

Mr. Speaker, this is not a complicated bill. It is very simple. It is basically saying that, for the first time in more than 40 years, that we are not going to spend the surplus, whatever that surplus is. That is, in Medicare and Social Security, we are not going to spend it. Very simply, whatever it is, we are not going to spend. It brings about a point of order to ensure that we do not.

Look how far we have come. It was only a few years ago that we were looking at deficits of \$200 billion and \$300 billion, and that did not even include the surplus of Social Security or Medicare. Then a few years ago, we were reporting \$80 billion, \$90 billion, \$100 billion surpluses; but that did include, I am afraid, Medicare and Social Security.

But guess what, those surpluses were only half true. Every penny of those surplus dollars were really Social Security dollars. So what did we do? We passed a Social Security lock box last year that said that we would not spend any of the surplus of Social Security, and that passed. Now Congress and the President speak of budget surpluses without Social Security being included in it. This amount is estimated to be \$40 billion this year.

Now we are raising the bar one notch higher. We are saying that we are now going to stop raiding Medicare, just as we stopped raiding Social Security last year. What we are doing is ensuring that Social Security recipients deserve to know that their Medicare dollars are not being spent on anything else except Medicare.

This bill is a win-win. It is a win for fiscal discipline. It is a win for Medicare. Most importantly, it is a win for our seniors.

I urge all my colleagues to support this Medicare and Social Security lock box.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, it is common knowledge that most of today's American families can no longer live comfortably on one sole income, in fact, most households depend on at least two incomes, and as if that wasn't enough, today's American employees average more hours at work than employees from other nations.

It is crystal clear that Americans work hard for their paychecks, which is why it is disheartening to know that when a significant percentage of their hard earned money is involuntarily removed for a Medicare fund, our government will use it as a slush fund to operate completely unrelated programs from which our seniors will never benefit.

Our nation's population is rapidly aging and in response to this, Congress must make the protection of Medicare dollars a high priority in order to deliver healthcare for seniors.

Our seniors deserve the health care benefits they were promised.

Our seniors need to know that they will receive adequate healthcare when they need it most.

They need not be terrified, as many are, about whether their doctor visits, treatments and even prescriptions will be covered.

Today, the House of Representatives hopes to put seniors' worries at ease as we will vote

on H.R. 3859, the Social Security and Medicare Safe Deposit Box Act.

I thank my colleague, Congressman WALLY HERGER for creating this legislation which will reserve Medicare surplus dollars only for responsible debt reduction or spending on the Medicare program.

Soon after today's vote, seniors will no longer need to fear that the money set aside for their Medicare and well being will be used as a big government slush fund.

Similarly to the Social Security lock box which passed by a vote of 417-2 last year, this Medicare lock box is the right thing to do; the responsible thing to do.

Today's vote is the first step in ensuring our nation's seniors that they will no longer need to fear about whether they will be taken care of in their old age.

Today, Congress will make history because today we begin the guarantee of security in healthcare for our senior citizens.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3859, the Social Security and Medicare Safe Deposit Box Act of 2000, and urge my colleagues to join in support of this bill.

H.R. 3859 amends the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to protect the net surplus of the Medicare Part A or Social Security trust funds by moving them "off budget." Specifically, they may not be counted as part of the overall federal surplus by either the President or the Congress. The bill further amends the Budget Act of 1974 to allow a point of order to protect Social Security surpluses in both the House and Senate from legislation whose enactment would either cause or increase an on-budget deficit for a fiscal year, with the exception of Social Security reform legislation.

Moreover, H.R. 3859 also makes it out of order for either chamber to consider any measure whose enactment would cause the on-budget surplus for a fiscal year to be less than the projected surplus of the federal hospital insurance trust fund for that fiscal year. This provision makes an exception for Medicare reform legislation.

Finally, H.R. 3859 requires that any statement or official estimate issued by the Congressional Budget Office or the Office of Management and Budget must exclude any surplus in the Social Security trust fund when issuing totals of the surplus or deficit of the United States Government. The legislation applies to fiscal year 2001 and future years.

Mr. Speaker, the Congress has made significant strides in the past three years with regards to ending the practice of raiding the Social Security Trust Fund to mask the true size of the Federal outlays. This legislation will ensure that our practice of fiscal restraint will continue.

By approving this bill, the House will demonstrate to the American people its commitment to protecting the long term solvency of both the Social Security and Medicare systems. For that reason, I urge my colleagues to lend it their strong support.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3859, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. HERGER. 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.

