

us 4 years to do it. During that period of time, the IRS worked with us, they withheld the implementation of these regulations because they knew that the goal was worthy. Lastly, I want to thank Sarah Giddens of our staff who, for 4 years, tirelessly worked on this legislation, dogging it dot by dot, i by i, in the hundreds of meetings, literally, that she had and the hours that she poured into this piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great piece of legislation. Instead of spending money on regulatory compliance, the schools can spend that money doing what they do best, and that is educating the kids.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. THURMAN), a distinguished member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, who may have to watch my university play in the Orange Bowl. We were just discussing that over here. But I want to say to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. MANZULLO) how welcome this piece of legislation is. I do not know if my colleagues are reading what is happening in Florida right now, but the legislature is in a special session specifically for the purpose of cutting their budgets. The headline news in Florida is that the State universities were hit with cuts in excess of \$100 million, while community colleges must deal with \$33 million.

As the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. HULSHOF) has said, one of the things that makes our country great is the ability for us to have an educated population. What we did in 1997 in providing the \$1,500 tax credit for the HOPE scholarship and the lifetime learning tax credits I was hoping would not be taken away from by the administrative nightmares that they might be facing, as my colleagues can imagine, also based on the numbers that we heard of the increased tuition. I do not know where those monies are going to come from when they cut them, but certainly we did not want them to have to be raised in tuition. With the gentleman's help, we are going to be able to see this \$1,500 and the bureaucracy cut so that our universities and our community colleges are not going to have to be hiring new staff and setting up new computer programs, so this might help them in looking at their overall budgets if we get this passed and through over in the Senate.

□ 1800

I just want to say that, in conclusion, because of the work and the people that the gentleman has recognized, this is a work that the higher education community has asked for. They have asked for the greater flexibility in reporting information to the IRS about the education tax credits. I believe that H.R. 3346 provides that requested flexibility through the simplification of the Tax Code.

I might just say, for all of us who serve on the Committee on Ways and Means, that it is always a pleasure for us to be able to come to the floor and talk about the idea that we are simplifying, and not adding to, the tax codes in this country.

I think it is something that the American people want us to be doing, have suggested that we do; and as we can see, as we work in a bipartisan manner, in fact we can provide not only the dream for our students and to help our universities, but we can also help the taxpayers of this country. So we thank the gentleman for his leadership.

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

Mr. Speaker, I have a few concluding remarks.

First, I want to amplify a point that my friend, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), made regarding the situation regarding the computer systems.

The point is that as educational institutions begin to raise some concerns that these new reporting requirements would require their schools to completely revamp their computer systems at a substantial cost, these institutions noted that complying with the law's requirement to report tuition payments received would be difficult, and that because schools keep a running total of the payments that they receive from students, in other words, payments are not applied separately to tuition, but instead are applied to a student's total outstanding balance that may include room and board, books, student fees for recreational activities, or other costs, and, moreover, payments are not applied to any particular academic year. As a result, these institutions would have had to change their accounting and computer systems dramatically to make them compatible with reporting requirements. We have undertaken, instead, a change in those reporting requirements so those colleges and universities will not have to undertake that substantial cost.

As a final comment, I would just advise my colleagues that in the 1999 calendar year, the Hope scholarship credit was claimed by 3,334,000 students; the lifetime learning tax credit was claimed for 3,575,000 college students.

Clearly, the work we have done here in Congress back in 1997 has taken a large step forward as far as making higher education more affordable. I think we are taking an additional step forward for the administrators of these colleges and universities by reducing their burden.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, let me just concur with my friend, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. HULSHOF).

Also, I would like to compliment the Internal Revenue Service. We do not often say that. But they have worked with us to implement, as the gen-

tleman from Illinois (Mr. MANZULLO) has pointed out, this part of the code in a taxpayer-friendly way. If we look at the 1098-T form and 8863 form, I think we will find both of those forms are easy for the taxpayer to use.

They worked with us to modify the law in regard to the unnecessary burden upon the institutions of higher education. As a result, we have had, I think, the right spirit in simplifying the Tax Code to carry out the purposes of Congress.

This legislation is important legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. HULSHOF. Madam Speaker, I urge adoption of H.R. 3346, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. MANZULLO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3346.

