

Mr. CONAWAY. The Thunderbirds, of course, are the elite performance team for the Air Force; and Nicole was a member of that team in the early nineties. As a female test pilot, no one understands WASP's legacy better than her. As she explained in her letter to me, "I am convinced that every opportunity I've been afforded, from flying combat patrols over Iraq to representing the military as a fellow, is because of these pioneering WASP. Countless servicemen during World War II, and every airman since, have reaped the benefits of their courage, determination, and sacrifice."

It is with great enthusiasm that I ask my colleagues for their support on Senate bill 614 and that we recognize the contribution of these women for their service with our highest congressional award.

I thank you for the time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume for a very brief closing.

Mr. Speaker, the story of the WASP is, without question, among the stories that are rarely, if ever, told. In fact, I have contended and continue to contend it's among the greatest stories never told. But for this reason, we should accord this Congressional Gold Medal. I beg all of my friends to support it if a vote is called for. I shall not call for one.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 614.

This legislation awards a Congressional Gold Medal to the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) in honor of their dedicated service during World War II.

I am a cosponsor of the House version of this bill (H.R. 2014), which recognizes the first women in the history of our country to fly American military aircraft. The Women Airforce Service Pilots volunteered to fly over 60 million miles in every type of aircraft available to them, participating in all missions other than direct combat missions. They towed targets for air-to-air and ground-to-air gunnery practice, ferried planes, transported cargo and personnel, instructed, flew weather missions, and test flew repaired aircraft. They even flew aircraft that male pilots refused to fly.

In spite of their service, the Women Airforce Service Pilots were not given active duty military status and never received any kind of commissioning, rank, or military benefits. In November 1977, Congress narrowly approved legislation to give the WASP the veteran status that they had earned, but they were not invited to the bill signing and received their medals in the mail.

Today we recognize the 1,102 women who trained to serve as Women Airforce Service Pilots, 300 of whom are still living today, including three from my home State of Hawaii: Betty Joiner, Elaine Jones, and Mildred Marshall.

As a result of the heroism exemplified by the Women Airforce Service Pilots, the U.S. Armed Forces lifted the ban on women attending military flight training in the 1970s, and women now fly on every type of aircraft imag-

inable, from combat fighter aircraft to space shuttles. This legislation at long last commemorates their service to our country.

I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support S. 614, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the Women Airforce Service Pilots, and to honor all the Women Airforce Service Pilots, or WASP, especially three who live in Lancaster, California in my district. Flora Belle Reece, Irma "Babe" Story, and Marguerite "Ty" Killen are perfect examples of why this intrepid group of women deserve the honor they are receiving today.

I was privileged to join the Mojave Chamber of Commerce in honoring these three women at a special May 11th luncheon. It was a pleasure to recognize these three amazing pilots who dedicated themselves to a dangerous mission when their country needed them.

Flora Belle Reece learned to fly before she could drive so she could join the WASP. Reece primarily flew the AT-6, but also the PT-19, PT-17, BT-13, and B-26, and she often tested aircraft that had been repaired. She was assigned to Foster Field, Texas, and there she discovered an affinity for the P-38 Lightning, often visiting with the aircraft's crew chief; she was able to fly in one in 2004 during a commemorative flight.

Irma "Babe" Story grew up in the Antelope Valley with her brother, Tom, hanging out at the local airport running errands, and eventually learning to fly at Antelope Valley College. Story received her pilot's license at the age of 19 in June 1941, and worked at Lockheed's Vega aircraft factory in Burbank until joining the WASP program in 1943. She flew the AT-6 and Cessna UC-78, and later the B-26.

Marguerite "Ty" Killen learned to fly as a 15-year-old in high school and received her commercial and flight instructor ratings when she was 19. Killen was a student at the University of Arizona when she found out that the WASP age requirement was dropped to 19, and so she signed up for WASP training and graduated in August 1944. She flew a variety of aircraft, including the Stearman PT-17, AT-6 advanced trainer, Beechcraft AT-11, the Vultee BT-13, and was a copilot in a B-24.

These women, and all those who stepped up to serve when their country needed them, are deserving of our thanks and admiration. I am pleased to support this legislation to recognize their efforts with a Congressional Gold Medal.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 614, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the Women Airforce Service Pilots of World War II.

As an original cosponsor of a similar measure in the House, I would like to give special recognition to Betty Cozzens, one of my constituents from Cody—and one of the 300 remaining Women Airforce Service Pilots.

We all owe these heroic women a debt of gratitude. In the 16 months that the Women Airforce Service Pilots existed, over 1,000 of them served their country with pride.

The Congressional Gold Medal is one of the most distinguished forms of recognition that Congress can bestow. It is an expression of public gratitude on behalf of the nation—to these women, for their service in a time of need.