□ 1500

CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO ASTRONAUTS NEIL A. ARMSTRONG, BUZZ ALDRIN, AND MICHAEL COLLINS.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2815) to present a congressional gold medal to astronauts Neil A. Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins, the crew of Apollo 11.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2815

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

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) Astronaut Neil A. Armstrong, as commander of Apollo 11, achieved the historic accomplishment of piloting the Lunar Module "Eagle" to the surface of the Moon, and became the first person to walk upon the Moon on July 20, 1969.

(2) Astronaut Buzz Aldrin joined Neil A. Armstrong in piloting the Lunar Module "Eagle" to the surface of the Moon, and became the second person to walk upon the Moon on July 20, 1969.

(3) Astronaut Michael Collins provided critical assistance to his fellow astronauts that landed on the Moon by piloting the Command Module "Columbia" in the Moon's orbit and communicating with Earth, thereby allowing his fellow Apollo 11 astronauts to successfully complete their mission on the surface of the Moon.

(4) By conquering the Moon at great personal risk to their safety, the three Apollo 11 astronauts advanced America scientifically and technologically, paving the way for future missions to other regions in space.

(5) The Apollo 11 astronauts, by and through their historic feat, united the country in favor of continued space exploration and research.

SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

(a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The President is authorized to present, on behalf of the Congress, gold medals of appropriate design to astronauts Neil A. Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins, in recognition of their monumental and unprecedented feat of space exploration, as well as their achievements in the advancement of science and promotion of the space program.

(b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purpose of the presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury (hereafter 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. NATIONAL MEDALS.

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

SEC. 5. 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.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAFALCE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS).

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

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

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, on a clear sunny Wednesday in July 1969, the first human journey to the surface of the moon began at Launch Complex 39 of the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. With the liftoff of Apollo 11, Commander Neil Armstrong, Commander Module Pilot Michael Collins, and Buzz Aldrin were about to make history.

These three men accomplished what others had been dreaming about for centuries and what President John F. Kennedy declared was a national priority during the height of the Cold War. In response to the Soviet Union's stunning surprise with the first manned flight into space, the Americans astonished the world by surpassing the Soviet Union's space program in a few short years. This accomplishment demonstrates the greatness of the American spirit, one based on free enterprise, determination and patriotism.

Mr. Speaker, we should have honored these three men years ago. It has been over 30 years ago since this accomplishment.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROGAN), and I want to commend him at this time as the sponsor, the originator, of this legislation to honor the Apollo 11 astronauts. I would like to thank him on behalf of the entire House for bringing this legislation forward.

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank first my good friend from Alabama, the distinguished subcommittee chair, for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I was 11 years old on July 20, 1969. For anybody of my generation, particularly who was a young person on that date, and who can remember, as I do, sitting in front of a somewhat flickering black and white television to see the grainy image of a human being coming down the ladder of the lunar module and setting foot on the moon, that was an incredible moment, not just in our Nation's history but in the history of all mankind. Because Americans were the ones to first do what people for generations and for centuries and for a millennia had merely dreamed about: Setting foot on the surface of another celestial body.

As the distinguished subcommittee chairman noted, this is about 30 years too late. The Congress of the United

States, in 1969, should have taken the step of awarding these three heroes, these three explorers, these three great patriots Congress' highest award, the Congressional Gold Medal, and the time has come to recognize these three extraordinary individuals, Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins with this honor. Together, these three pioneers propelled America ahead in the space race. They united a country and a Nation and a world torn in conflict, and inspired future generations to continue the pursuit of space exploration.

Who were these men that did this monumental feat? Neil Armstrong was born on August 5, 1930 in Wapakoneta, Ohio. He received his bachelor's degree in aeronautical engineering at Purdue and a master's degree at USC.

Neil made seven flights in the X-15 program, reaching an altitude of over 207,500 feet. He was then the backup command pilot for Gemini 5. He was the command pilot for Gemini 8. He was the backup command pilot for Gemini 11 and the backup commander for Apollo 8. And, finally, the reason we are here today, he was the commander of the epic Apollo 11 flight on that day in July, 1969.

Following the mission, Neil worked as Deputy Associate Administrator for Aeronautics at NASA. He then became professor of aeronautical engineering at the University of Cincinnati. He served on the National Commission on Space from 1985 to 1986, and on the Presidential Commission on the Space Shuttle Challenger Accident in 1986.

Buzz Aldrin, the second man to walk on the moon, was born in 1930 in Montclair, New Jersey. He received his bachelor's degree at the U.S. Military Academy in 1951 and a Ph.D. in astronautics at MIT in 1963. Buzz's study of astronautics contributed to the perfection of space walking.

