide.

I thank the gentleman who chairs the District of Columbia authorizing committee for moving this legislation forward at a rapid pace, and I look forward to the day that we can all go to this convention center and enjoy not only the center itself, but all the economic and social benefits it will bring to this great capital city.

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. I yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank Tracy Cox and Peter Sirh of my staff for the staff work they have done on this.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to amend the D.C. Convention Center and Sports Arena Authorization Act of 1995 in order to enable the Washington Convention Center Authority (Authority) to finance revenue bonds for the cost of constructing a new convention center in downtown D.C. This legislation moves forward the hope and promise of the 1995 legislation for a sports arena and a convention center, twin centerpiece of economic development and jobs in the city and revitalization of downtown in the District. The quick and efficient construction of the MCI Center and the new jobs and revenue the arena has brought to D.C. residents have encouraged the city to complete its work on a convention center, where the need has long been conceded.

In every other city in the United States, this matter would not come before any but the local city council. Unfortunately, unlike every other city, the District does not have legislative