

MARKUP ON: H.R. 1670, THE NATIONAL POW/MIA REMEMBRANCE ACT OF 2015

MARKUP BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS FIRST SESSION

Held in Washington, DC, December 2, 2015

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2015

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION,
Washington, DC.

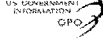
The Committee met, pursuant to call, at 11:05 a.m., in Room 1310, Longworth House Office Building, Hon. Candice S. Miller [chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Miller, Harper, Nugent, Davis, Comstock, Walker, Brady, Lofgren, and Vargas.

Staff Present: Sean Moran, Staff Director; John Clocker, Deputy Staff Director; Bob Sensenbrenner, Deputy General Counsel; John L. Dickhaus, Legislative Clerk; Erin McCracken, Communications Director; Reynold Schweickhardt, Director of Technology Policy; Brad D. Walvort, Professional Staff Member; Edward J. Puccerella, Professional Staff Member; Jamie Fleet, Minority Staff Director; Matt Pinkus, Minority Senior Policy Advisor; Khalil Abboud, Minority Deputy Staff Director/Director of Legislative Operations; Mike Harrison, Minority Chief Counsel; and Eddie Flaherty, Minority Chief Clerk.

The CHAIRMAN. I now call to order the Committee on House Administration for today's Committee markup. We do have a quorum, so we can proceed. I would note that the meeting record will remain open for 5 legislative days so that members might submit any materials that they wish to be included therein.

[The information follows:]



114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1670

To direct the Architect of the Capitol to place in the United States Capitol
a chair honoring American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 26, 2015

Mr. LYNCH (for himself, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. JOLLY, Mr. JONES, Mr. KEATING, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. LANCE, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, and Ms. TSONGAS) introduced the following bill, which was referred to the Committee on House Administration

A BILL

To direct the Architect of the Capitol to place in the United
States Capitol a chair honoring American Prisoners of
War/Missing in Action.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

4 This Act may be cited as the “National POW/MIA
5 Remembrance Act of 2015”.

6 SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) In recent years, commemorative chairs hon-
2 oring American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action
3 have been placed in prominent locations across the
4 United States.

5 (2) The United States Capitol is an appropriate
6 location to place a commemorative chair honoring
7 American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action.

8 **SEC. 3. PLACEMENT OF A CHAIR IN UNITED STATES CAP-**
9 **ITOL HONORING AMERICAN PRISONERS OF**
10 **WAR/MISSING IN ACTION.**

11 (a) **OBTAINING CHAIR.**—The Architect of the Capitol
12 shall enter into an agreement to obtain a chair featuring
13 the logo of the National League of POW/MIA Families
14 under such terms and conditions as the Architect con-
15 sidered appropriate and consistent with applicable law.

16 (b) **PLACEMENT.**—Not later than 2 years after the
17 date of enactment of this Act, the Architect shall place
18 the chair obtained under subsection (a) in a suitable per-
19 manent location in the United States Capitol.

20 **SEC. 4. FUNDING.**

21 (a) **DONATIONS.**—The Architect of the Capitol
22 may—

23 (1) enter into an agreement with any organiza-
24 tion described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal
25 Revenue Code of 1986 that is exempt from taxation

1 under section 501(a) of that Code to solicit private
2 donations to carry out the purposes of this Act; and

3 (2) accept donations of funds, property, and
4 services to carry out the purposes of this Act.

5 (b) COSTS.—All costs incurred in carrying out the
6 purposes of this Act shall be paid for with private dona-
7 tions received under subsection (a).

The CHAIRMAN. The measure before the Committee today is to direct the Architect of the Capitol to obtain a chair featuring the logo of the National League of POW/MIA Families and to prominently place it on display in the U.S. Capitol. This measure, which was introduced by Representative Steve Lynch of Massachusetts, we think would be an extremely powerful symbol in our Nation's Capital honoring American prisoners of war and Americans missing in action.

As Members of Congress, obviously, we each represent districts where so many brave men and women went off to stand on the battle lines in defense of our Nation's freedom, our liberty, our way of life. The importance of remembering and honoring their great sacrifice can never ever be overstated. Our Nation has a responsibility to them and to their families who have shared in their sacrifice and we must never forget.

This chair will serve as the permanent reminder of the enormous sacrifice made by those who served our country and were taken as POWs or listed as MIA. They deserve to be honored, they need to be honored in the U.S. Capitol, which is a symbol itself of our American beliefs and the liberties and freedoms they sacrificed to defend.

I would just say for me personally, when I would look at a chair like that I would think about a fellow who lives in my district. His name is Donald, but we call him Digger, Digger O'Dell. He is now in his eighties, but he served 5½ years in the Hanoi Hilton, the infamous Hanoi Hilton. Of course, there were 123 of those guys. Another one of them is our colleague, Sam Johnson.

Thankfully, Digger made it home, as Sam did, after all those years in a North Vietnam camp, and today he serves as a member of our local air base community council. He chairs a fundraising event for Special Olympics. He is just a remarkable fellow, but he is just one of many who selflessly serving our Nation faced enormous adversity.

So I think it is just very important that we, especially here in our Nation's Capital, remember their stories and their sacrifice for our great country.

And with that, I would now recognize my colleague, the Committee's ranking member, Mr. Brady, for the purpose of an opening statement.

Mr. BRADY. Thank you, Madam Chairman. Thank you for considering this measure today.

Advancing this legislation brings us one step closer to giving American POWs and MIAs the honor that they do deserve. In the Philadelphia area, chairs have been placed at many of our sports venues and local city halls. And just a few weeks ago, the Philadelphia Eagles recognized this effort during halftime at one of our home games. By placing a chair like this in the Nation's Capital, we will send a message to those servicemembers and their families that we will never forget their sacrifice.

I would like to thank many of my constituents who brought this issue to our attention, and I urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank the gentleman.

Would any member like to offer an amendment to this bill?

Ms. LOFGREN. Madam Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Ms. LOFGREN. I would like to move to strike the last word. I am not going to offer an amendment, although I was thinking about whether we might somehow involve the one prisoner of war that we have in our House, Sam Johnson. I don't know, putting his name on it might involve disrespect for others, so I didn't want to make that amendment. But I would like us all to think how we might involve honoring Sam as part of this process.

The CHAIRMAN. Absolutely, yes, absolutely. Good suggestion. I am sure that we will incorporate Sam in any way and every way that we can in an appropriate way for recognizing his service as well.

Any other member like to offer an amendment?

Then I move that the Committee favorably report the bill. The question is on the motion to favorably report to the House the bill.

All members in favor, signify by saying aye.

Opposed, say nay.

In the opinion of the chair, the ayes have it, the ayes have it.

Without objection, the motion to reconsider is laid upon the table. I would also ask unanimous consent that the staff be authorized to make any technical and conforming changes to the measure the Committee just considered and to make other modifications with the concurrence of the ranking minority member of the Committee and notification to all members of the Committee.

Without objection, so ordered.

That will conclude today's markup.

[Whereupon, at 11:10 a.m., the Committee was adjourned.]