His spaceflights included also piloting a Gemini 12 mission in 1966, and piloting the Apollo 11 lunar module in 1969. Buzz was backup pilot for Gemini 9 and backup command module pilot for Apollo 8.

He resigned from NASA in 1971 to become Commandant of the Aerospace Research Pilot's School at Edwards Air Force Base.

Buzz retired from the Air Force in 1972 and became a consultant. Currently he resides in Southern California and lectures and consults on space sciences with Starcraft Enterprises. He has authored two books, *Return to Earth* and *Men From Earth*.

The third member of that historic mission, Michael Collins, was born in 1930 in Rome, Italy. He received his bachelor's degree at the U.S. Military Academy in 1952.

He piloted the Gemini 10 space flight in 1966. He served as a command module pilot for Apollo 11 in July 1969. Mike also served as backup pilot for Gemini 7 and pilot for Gemini 10. He had been assigned to Apollo 8 but was removed to undergo surgery.

He resigned from NASA in 1970 and was appointed Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs. In 1971, he became Director of the National Air and Space Museum here in Washington, and became Under Secretary of the Smithsonian in April 1978.

Mike retired from the Air Force with the rank of Major General. He later became vice president of the Vought Corporation. He currently heads Michael Collins Associates, a Washington, D.C. consulting firm.

Mr. Speaker, I never dreamed that 31 years ago, as a young boy watching that flickering screen at my Great Aunt Della's house, that I would have the incredible privilege of serving as a Member of this body and sponsoring legislation for our Nation and our Congress to recognize the contribution of these three great heroes. They are Columbus, Galileo, and Lindbergh all rolled into three, the three pilots of Apollo 11. They served our country, they served the cause of peace, and the spinoffs in technology that emanated from that massive Apollo program are being felt every day today in our country, in biotech, in medicine, in health care, in computers. The list goes on and on.

We owe it all to the men and women who put their time and their efforts and their belief into our space program, and that is symbolized in the person of the three men who boarded Apollo 11 on that day, almost 31 years ago, soared off into space, and did as Neil Armstrong proudly proclaimed from the moon, made one small step for man and one giant leap for mankind.

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

Mr. Speaker, today the House of Representatives would honor with a Congressional Gold Medal to three American heroes, Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins, the crew of Apollo 11. Together, these three astronauts conquered territory that countless generations of astronomers and philosophers gazed at from afar but considered unconquerable; the surface of Earth's only satellite, the Moon.

On July 20, 1969, President Kennedy's dream of seeing American astronauts exploring the moon became a reality when the brave groundbreaking crew of Apollo 11 landed on the moon's surface and proclaimed to a spellbound America, in the words of Neil Armstrong, "One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." By awarding them with a Congressional Medal, we honor their bravery and valor and their major contributions to humankind's greatest technological achievement: sending humans into outer space to set foot on a celestial body outside Earth.

The Apollo 11 landing ushered in a new era of space exploration, thereby contributing to the advancement of scientific inquiry and the improvement of the human condition. We owe much of NASA's and the United States' space program's current success to the pioneering efforts of the Apollo 11 crew.

Our now routine space shuttle flights and the scientific experiments in weightlessness that they have facilitated are a direct outgrowth of the Apollo 11 mission to the Moon.

Many of us recall that July day in 1969, when the Apollo 11 crew mesmerized the Nation and the world as they took that historic leap for humankind. As the entire Nation watched their television sets in amazement, the Apollo 11 crew undertook their simple mission of performing a manned lunar landing, collecting lunar samples, and returning to Earth with utmost professionalism and care. It was a greater success than anyone could have hoped for, not to mention a major milestone in human history. And the successful mission will forever remain etched in our collective conscience as a national symbol of our unity.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this long overdue honor to the crew of Apollo 11, three great American heroes who will forever remind us of the greatness of our country's pioneering spirit.

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

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. KUYKENDALL), who has in his district the headquarters of the U.S. Space and Missile System Command.

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, I, like one of the earlier speakers, can sit back and remember what I was doing that night. For me, it was in the evening, as I recall, and I remember laying on the floor over at my girlfriend's apartment. She and her mother were sitting there; and we were watching that on television, watching these three pioneers, three people that nobody really knew who they were other than they were astronauts. But here we were watching on TV what they were doing, landing on the moon. I remember I was almost more astounded at the fact that I could watch them do it than I was that we technologically had figured out how to send them there and bring them back in one piece.

That was during a time of strife in our Nation. In my case, I was en route to Vietnam. Yet here was an action taken by three heroes who stepped up, and when they made that trip the whole country could focus on them. The whole country could. It did not make any difference whether a person was for or against that war, or whether they were involved in college or whether they were a little kid or an elderly member of our society, everybody watched. Everybody did.

