

offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 234.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AMENDING AND EXTENDING IRISH PEACE PROCESS CULTURAL AND TRAINING PROGRAM ACT OF 1998

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2655) to amend and extend the Irish Peace Process Cultural and Training Program Act of 1998, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2655

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

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT AND EXTENSION OF IRISH PEACE PROCESS CULTURAL AND TRAINING PROGRAM.

(a) IRISH PEACE PROCESS CULTURAL AND TRAINING PROGRAM ACT.—

(1) PROGRAM PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS.—Section 2(a) of the Irish Peace Process Cultural and Training Program Act of 1998 (8 U.S.C. 1101 note) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(5) PROGRAM PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS.—An alien entering the United States as a participant in the program shall satisfy the following requirements:

“(A) The alien shall be a citizen of the United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland.

“(B) The alien shall be between 21 and 35 years of age on the date of departure for the United States.

“(C) The alien shall have resided continuously in a designated county for not less than 6 months before such date.

“(D) The alien shall have been continuously unemployed for not less than 6 months before such date.

“(E) The alien may not have a degree from an institution of higher education.”

(2) EXTENSION OF PROGRAM.—Section 2 of the Irish Peace Process Cultural and Training Program Act of 1998 (8 U.S.C. 1101 note) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)(3), by striking “the third program year and for the 4 subsequent years,” and inserting “each program year.”;

(B) by amending subsection (d)(1) to read as follows:

“(1) Effective October 1, 2008, this Act is repealed, except for subsection (a)(3), which is repealed effective October 1, 2009.”; and

(C) in subsection (d)(2), by striking “2006,” and inserting “2008.”

(3) TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.—The Irish Peace Process Cultural and Training Program Act of 1998 (8 U.S.C. 1101 note) is amended—

(A) by striking “Attorney General” each place such term appears and inserting “Secretary of Homeland Security”; and

(B) by striking “Immigration and Naturalization Service” each place such term appears and inserting “Department of Homeland Security”.

(b) IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT.—

(1) REQUIREMENTS FOR NONIMMIGRANT STATUS.—Section 101(a)(15)(Q) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(Q)) is amended—

(A) by striking “Attorney General” each place such term appears and inserting “Secretary of Homeland Security”; and

(B) in clause (ii)(I)—

(i) by striking “35 years of age or younger having a residence” and inserting “citizen of the United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland, 21 to 35 years of age, unemployed for not less than 6 months, and having a residence for not less than 6 months”; and

(ii) by striking “36 months” and inserting “24 months”.

(2) FOREIGN RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT.—Section 212 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182) is amended—

(A) by redesignating the subsection (p) as added by section 1505(f) of Public Law 106-386 (114 Stat. 1526) as subsection (s); and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(t)(i) Except as provided in paragraph (2), no person admitted under section 101(a)(15)(Q)(ii)(I), or acquiring such status after admission, shall be eligible to apply for nonimmigrant status, an immigrant visa, or permanent residence under this Act until it is established that such person has resided and been physically present in the person’s country of nationality or last residence for an aggregate of at least 2 years following departure from the United States.

“(2) The Secretary of Homeland Security may waive the requirement of such 2-year foreign residence abroad if the Secretary determines that—

“(A) departure from the United States would impose exceptional hardship upon the alien’s spouse or child (if such spouse or child is a citizen of the United States or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence); or

“(B) the admission of the alien is in the public interest or the national interest of the United States.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2655, the bill currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2655 would extend the Irish Peace Process Cultural and Training Program for 2 years, from 2006 to 2008. It would also modify the provisions of the program to ensure that those aliens receiving visas are those the program was designed to benefit.

In 1998, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) guided the Irish Peace Process Cultural and Training Program Act to enactment. The purpose of this program is to allow young adults who live in disadvantaged areas of Northern Ireland and designated border counties of the Irish Republic that are suffering from sectarian violence and high unemployment to enter the United States to develop job skills and conflict resolution abilities in a di-

verse, cooperative, peaceful and prosperous environment. They can then return to their homes better able to contribute toward economic regeneration and the Irish peace process.

Up to 4,000 qualifying aliens, and their spouses and minor children, can be admitted each year, and they can stay in the United States for up to 3 years. The program was set to sunset on October 1, 2005. In the 107th Congress, this program was extended until October 1, 2006.

The bill of the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), H.R. 2655, would extend the program for another 2 years until October 1, 2008. It would also make a number of changes to the program to ensure that the aliens granted admission are truly the economically disadvantaged young adults the program was designed to help. These changes include requirements that program participants not have degrees from institutions of higher education; that they be at least 21 years of age; that they be nationals of the United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland; and that they have been unemployed and resident in Northern Ireland or the designated border counties for at least 6 months.