The Women Airforce Service Pilots forged reform in the U.S. Armed Forces in regard to

women in service, flying on every type of assignment flown by the male Army Air Forces pilots, except combat. I would like to express my gratitude to Betty and her fellow pilots for their trailblazing service, being the first women in history to fly American military aircraft.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 614.

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.

#### RECOGNIZING 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF NATIONAL EYE INSTITUTE

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 366) recognizing the 40th anniversary of the National Eye Institute (NEI) and expressing support for designation of 2010 through 2020 as the "Decade of Vision".

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 366

Whereas vision impairment and eye disease is a major public health problem, especially due to the aging of the population, a disproportionate incidence of eye disease in minority populations, and vision loss as a result of diabetes and other chronic diseases, which costs the Nation \$68,000,000,000 annually in health care costs, lost productivity, reduced independence, diminished quality of life, increased depression, and accelerated mortality;

Whereas 38,000,000 people in the United States age 40-plus currently experience blindness, low-vision, or an age-related eye disease, and this number is expected to grow to 50,000,000 by 2020, a year mid-way in the tidal wave of 78,000,000 baby boomers who will begin turning age 65 in 2010, and many of whom will continue working well beyond age 65;

Whereas, in public opinion polls over the past 40 years, people in the United States have consistently identified fear of vision loss as second only to fear of cancer and, as recently as a 2008 NEI study, 71 percent of respondents indicated that a loss of their eyesight would have the greatest impact on their life;

Whereas, with wisdom and foresight, Congress passed the National Eye Institute (NEI) Act (Public Law 90-489), which was signed into law by President Johnson on August 16, 1968, with the NEI holding the first meeting of its National Advisory Eye Council (NAEC) on April 3, 1969;

Whereas the NEI leads the Nation's Federal commitment to basic and clinical research, research training, and other programs with respect to blinding eye diseases, visual disorders, mechanisms of visual function, preservation of sight and the special health problems and needs of individuals who are visually-impaired or blind, and to disseminate information aimed at the prevention of blindness, specifically with public and professional education facilitated through its National Eye Health Education Program (NEHEP);

Whereas the NEI maximizes Federal funding by devoting 85 percent of its budget to

extramural research that addresses the breadth of eye and vision disorders, including “back of the eye” retinal and optic nerve disease, such as age-related macular degeneration (AMD), glaucoma, and diabetic retinopathy, and concomitant low vision, and “front of the eye” disease, including corneal, lens, cataract, and refractive errors;

Whereas the NEI research benefits children, including premature infants born with retinopathy and school children with amblyopia (“lazy eye”);

Whereas the NEI benefits older citizens in the United States by predicting, preventing, and preempting aging eye disease, thereby enabling more productive lives and reducing Medicare costs;

Whereas the NEI has been a leader in basic research, working with the NIH’s Human Genome Project to translate discoveries of genes related to eye disease and vision impairment, which comprises one quarter of genes discovered to date, into diagnostic and treatment modalities;

Whereas the NEI has been a leader in clinical research, funding more than 60 clinical trials, including a series of Diabetic Retinopathy Clinical Trials Networks, in association with the National Institute for Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disorders (NIDDK), which have developed treatment strategies that have been determined by the NEI to be 90 percent effective and save an estimated \$1,600,000,000 per year in blindness and vision impairment disability costs;

Whereas the NEI has been a leader in prevention research, having reported from the first phase of its Age-Related Eye Disease Study (AREDS) that high levels of dietary zinc and anti-oxidant vitamins reduced vision loss in individuals at high risk for developing advanced AMD by a magnitude of 25 percent, and in its second phase, is now studying the impact of other nutritional supplements;

Whereas the NEI has been a leader in epidemiologic research, identifying the basis and progression of eye disease and its disproportionate incidence in minority populations such that informed public health policy decisions can be made regarding prevention, early diagnosis, and treatment;

Whereas the NEI has been a leader in collaborative, trans-NIH Institute research, working with the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) on factors that promote or inhibit new blood vessel growth that has resulted in the first generation of Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved ophthalmic drugs to inhibit abnormal blood vessel growth in the “wet” form of AMD, thereby stabilizing and often restoring vision;

Whereas the NEI has been a leader in collaborative research with other Federal entities, such that its bioengineering research partnership with the National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy has resulted in a retinal chip implant, referred to as the “Bionic Eye”, that has enabled individuals who have been blind for decades to perceive visual images;

Whereas the NEI has been a leader in collaborative research with private funding entities, such that its human gene therapy trial with the Foundation Fighting Blindness for individuals with Leber Congenital Amaurosis (LCA), a rapid retinal degeneration that blinds infants in their first year of life, has demonstrated measurable vision improvement even within the initial safety trials;