We all remember what we were doing that night, what we were doing when these three men soared away and they stepped down off of that module and we could see the dust kind of kick up from his steps on the moon. There are footprints up there that will be there for eternity because of what these three men did. I think we all will remember that as probably the most important

thing many of us have ever watched on TV.

We soared above any strife we had in our country, and that was the power of that mission. Not only did we prove our dominance to the world, as far as technologically being able to accomplish it, but we proved to ourselves as a Nation that, even in the midst of this terrible war we were in, we could coalesce behind a cause that would better this place we live in and expand our horizons as Americans to look for in the future.

I am pleased to be here supporting and recognizing their actions. This is one of the best things we can do as a country.

Mr. LAFALCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. LAMPSON).

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I rise today in support of H.R. 2815, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins, the crew of Apollo 11.

When a young president named John Kennedy described his vision in 1961 of landing a man on the moon, he encountered many skeptics. Some said it could not be done; others said it would cost too much money. But when I watched Neil Armstrong take his first step on the moon 8 years later, I knew that the naysayers were wrong, and so did my high school students, who huddled around that television set we have heard about on that unforgettable day.

□ 1515

I saw the gleam in their eyes that inspired them to become our future engineers and scientists.

The Apollo 11 lunar landing is one of the events in American history that stands out as a moment that connects every American who was alive in July of 1969. Six hours after landing on the surface of the moon on July 20, with less than 30 seconds of fuel remaining, Commander Neil Armstrong took the "one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind" when he stepped off the lunar module onto the surface of the Moon.

Minutes later, joined by Buzz Aldrin, the two astronauts spent a total of 21 hours on the lunar surface. After their historic walk on the Moon, they successfully docked their lunar module with the command module, piloted by fellow astronaut Michael Collins, who made the mission possible by providing the crucial communications link between the Moon and the Earth.

Public opinion polls, the universal tool of politics today, tell us that the lunar landings are seen by Americans as one of the greatest achievements during that century, on the level of winning World War II. Together, these men propelled America ahead in the space race, united a country torn over the conflict in Vietnam, and inspired future generations to continue the pursuit of space exploration.

The time has come to recognize these three extraordinary individuals, Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins, with the Congressional Gold Medal. And here we are, 31 years after Apollo 11, nearing the completion of the construction of the International Space Station, having seen a remarkable record of NASA accomplishments, the first space plane, the space shuttle, capable of carrying a crew and payload into space to do research, new wing designs for civilian aircraft, a revolution in Earth science as we have begun to recognize the need to understand the changes occurring in the Earth's lands and oceans and atmosphere and new views of the universe.

Space exploration has evolved over the past 30 years to more than just romantic notions of collecting Moon rocks and taking pictures of other planets in our solar system, and now is the time to award a Congressional Medal to three individuals who contributed to our Nation's knowledge of space.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, on July 20, 1969, after a 4-day trip, the three Apollo astronauts arrived on the surface of the Moon. Upon arriving, Armstrong announced "Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed."

These words ushered in a new era of human exploration as the first man flight to the Moon touched down with less than 40 seconds of fuel remaining in its tanks. The astronauts had managed to make one last-minute maneuver to avoid landing on a field of boulders and a large crater, demonstrating the importance of manned space flight, the human ability to adapt to demanding circumstances.

After hours of exploring and experiments and those famous words "one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind" uttered by Neil Armstrong, the astronauts left a plaque stating: "Here men from the planet Earth first set foot upon the Moon July 1969, A.D. We came in peace for all mankind." The plaque was signed by Armstrong, Collins, Aldrin, and President Richard Nixon.

The final phase of President Kennedy's challenge was realized on July 24, 1969, when these three astronauts safely returned to Earth, splashing down aboard the Columbia, 812 nautical miles southwest of Hawaii. Prior to splashdown, Buzz Aldrin summarized their magnificent accomplishments with these words: "We feel this stands as a symbol of the insatiable curiosity of all mankind to explore the unknown."

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON), my good friend.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the author of this piece of legislation, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROGAN).

Landing on the Moon has been considered to be the crowning achievement of the 20th century. I am proud to say that, in my congressional district, Kennedy Space Center was the departure point for this incredible adventure.

On July 20, 1969, the culmination of man's dream to go to the Moon was realized. For the first time, people were taking their first steps on a new world. America led the way and showed the world how a republic can harness its power for scientific and peaceful purposes.

Thirty years ago, American know-how and technology and its technological might was demonstrated in a way that benefited every human on the planet. Thirty years ago, we aimed higher than ever and accomplished that goal.