The bill would also make changes to the program to help ensure that the aliens return to Ireland to foster economic development and peace. The bill would reduce the duration of the visa term from 3 years to 2 years, and this change would discourage visa holders from remaining in the United States by reducing the amount of time they would have to establish roots here. The bill would also require that aliens admitted under this program return home for 2 years before they could apply for an immigrant visa, permanent residence, or another non-immigrant visa.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this bill.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in support of H.R. 2655.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2655 amends the Irish Peace Process Cultural and Training Program Act of 1998 to extend through fiscal year 2008. The Irish Peace Process Cultural and Training Program provides for admission into the United States each fiscal year of up to 4,000 young, disadvantaged aliens from designated countries in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. These youths suffer from sectarian violence and high unemployment. This program helps these youth develop job skills and conflict resolution skills in a diverse and peaceful environment so that they can return to their homes better able to contribute toward economic regeneration and a lasting peace in Ireland.

This bill also makes a few changes to the program to ensure that the disadvantaged youth are those who benefit from the program. H.R. 2655 clarifies that a qualifying alien must be a citizen of the United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland. It also clarifies that no qualifying candidate may have a degree from an institution of higher education. All participants in the program must also return home for 2 years, rather than 1, at the conclusion of the visa term.

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

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), who is the principal author of this bill.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time and also for providing for speedy consideration of this bill. The gentleman from Wisconsin takes remarkable interest in all of this legislation, has a thorough understanding of it, and I very much appreciate his interest.

I rise in strong support of the reauthorization of the Northern Ireland Peace Process and Cultural Training Program. A long time ago, as a Peace Corps volunteer in Nepal, I was given the opportunity at a tender young age to broaden my horizons and in a short 2-year period of time step out of my role in traditional American society and immerse myself into a culture that opened my eyes to a new world and new perspective on life. This experience inspired me to help create a similar program that could be applied to those living in Northern Ireland and the border counties.

As chairman of the Friends of Ireland and a member of the Ad Hoc Committee on Irish Affairs, I have traveled annually to Ireland, both with the President and leading my own CODELS, and through these experiences have had a firsthand opportunity to watch the peace process evolve. Through these experiences, I felt a program of this nature could be applied to people on both sides of the conflict.

The program was first enacted by Congress in October of 1998 and is up for reauthorization this year. Since the program's infancy, approximately 1,000 men and women between the ages of 18 and 35 have traveled from disadvantaged areas of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, the border counties bordering Northern Ireland. This program provides unemployed members from different communities, of varying educational level levels and religious backgrounds the opportunity to work in the United States for up to 2 years in our society, a society where it does not matter what religion you practice or what street you live on.

This program creates 4,000 temporary nonimmigrant working visas per year and targets men and women from these disadvantaged areas. Moving forward, we have tailored the program slightly so that it truly applies to disadvantaged people residing in areas of North-

ern Ireland where there are deep pockets of unemployment. This program is not intended or structured to be a work visa program for college graduates looking to gain work experience, but rather a program to give those without an education, without a job, without the skills the opportunity to gain experience and expertise and overall self-confidence before they return.

There have been several questions raised regarding the new unemployment and educational restrictions placed on the applicants. The reasoning behind limiting the program to those without a degree of higher education is to target the truly underprivileged and, more specifically, those susceptible to paramilitary recruitment.

Participants go through an 8-week predeparture training period during which time they research and secure employment in the United States prior to their arrival. As a result, they are gainfully employed before they reach the U.S. The program continues to give participants practical training experience during the time they are here as well as the opportunity to coexist and experience conflict resolution training in a diverse society. Therefore, we have changed the education requirements in order to better target those who deserve to participate in the skills-based opportunity that this program provides.

We have also placed a requirement that the participants must be unemployed for at least 6 months prior to departure to the U.S. In previous years, the requirement was 3 months. Recruiters in Dublin and Belfast ran into a problem when college-level graduates began staying purposefully unemployed for 3 months in order to qualify for the program. Therefore, the 6-month time frame creates a more extreme period in which they must be unemployed. The legislation now states that it is mandatory for the participants to return home for at least 2 years following their stay in the United States.

Politically, the island of Ireland has been relatively stable, and we are seeing positive changes unfold as the peace process continues to work. The results and return rates of the Walsh visa program have been terrific. The program will continue to support this transition by providing new potential leaders with valuable job skills and a demonstrated ability to live and work with people of diverse views.