Whereas in the decade 2010 through 2020, the Nation will face unprecedented public health challenges associated with aging, health disparities, and chronic disease; and

Whereas Federal support at the NEI and related Department of Health and Human Services agencies is essential for the prevention and early detection, access to treatment and rehabilitation, and research associated with vision impairment and eye disease: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the 40th anniversary of the National Eye Institute (NEI), commends it for its leadership, and supports its mission to prevent blindness and to save and restore vision;

(2) supports the designation of the “Decade of Vision” to maintain a sustained awareness in the next decade of the unprecedented public health challenges associated with vision impairment and eye disease and to emphasize the need for Federal support for prevention and early detection, access to treatment and rehabilitation, and research; and

(3) commends the National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (NAEVR), which serves as the “Friends of the National Eye Institute”, for its efforts to expand awareness of the incidence and economic burden of eye disease through its Decade of Vision 2010–2020 Initiative.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wisconsin.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

This resolution recognizes the 40th anniversary of the National Eye Institute within the National Institutes of Health and designates the years 2010 through 2020 as the Decade of Vision.

Eye disease is a significant public health problem. Those disproportionately affected by eye disease are our aging population, the African American and Hispanic communities, and those who suffer from chronic diseases, especially diabetes. The National Eye Institute estimates that eye disease and vision impairment currently cost the Nation \$68 billion in health care costs, lost productivity, reduced independence, diminished quality of life, and accelerated mortality.

The NEI leads our Nation’s efforts to prevent blindness and to save and restore vision. The NEI has been a leader in both basic and translational research. Its researchers have been able to associate one-quarter of all genes discovered to date with eye disease and vision impairment. The NEI has conducted more than 60 clinical trials that have resulted in treatments and therapies to save sight and, in some cases, actually reverse vision loss.

The National Eye Institute estimates that over the decade of 2010 to 2020, the number of individuals over age 40 who

experience blindness, low vision or age-related eye disease, such as age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy and cataracts, will grow from today’s level of 38 million cases to 50 million cases. As a result, the National Eye Institute’s leadership, in directing vital vision research over the next decade, will be more important than ever.

I have been pleased to work on this resolution with my coauthor Mr. SESSIONS of Texas. He has been a terrific coauthor and has worked very hard with me to bring this matter to the floor and to the attention of this Congress. I commend this resolution to my colleagues.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the gentlewoman’s amendment. I want to thank TAMMY BALDWIN from Wisconsin for not only working with me but also other members of my conference, the Republican Conference, on important issues related to eye and retinal health. I appreciate her recognizing today as the 40th anniversary of the National Eye Institute, H. Res. 366. Also I appreciate her dedication to people that are suffering with retinal and eye diseases; and these visions issues that we speak about today, as a result of our support and the support of the National Eye Institute, make a difference to thousands of people who have these eye diseases in their families.

I am very proud of this resolution. Last Congress we, meaning Ms. BALDWIN and I, joined together in support of National Glaucoma Day, and today we’re here to recognize the 40th anniversary of the National Eye Institute and to express support for the designation of 2010 through 2020 as the Decade of Vision.

The National Eye Institute, also known as NEI, was established by Congress in 1968 to protect and prolong the vision of the American people. NEI research leads to sight-saving treatments, reduces visual impairment and blindness, and improves the quality of life of people of all ages.

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Vision research has been supported through the NEI by over 600 research grants and training awards made to scientists at more than 250 medical centers, hospitals, universities, and other institutions across the country and around the world. With congressional and public support, the national investment in vision research has yielded substantial dividends to treat many potentially blinding eye diseases and visual disorders.

Vision impairment and eye disease is a major public health problem for the world to face. As you have heard, vision-related costs here in the United States approach \$68 billion annually. There are some 38 million people in the United States over the age of 40 currently experiencing blindness, low vision, or age-related eye disease. This

number is estimated to increase to 50 million people by 2020.

NEI benefits children born with eye diseases and vision loss, as well as older citizens and everyone else that fits in between. NEI actively works to predict, prevent, and preempt aging eye disease and visual impairment thereby enabling more productive lives and reducing vision costs.

The National Eye Institute is the world leader in basic research with the National Institutes of Health's Human Genome Project to translate discoveries of genes related to eye disease and vision impairment which compromises one-quarter of genes, discovered to date, into diagnostic and treatment modalities.

The NEI has been a leader in collaborative research with so many private funding entities such as the human gene therapy trial with the Foundation Fighting Blindness, or this lead organization known as FFB, for individuals with Leber congenital amaurosis, a rapid retinal degeneration that blinds infants in their first year of life. This trial has demonstrated measurable visual improvement even with initial safety trials.