The names Michael Collins, Buzz Aldrin, and Neil Armstrong will forever be etched in the edifice of human history next to the names of Columbus and Lindbergh.

We all know by heart the phrases oft repeated this afternoon, "The Eagle has landed" and "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

Every one of us who was of age at the time can recite to our children and grandchildren where we were at that historic moment. The magic of television helped take the whole world on that most fantastic of voyages. We all thought that by now, in the year 2000, we would have bases on the Moon and people on Mars. Sadly, we are not at that point.

And it is even more sad that today we will be taking up the funding bill for NASA, the VA-HUD bill, and there will again be attempts by some to cut our investment in the space program, keeping us further bound here on Earth.

Our efforts into space have an uncanny ability to unite all peoples and excite the imagination like nothing else, particularly the imagination of our young people. We should be proud of our space program and continue to support it to the fullest extent possible, supporting this effort to award these three historic pioneers in this very, very appropriate way.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN).

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the chairman, for yielding me the time. I want to also congratulate the gentleman from California (Mr. ROGAN), my friend, for moving forward with this important legislation to finally present our Apollo 11 astronauts Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins with a much deserved Congressional Gold Medal.

I am particularly interested in this legislation because it involves a constituent of mine, a friend of mine and a neighbor of mine, Neil Armstrong,

who inspired all of us by becoming the first person to set foot on the Moon.

Facing tremendous personal risks and very difficult technological challenges, Neil Armstrong and his fellow astronauts left an indelible impression on those of us on Earth. And the Apollo mission will certainly go down as one of the most memorable achievements of the 20th century.

I certainly remember it. I was a 13-year-old exchange student living with a family outside of Malmo, Sweden. We all crowded around a TV set in an apartment complex outside of Malmo that night. I was the only American in the apartment complex. But we all watched it, as citizens of the world, to watch that memorable mission. And the success of it when we heard "the Eagle has landed" was the cause for celebration and applause. I remember it well.

Neil Armstrong has certainly compiled a remarkable record of legacy of service to our Nation as a fighter pilot, as an astronaut, a test pilot, a NASA official, a scientist, a teacher, and now a successful businessman. And although his name has been forever linked with that historic Apollo 11 mission and his famous words announcing "a giant leap for mankind," Neil Armstrong has never sought the limelight and he has never exploited his fame for personal gain.

Instead, he has quietly and effectively found ways to give back to others. He has helped NASA in their space program. He has worked with another famous Cincinnati, Dr. Henry Heimlich, to develop a miniature heart-lung machine, the forerunner of the modern Micro Trach machine that is used to deliver oxygen to patients.

He has become a civic leader in greater Cincinnati, including enriching our community as chairman of the board of the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History, where he led the successful effort to give the museum a rebirth in its new home at our Union Terminal.

Neil also owns a small farm in Warren County, Ohio, outside of Cincinnati; and there he has been an active participant in civic activities. He has assisted with the annual Warren County Fair livestock auctions to support local 4-H programs. He has participated in local Boy Scouts troops. He has worked with other community leaders to establish an impressive YMCA, called the Countryside YMCA, outside of Lebanon, Ohio. And, yes, he has even helped coach the high school football team. This is the Neil Armstrong I know.

Neil Armstrong and the brave men of Apollo 11 deserve this special congressional recognition for the remarkable accomplishments over 30 years ago and their amazing legacy that inspires future generations.

My constituent, Neil Armstrong, also deserves recognition for his continued efforts to make our world a better place.

I urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

Mr. LAFALCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA).

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS) for yielding the time to me.

Mr. Speaker, this is an excellent example of bipartisan cooperation. I want to congratulate the gentleman from California (Mr. ROGAN) for introducing this resolution.

I rise today in support of the resolution to honor three American heroes with the Congressional Gold Medal: Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins. They inspired a generation of Americans, and their accomplishment continues to stand as a testament to bravery and determination.

"Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed." Almost 31 years ago, these words were uttered and the world was forever changed. Just a few minutes later, Neil Armstrong, commander of the Apollo 11 mission, descended down the ladder of the lunar module and took the first step in the powdery surface of the Moon, the first person to walk on another world. Shortly after, he was joined on the dusty landscape by the mission's lunar module pilot, Edwin Buzz Aldrin.

The journey began 8 years earlier when President Kennedy issued the decree before Congress: "I believe this Nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to Earth."

America answered the call.

Among the thousands of dreamers who applied for the handful of positions in the newly created astronaut corps were Neil Armstrong, Michael Collins, and Buzz Aldrin. Already brilliant pilots and engineers, these men came to NASA to do a job as best they could.