I hope all members will join me in supporting this low-risk, high-return investment to support the continuing movement towards peace in Northern Ireland. Through programs like this, we will be able to solidify the steps toward a permanent peace.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY).

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Irish Affairs, I am pleased to rise in strong support of the Walsh visa program.

This program helps the truly disadvantaged of Northern Ireland and the six border counties of the Republic of Ireland by allowing them to live and work here in the United States for a short period of time.

While in the United States, these young men and women are given the training they need to become skilled workers. At the completion of this short-term job training program, the participants return to their homeland and put into practice the skills they have learned here in the United States. These skills will help them to build a better life for themselves, a life that they may not have had but for this program and its opportunities.

We are not just discussing job opportunities, but rather life opportunities and the ability to look to a brighter future. We all know the reality that Northern Ireland still faces is a very difficult one. The assembly is still dissolved and the elections look as if they will be further postponed. But this program provides hope to these people for a better future for themselves and their families.

The United States needs to continue this program for the good people of the island of Ireland. I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING).

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I am proud to rise in support of this legislation.

At the outset, Mr. Speaker, let me extend my sincerest thanks and gratitude to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) for the leadership he has shown on this issue and being in the forefront of putting forth the Walsh visas, which have done so much, not just on a very practical level of providing training and opportunity for Catholics and Protestants, Republicans and Loyalists, Nationalists and Unionists from the north of Ireland and also from the border counties on the northern border, but also for making it clear the United States retains a lasting commitment to the peace process in the north of Ireland.

Several years ago, none of us would have thought that we would see the resolution, or almost the resolution, of the centuries-old struggle that has been going on among the Irish and the British and so many of the forces on the island of Ireland. But today we have gone so far. We are approaching what I believe will be the ultimate resolution of the struggle in Northern Ireland. This legislation, providing the Walsh visas, providing economic opportunity, and letting the people in those areas know that the United States remains committed to peace and justice and to the peace process really is worth its weight in gold.

The gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) referred to this as low-risk, high-investment. That could not be more true. This is so important to the

peace process. It is so important, really, to the image of the United States around the world. It is so important to the people who have suffered for so many years on both sides of the divide, on both sides of the border, those who have lived in poverty, those who are struggling to work their way up. This is such an important symbol to them. It also has the practical effect of providing the training they need.

So, Mr. Speaker, with that, I am proud to support it, and I urge its adoption.

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Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL).

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I want to lend my support to the initiative which has been so successful and to point out on the island of Ireland, the dispute represents the longest standing political divide in the history of the Western world. It is most extraordinary; and today in contrast to the turbulence that we witness in the rest of the world, the reach of the United States is so apparent in the successful diplomatic efforts which have occurred in Ireland over this past decade.

I would remind Members it was not that long ago when this issue seemed to defy solution. Today the face of Ireland is changed. I do not know anybody on either side of the border or in either of the two communities that would argue that we ought to return to such a tragic history. Instead, Ireland is a vibrant international economy, the second largest producer of software in the world, a population that is educated as well as any and all of Europe, a people that are confident and in large measure they were willing to take that risk for peace because of the support that was generated in the Congress of the United States by both political parties, two successive administrations who said that this issue deserved the same sort of attention that other international events had reached.

Today, we reap the reward of that success. It has been initiatives like this from the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), and it is a fact that Members on both sides of the aisle meet faithfully and regularly in an effort to demonstrate that America still cares.

Is there a way to go? There certainly is. It is still a long road, but contrast what we have today with what we had just a few years ago, and I think members of the American community as well as other international partners can all take the necessary satisfaction from the success that the world is witnessing, and it is thanks to initiatives like this that have ensured that path forward.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2655 would extend the excellent Irish Peace Process Cultural and Training Program. This program provides employment and vocational training for young people from disadvantaged areas of Northern Ireland and the 6 border counties of the Republic of Ireland. The goal of the program is to help the participants

to develop and enhance their personal and professional skills and then return to their own communities as productive and skilled members of the workforce.

The program has focused on business sectors in which personnel or skills shortages exist in Ireland and Northern Ireland, or where strong future growth and/or new investment is expected. The business sectors include hospitality and tourism; customer service; information and communications technologies; pharmaceuticals; engineering; sales, marketing and promotion; agriculture and horticulture diversification; food processing, and furniture.

The experience this program provides enables the participants to return to their communities better able to contribute to economic regeneration and a lasting peace in Ireland. I urge you to vote for H.R. 2655 to extend the Irish Peace Process Cultural and Training Program.