I am a big supporter of the Foundation Fighting Blindness, and the work that they have done in the past continues to carry out in our daily lives. This resolution recognizes the 40 years of service from the National Eye Institute and commends them for their leadership while supporting their mission to prevent blindness and save and restore vision.

Additionally, this resolution designates 2010 through 2020 as the "Decade of Vision" to maintain awareness in the next decade of public health challenges associated with vision impairment and eye disease, as well as to emphasize the need for prevention and early detection, access to treatment, and rehabilitation.

Lastly, we commend the National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research for its efforts to expand awareness of the incidence and economic burden of eye diseases through this Decade of Vision initiative.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of supporting not only this 40th anniversary but also to say that the United States Congress has what I believe is a realistic opportunity to work with the National Institutes of Health to make sure that we continue to push the envelope for people who are in this country and around the world who are counting on research and development to cure blindness during this Decade of Vision. I encourage all of my colleagues to vote in favor of this resolution.

I thank the gentlewoman from Wisconsin for her concentrated and special support of blindness issues. I look forward to working with her.

I yield back the balance of my time. Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I would now like to yield 3 minutes to a fellow member of the Energy and Commerce Committee and a champion of vision issues, Mr. GREEN of Texas.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. I would like to thank my colleague, who is a diligent and hardworking member of our Energy and Commerce Committee, for sponsoring H.R. 366, celebrating the Decade of Vision and the National Eye Alliance's 40th anniversary.

As co-Chair of the Congressional Vision Caucus with a particular interest in vision health, I strongly support the National Eye Institute, which serves as the lead NIH institute that manages our Nation's commitment to save and restore vision.

NEI research has contributed to the development of several critical therapies and interventions that are helping to slow the progression of vision impairment. In some cases, these therapies are helping to restore sight for individuals who may otherwise have lost their vision. Treatments for diabetic retinopathy that were developed by NEI researchers save our health care system more than \$1.6 billion annually. Other NEI-funded research is resulting in treatments and therapies that are slowing the progression of vision impairment; in some cases, vision loss is even restored.

Starting next year, the first wave of the 78 million baby boomers will begin turning 65 years old, an age of elevated risk for aging eye disease. Coupled with the disproportionate incidences of eye disease in the African American and Hispanic populations and the increased incidence of diabetic eye disease, the NEI will be challenged more than ever to fund basic and clinical research that results in treatment and therapies.

As demonstrated by its past history, I am confident that the NEI will rise to this challenge, and, of course, we in Congress must work to ensure that it is adequately funded so that it can continue its research that benefits the health—and vision health—of all Americans.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I want to close by recognizing just a few of the champions of eye health and the warriors against eye disease from the district that I have the privilege of representing. And I know, like my co-author, Congressman SESSIONS, we were drawn to this issue because of pioneering things that are happening in each of our respective districts.

Dr. Paul Kaufman is a leading eye researcher at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and a major partner of the National Eye Institute. And I want to commend and recognize his groundbreaking research.

Also, a technology called BrainPort is being developed in my district by a company called Wicab with the support of National Eye Institute funding, and this technology is helping the blind to find new ways to process visual information. These sort-of breakthroughs are so exciting and really go back to the importance of celebrating the accomplishments to date and the future potential through the National Eye Institute with our support.

Again, I commend my colleagues' support of this resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 366.

The question was taken. The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed. Votes will be taken in the following order:

- H.R. 2470, by the yeas and nays;
- H.R. 780, by the yeas and nays;
- H.R. 2247, by the yeas and nays;
- H.R. 403, de novo.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER ROY H. BOEHM POST OFFICE BUILDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2470, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2470.

This will be a 15-minute vote. The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 417, nays 0, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 340]  
YEAS—417

Abercrombie	Bishop (GA)	Burgess
Ackerman	Bishop (NY)	Burton (IN)
Aderholt	Bishop (UT)	Butterfield
Adler (NJ)	Blackburn	Buyer
Akin	Blumenauer	Calvert
Altmire	Blunt	Camp
Andrews	Bocchieri	Campbell
Arcuri	Boehner	Cantor
Austria	Bono Mack	Cao
Baca	Boozman	Capito
Bachmann	Boren	Capps
Bachus	Boswell	Capuano
Baird	Boucher	Cardoza
Baldwin	Boustany	Carnahan
Barrett (SC)	Boyd	Carney
Barrow	Brady (PA)	Carson (IN)
Bartlett	Brady (TX)	Carter
Barton (TX)	Braley (IA)	Cassidy
Bean	Bright	Castle
Becerra	Broun (GA)	Castor (FL)
Berman	Brown (SC)	Chaffetz
Berry	Brown, Corrine	Chandler
Biggert	Brown-Waite,	Childers
Bilbray	Ginny	Clarke
Bilirakis	Buchanan	Clay