Neil Armstrong served in 78 combat missions in Korea for the Navy before joining NASA in 1955 in the high-speed flight research program. He participated in cutting-edge flight tests, pushing the envelope to go faster and higher. He was selected in the second group of astronauts and commanded the Gemini 8 mission, which first accomplished the task of docking with another spacecraft in orbit. The lunar missions would have been impossible without the ability to perform this task.

□ 1530

Buzz Aldrin was also a combat pilot in Korea. He graduated from West Point third in his class before receiving his commission in the Air Force. He attended MIT, receiving a doctorate after completing his thesis concerning guidance for manned orbital rendezvous. He flew as the pilot of the Gemini 12 mission, setting the record at the time for the longest space walk, testing important mobility characteristics of his space suit, essential for future astronauts to walk on the Moon.

Michael Collins also graduated from West Point before receiving his commission in the Air Force. He was a test pilot at Edwards Air Force Base, like Neil Armstrong. He stayed at Edwards as a flight test officer until he was selected as an astronaut. He flew on Gemini 10 which docked with an Agena spacecraft and he successfully used that spacecraft's power to maneuver into a higher orbit and rendezvous with another Agena target space craft. He also conducted two space walks.

These three men were already heroes when they were selected to be astronauts for the Apollo 11 mission. The dazzling success of Apollo 8's 10 orbits around the Moon on Christmas the previous year and the successful tests of the lunar module in Earth's orbit on Apollo 9 and in lunar orbit on Apollo 10 set the stage for the first mission to land on the Moon.

On July 16, 1969, these brave astronauts lifted off the launch pad in Florida aboard a Saturn 5 rocket and began the 4-day journey to the Moon. On July 20, the lunar module Eagle left Michael Collins behind in the command module Columbia and began its descent to the lunar surface. Missing the landing site, it took all the courage, determination and skill of the astronauts to set the Eagle safely in the ground in the Sea of Tranquility with only a few seconds of fuel left.

It was their ability and their bravery that saw America accomplish its dream. The work of thousands of people culminated in those few moments of suspense just before the Eagle touched down. Many words can be said to express the grandeur of the moment but just a few hours later, Neil Armstrong said it best: "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." One small step for men and women, one giant leap for people.

Mr. LAFALCE. Mr. Speaker, this past Sunday was Father's Day. Yesterday we passed a resolution honoring fatherhood.

It is my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BENTSEN) the father of young Meredith Bentsen who is present today.

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

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill. I can remember 31 years ago at the time that this event occurred, it was a typical steamy Saturday afternoon in the summer in Houston. As a young boy as we often did on Saturday afternoons, we were at a movie. I do not remember the title of the movie. As I recall I think it was about a tidal wave hitting an island. Anyway, it was a great action film that young boys and girls would like at the time. I can remember they stopped the film and they said, "Apollo 11 has landed on the Moon." It was the most amazing event for a young boy and my friends and I sitting there to see that this had happened. This was the crowning event of our childhood, to

grow up in Houston with the Johnson Space Center right there, and we had all visited it as children in school, that this really showed that America could do something if America wanted to do something. It was under the guise of NASA but also these three astronauts, Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins, who instantly became American heroes, particularly to this young Houston boy at that time.

I want to commend my colleague from California for having the foresight to introduce this bill. I am not going to add to what has already been said. But as a native Houstonian, I am particularly proud to have had the opportunity and now as a Representative for part of Houston to be able to speak in favor of this bill and vote in favor of it.

Mr. LAFALCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS).

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Without objection, the gentleman from Alabama will control 5 additional minutes.

There was no objection.

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

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAFALCE) for yielding me the time. Let me say before I yield that time to another speaker that I am wearing a Father's Day gift from my oldest son. I am sure my colleagues have been admiring it and his good taste.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. COX) who has in his district Buzz Aldrin as a constituent.

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, I too am pleased to rise in strong support of this resolution which will present the Congressional Gold Medal to the three astronauts who flew in the historic 1969 Apollo 11 mission. I want to congratulate the gentleman from California (Mr. ROGAN) for bringing this to the floor and to the attention of the Nation. Those three men who first set foot on the Moon's surface and flew to the Moon, Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins, stand out as heroes to us now and in even greater relief after the passage of so many decades.

We are now in a new century. We can look back to the events of the mid-20th century and see what were the great events and what were the minor ones. This is truly an outstanding achievement not only of the 20th century but of all time. So it is appropriate that we are here today to recognize and honor these three American heroes.