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2655, legislation reauthorizing the Walsh Visa program. This program provides U.S. work visas to young people from economically disadvantaged communities in Northern Ireland.

The City of Pittsburgh, which I have the honor of representing, is one of the hub cities for the Walsh Visa program. Consequently, I have had the opportunity to see first-hand the impressive accomplishments of this important program.

Nearly 250 young men and women, Protestant and Catholic, have participated in the Walsh Visa Program in Pittsburgh since the city was selected as a hub city for this initiative. This program promotes tolerance in Northern Ireland by bringing unemployed Protestant and Catholic youth from economically disadvantaged areas to work and live together in a vibrant multicultural community. These young people learn first-hand about the benefits of tolerance and diversity as they develop useful job skills and important work habits.

The Walsh Visa program literally transforms the lives of many of its participants, ending their dependence on government hand-outs and returning them to their communities as valuable economic assets—as well as advocates of tolerance and peaceful coexistence in their deeply divided communities. Their new work skills reinforce their status and influence in their communities, and that gives their message of tolerance and peaceful co-existence added weight.

And that brings me to the bigger picture. The Walsh Visa programs doesn't just benefit a few thousand individuals. It also benefits the hundreds of thousands of people in their communities in Northern Ireland.

When these young people go home, they take back much-needed job skills, and they serve as important role models for the other young people in their community—not just in terms of promoting religious tolerance, but also in terms of encouraging participation in the workforce in communities where unemployment has historically been depressingly high and many young people have developed an unhealthy dependency on government welfare programs.

After completing the Walsh Visa Program, one of the Pittsburgh hub participants stated that, having lived and worked in America, she would never consider being without a job again back in Belfast.

The Walsh Visa Program is administered in Pittsburgh by the Ireland Institute, a non-profit

organization which has a mission to promote mutual understanding between the Catholic and Protestant communities in Northern Ireland and job creation throughout all of Ireland.

More than 100 local companies have signed on in support of this program, and thousands of dollars in in-kind contributions have been received from the community. If, as I believe, widespread public support indicates the merit of a government program, then private support for the Walsh Visa Program in Pittsburgh represents a ringing endorsement of this international initiative.

Mr. Speaker, the Walsh Visa Program is helping the people of Northern Ireland move beyond the sectarian strife that has divided them for far too long. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 2655 and reauthorizing this important program.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2655, which would extend and enhance the Walsh Visa Program—a critical effort in the drive for peace in Northern Ireland.

There is still a great deal of work to be done to realize the vision we all share of a peaceful and prosperous Northern Ireland. The Walsh Visa Program is a critical part of this effort, providing disadvantaged young adults from Northern Ireland and border counties with job skills and conflict resolution training in the United States. When they return home, these young people play a positive role in their communities, helping along the economy and the peace process. I cannot stress enough the importance of this program.

H.R. 2655 would extend this vital program for two years and would also ensure that the people who benefit from it are the truly economically disadvantaged young adults the program was designed to help. They come from areas that have been gravely affected by conflict, suffering from intense violence and high levels of unemployment.

As we strive for peace and prosperity in Northern Ireland, we must remember that while leaders may make peace, people make peace flourish. This program would support the everyday people who are the foundation of peace in future generations.

I strongly support H.R. 2655, and I thank my colleague Mr. Walsh for his important contribution to the peace effort.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2655, a bill which establishes a cultural training program for young people from disadvantaged areas in Northern Ireland and other areas in Ireland.

This bill will extend a very successful program for two years, and makes a few other changes which will improve the program.

The changes include requiring that only 20 percent of the program participants may have a higher education degree, that they must be at least 21 years old, and that they must be an unemployed resident for at least 6 months.

One of the main goals of the program is a better educated Irish citizenry. Not only do the participants personally benefit from the program, but because of the improved contributions participants can make, so do the people of Ireland. Participants are required to return home after the program, which fosters economic development and peace. This requirement is waived however, if returning home

would impose certain hardships on a participant or his family, or if it is of national interest to keep the alien here.

When I traveled to Ireland earlier this year, I saw first hand how such a program would help the Irish people. A well-educated society is a successful, productive, and peaceful society.

I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this bill, and am sure that the improvements made by it will benefit not only individuals participating in the program, but also the Irish people.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2655, 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.

AWARDING CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO JACKIE ROBINSON IN RECOGNITION OF HIS MANY CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NATION

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1900) to award a congressional gold medal to Jackie Robinson (posthumously), in recognition of his many contributions to the Nation, and to express the sense of the Congress that there should be a national day in recognition of Jackie Robinson.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1900

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

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

The Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Jackie Roosevelt Robinson was born on January 31, 1919, in Cairo, Georgia, and was the youngest of 5 children.