These men were tasked with a mission that was never before attempted by men or women. They participated in a space program that was then and is now still fraught with danger. My brother-in-law, Mike Gernhardt, is an astronaut. I have had the opportunity to watch him go up on the space shuttle more than once, and even today that is an extraordinarily risky ven-

ture. But think what it was like for those first astronauts, think what it was like for the Apollo astronauts and those on the Apollo 11 mission who were supposed to carry out all that had been tested before them.

They proved to the world that we were still a Nation that when it sets its mind to something can do almost anything. With those few minutes of videotape, of Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin skipping across the surface of the Moon and planting the American flag, confidence in American ingenuity was reborn. Landing on the Moon may have been an American feat, but more than that it was a pioneering event for the entire world, an achievement of humanity, and it opened to the entire world a whole new realm of possibilities.

As was mentioned, I have had the privilege of representing Buzz Aldrin as a constituent. I would like to say a few words in particular about him. Buzz's own life can be best illustrated by his impressive resume and his dedication to government service. He was a graduate of West Point. He distinguished himself flying combat missions in the Korean War. After his military service, he earned an advanced degree from the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He then returned to serving his country when he piloted one of the first manned rockets into space before joining NASA and the Apollo program.

Although it is hard to eclipse being one of the first men to set foot on the Moon, Buzz has continued to contribute to the advancement of space exploration and become a nationally recognized advocate for the space program. Even today, he earns national attention for his humanitarian efforts and his efforts with Sherespace, an organization which advocates human space travel. It is Buzz's notion that we can raise money for the space program by letting Americans participate in the opportunity to be in space. He is convinced that someday soon, sooner than later, that will be a real opportunity for ordinary Americans. But it is not just Buzz Aldrin, it is each of these three men, Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins that deserves the recognition that Congress is seeking to bestow upon them today.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation to present the Congressional Gold Medal to the three astronauts who flew in the historic 1969 Apollo 11 mission.

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

Today we not only honor the three astronauts, we also honor those other heroes at NASA, for their achievement is a tribute to the thousands of engineers, scientists and others at NASA whose extraordinary efforts made the journey possible. It is fitting that we do so this year as we begin both a new century and a new millennium. America again faces new and bold challenges both in space and here on Earth. As we

do so, the ingenuity, courage and determination shown by the astronauts can be our guide. Their love of freedom and pursuit of knowledge for the betterment of all mankind symbolizes the greatness of America.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROGAN), the sponsor of the bill.

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague for yielding me this time. I also want to thank the distinguished ranking member and all of my colleagues for their support in this most worthy legislation and for their comments today.

We have spent the last few minutes reflecting upon the feat of the Apollo 11 astronauts that occurred 31 summers ago. Yet their greatest gift to mankind was not the footprints they left behind on the Moon. Their greatest gift was what they brought home. They brought home a limitless concept of what Americans are capable of doing and a limitless potential of what sheer imagination can bring. Their bravery, their humility, and their contribution to man has brought unending honor to our people and to our Nation. And now it is the day and the time for the Congress on behalf of the American people to honor them in this most appropriate manner.

I urge adoption of this resolution. I once again thank both the chairman and the ranking member for their graciousness in supporting this.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON).

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Buzz Aldrin and I went through flying school together. I just want to make that comment. He is a true American hero. Probably a little known fact about him is his mother's name was Moon. Quite a coincidence. He graduated from West Point with honors, third in his class, but just to show how really smart he is, he ended up in the Air Force. I could not resist that.

He is working on a spacecraft system now that would make perpetual orbits between Earth and Mars. I hope Members will join me in honoring these three American heroes.

Buzz Aldrin is a true American hero. A perhaps little-known fact about Buzz is that his mother's maiden name was Moon. Quite a coincidence. But Buzz Aldrin was a great patriot long before he ever set foot on the moon!

He graduated from West Point with honors in 1951, third in his class. And to show you just how smart he really is, he ended up in the Air Force after West Point.

I first met Buzz Aldrin when we were in flying school together in 1951 in Bartow, Florida. And we were sent off to fight in Korea together. Buzz flew 66 combat missions in Korea as part of the 51st fighter interceptor wing, where he shot down 2 MiG-15s.

Buzz earned his doctorate in astronautics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the manned space rendezvous techniques he devised were used on all NASA missions, including the first space docking with Russian cosmonauts.

Buzz was selected as one of NASA's original astronauts in October of 1963. And on July 20, 1969, the world watched in amazement as Apollo 11 touched down on the moon and Buzz Aldrin became the 2nd man to set foot on another world.