(2) Jackie Robinson attended the University of California Los Angeles where he starred in football, basketball, baseball, and track. His remarkable skills earned him a reputation as the best athlete in America.

(3) In 1947, Jackie Robinson was signed by the Brooklyn Dodgers and became the first black player to play in Major League Baseball. His signing is considered one of the most significant moments in the history of professional sports in America. For his remarkable performance on the field in his first season, he won the National League's Rookie of the Year Award.

(4) In 1949, Jackie Robinson was voted the National League's Most Valuable Player by the Baseball Writers Association of America.

(5) In 1962, Jackie Robinson was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame.

(6) Although the achievements of Jackie Robinson began with athletics, they widened to have a profound influence on civil and human rights in America.

(7) The signing of Jackie Robinson as the first black player in Major League Baseball occurred before the United States military

was desegregated by President Harry Truman, before the civil rights marches took place in the South, and before the Supreme Court issued its historic ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

(8) The American public came to regard Jackie Robinson as a person of exceptional fortitude, integrity, and athletic ability so rapidly that, by the end of 1947, he finished ahead of President Harry Truman, General Dwight Eisenhower, General Douglas MacArthur, and Bob Hope in a national poll for the most popular person in America, finishing only behind Bing Crosby.

(9) Jackie Robinson was named vice president of Chock Full O' Nuts in 1957 and later co-founded the Freedom National Bank of Harlem.

(10) Leading by example, Jackie Robinson influenced many of the greatest political leaders in America.

(11) Jackie Robinson worked tirelessly with a number of religious and civic organizations to better the lives of all Americans.

(12) The life and principles of Jackie Robinson are the basis of the Jackie Robinson Foundation, which keeps his memory alive by providing children of low-income families with leadership and educational opportunities.

(13) The legacy and personal achievements of Jackie Robinson, as an athlete, a business leader, and a citizen, have had a lasting and positive influence on the advancement of civil rights in the United States.

SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

(a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The President is authorized to present, on behalf of the Congress, to the family of Jackie Robinson, a gold medal of appropriate design in recognition of the many contributions of Jackie Robinson to the Nation.

(b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury (in this Act referred to as the "Secretary") shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary.

SEC. 3. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

Under such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, the Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck under section 2 at a price sufficient to cover the costs of the medals, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

SEC. 4. STATUS AS NATIONAL MEDALS.

The medals struck under this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be charged against the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund an amount not to exceed \$30,000 to pay for the cost of the medal authorized under section 2.

(b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the sale of duplicate bronze medals under section 3 shall be deposited in the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund.

SEC. 6. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of the Congress that—

(1) there should be designated a national day for the purpose of recognizing the accomplishments of Jackie Robinson; and

(2) the President should issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 1900, and to insert extraneous material thereon.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this is a piece of legislation which is long overdue. If there was anyone over the past half century that has warranted the Congressional Gold Medal, it is Jackie Robinson. The reason this legislation is on the floor today, the reason it has advanced this far is because of the efforts of the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL), the man who initiated this legislation, who has worked relentlessly to get the amount of support necessary to bring it to the floor. I commend the gentleman for it, and I thank him for giving me an opportunity to sign onto the bill as the lead cosponsor.

I have a personal interest because as a young kid growing up in New York, Jackie Robinson was certainly one of my heroes. I was a Brooklyn Dodgers fan, I attended many games at Ebbets Field, and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) thinks I fantasize these things, but these are true. As a kid, there is probably no ball player who excited New York in that era more than Jackie Robinson. He really just caused all attention to be focused on himself, both through his ability and also because of his dynamism. The first game I went to, Jackie Robinson scored the winning run in the 10th inning. I saw him play a number of positions. He was on six World Series teams with the Brooklyn Dodgers. He was a major player when they won the World Series in 1955, he was a perennial All-Star in the National League, and he really excelled as a ball player. And after he retired, he was elected to the Hall of Fame.

Of course, he was not just an outstanding ball player; he will go down in history for the fact and what he did in breaking the color barrier in the United States. When he broke into organized baseball in 1946 in the minor leagues and in 1947 in the major leagues with the Brooklyn Dodgers, baseball truly was the national pastime. All attention was focused on organized baseball, and there were no African Americans whatsoever allowed into organized baseball.

When Jackie Robinson broke that barrier, he really broke barriers throughout the country and set an example and a standard that our country has been attempting to live up to ever since.

I mentioned that as a kid I used to follow Jackie Robinson as a ball player. It is only as I became older that I