I was in solitary confinement in a Vietnam prison with no news from the outside world. But, Buzz Aldrin, paused to remember me that day. He took a POW bracelet with my name on it and an American flag to the moon to remember all the prisoners of war in Vietnam. And we will never forget that, Buzz.

You would think that after a man walks on the moon, he could sit down and rest for awhile.

But not Buzz Aldrin. Today, having retired from NASA, from the Air Force as a colonel, and from his position as commander of the test pilot school at Edwards Air Force Base, he is still working tirelessly to ensure a leading role for America in manned space exploration.

He is working on a spacecraft system that would make perpetual orbits between Earth and Mars.

Buzz has received numerous awards and medals, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest honor our country bestows.

So, I believe this Congressional Medal of Honor is long overdue for my friend Buzz Aldrin and other Apollo 11 astronauts—Neil Armstrong and Michael Collins.

I hope you will join me in honoring these three American heroes.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I'm honored and excited to join Congressman JIM ROGAN and my colleagues today in authorizing the President to present astronauts Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins—the crew of the historic Apollo 11 mission—with a congressional gold medal. As a cosponsor of this legislation and as Chairman of the House Science Committee, I have observed how these three leaders of America's space program continue to inspire generations of Americans to dream beyond Earth and entertain the infinite possibilities of space exploration.

I doubt any American alive on that memorable day in late July of 1969—the 20th to be exact—will ever forget the image of Neil Armstrong first stepping foot onto the Lunar surface. Commander Armstrong presciently declared, "That's one small step for man; one giant leap for mankind," and America and the rest of the world watched in awe of the greatest feat in space history.

These men provided courage and service to the U.S. beyond this memorable and daring mission. Mr. Collins co-piloted the Gemini 10 mission and later served as assistant secretary of state for public affairs. Mr. Aldrin flew over 60 combat missions in Korea and survived a 5½ hour space walk on the Gemini 12 mission. Mr. Armstrong left NASA in 1971 but continued his service through the National Commission on Space and helping lead the presidential commission investigating the Challenger explosion.

Mr. Speaker, these outstanding leaders embody the values, principles, and dedication that make our country the greatest in the world. I'm proud to join my colleagues in working to recognize Buzz Aldrin, Neil Armstrong, and Michael Collins with a congressional gold medal on behalf of the Congress and the people of the United States.

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I am honored today to speak in tribute of three of our coun-

try's bravest—pioneers who united this nation through their heroic feat: the astronauts of the Apollo 11 mission.

Thirty-one years ago next month, Commander Neil A. Armstrong, Lunar Module Pilot Edwin E. "Buzz" Aldrin, Jr., and Command Module Pilot Michael Collins completed what was an almost unthinkable task: a successful manned moon landing. It is often noted that each one of us remembers where we were when Neil Armstrong spoke the words, "The Eagle has landed." Indeed, a part of each of us traveled with these adventurers into space on their record-breaking mission.

I am especially honored to salute the visionary Neil Armstrong, born in Wapakoneta, Ohio, which I am privileged to represent. Wapakoneta boasts the recently renovated Neil Armstrong Air and Space Museum, which has on display various Apollo 11 artifacts, a moon rock, and the Gemini 8 spacecraft Armstrong commanded in 1966.

Mr. Speaker, the accomplishments of these three heroes are too numerous to compile. All three had distinguished military flying careers prior to their NASA days. All three were part of the monumental Gemini program, which saw the first spacewalk by an American and the first docking with another space vehicle. In the heart of the space race, these pioneers set the stage for today's continuing exploration of the new frontier. They conquered the moon despite the many unknown dangers of doing so, and thereby paved the way for NASA's space shuttle program and the International Space Station. Their bravery has inspired thousands of young people around the nation to pursue their hopes and dreams.

Indeed, their bravery cannot be heralded enough. Before the mission, Michael Collins commented: "I think we will escape with our skins . . . but I wouldn't give better than even odds on a successful landing and return. There are just too many things that can go wrong." Despite the obstacles and potentially fatal problems, the Apollo 11 astronauts did achieve a successful landing and return, bolstering the adventurous spirit of all Americans.

Neil Armstrong once noted, "We were three individuals who had drawn, in a kind of lottery, a momentous opportunity and a momentous responsibility." Armstrong, Aldrin, and Collins fulfilled this opportunity with dignity, courage, and honor. It is right that we recognize their supreme accomplishment today by presenting them with a congressional gold medal in commemoration of their sacrifice. They "came in peace for all mankind," as reads the plaque they left on the moon. Their achievements in the advancement of space exploration have revolutionized America, and renewed our sense of unity, pride, and hope for the future.

□ 1545

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2815.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.