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.

GERALD B.H. SOLOMON SARATOGA NATIONAL CEMETERY

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3392) to name the national cemetery in Saratoga, New York, as the Gerald B.H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3392

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) Gerald Brooks Hunt "Jerry" Solomon of Glens Falls, New York, served in the House of Representatives for 10 terms, from January 3, 1979, to January 3, 1999, and during that service gained a reputation for being outspoken and tenacious in presenting his views on a wide range of issues.

(2) Congressman Solomon was born in Okeechobee, Florida, and grew up there during the Great Depression before moving to New York in 1945.

(3) Congressman Solomon enlisted in the United States Marine Corps at the onset of the Korean War and served in the Marine Corps for 8½ years on active and reserve duty.

(4) Before being elected to Congress in 1978, Congressman Solomon was a businessman in Glens Falls, New York.

(5) During his 20-year congressional career, Congressman Solomon served as the ranking Republican on the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, where he was recognized by the veterans community as one of its strongest advocates. Among his other accomplishments for veterans, Congressman Solomon spearheaded the effort to create the Cabinet-level Department of Veterans Affairs and successfully led a 15-year drive to establish the Saratoga National Cemetery in Saratoga, New York, where he is now interred.

(6) Congressman Solomon was also recognized for his efforts to promote pride, patriotism, and volunteerism, and when the Supreme Court ruled that laws prohibiting the burning of the United States flag were unconstitutional, Congressman Solomon was given the assignment to pass a constitutional amendment to prohibit desecration of the flag. The Solomon Amendment passed overwhelmingly in the House, but failed by one vote in the Senate.

(7) As chairman of the Committee on Rules of the House of Representatives, Congressman Solomon revamped the rules under which the House operates, abolishing proxy voting, opening all meetings to the media and the public, and making Congress subject to the same laws that the American people live under.

(8) During his congressional career, Congressman Solomon was the recipient of dozens of major awards from many national veterans organizations, including the coveted "Iron Mike Award", presented to him by the Marine Corps and Marine Corps League, and the Distinguished Citizen Award, presented to him by the National Congressional Medal of Honor Society for his legislative successes on behalf of the United States military and veterans issues.

SEC. 2. NAME OF THE NATIONAL CEMETERY IN SARATOGA, NEW YORK.

(a) NAME.—The national cemetery located in Saratoga, New York, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the "Gerald B.H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery". Any reference to such national cemetery in any law, regulation, map, document, record, or other paper of the United States shall be considered to be a reference to the Gerald B.H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery.

(b) MEMORIAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall provide for the placement in the national cemetery referred to in subsection (a) of a suitable memorial to honor the memory of Gerald B.H. Solomon and his service to the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in very strong support of H.R. 3392, a bill to name the National Cemetery in Saratoga, New York, after Gerald B.H. Solomon, who we all knew and loved as Jerry. This is a fitting honor and memorial to our former colleague, the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Rules.

I want to commend and thank the gentleman from Illinois (Speaker HASTERT) for introducing this important bill. I know how highly the Speaker thought of Jerry Solomon and valued his service to the House of Representatives. So it is a tribute in itself that the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), who, as Speaker, does not normally introduce legislation, has taken this very extraordinary step. I am grateful to have been afforded the opportunity to be an original cosponsor of H.R. 3392.

In addition to naming the cemetery for Jerry Solomon, this bill will also authorize the Secretary of Veterans Af-

fairs to place a suitable memorial in the cemetery to honor his memory.

It is highly fitting that our distinguished colleague was laid to rest in the Saratoga National Cemetery because the cemetery itself owes its existence to Jerry Solomon. He worked tirelessly for this cemetery for 15 years to overcome obstacle after obstacle to its establishment. He promoted it in his town meetings, he pushed for timely completion of the environmental impact studies, he worked with members of the Committee on Appropriations to ensure that the money was appropriated for it, and overcame official indifference in the executive branch.

His unwavering determination, no matter how difficult an objective, manifested itself time and time again. I think it probably had much to do with his service in the U.S. Marine Corps; but also it reflected the kind of man that he was: he was tenacious, he was tough, and he was fair.

He enlisted, as I think many of my colleagues know, in the Marine Corps at the beginning of the Korean War and served for 8½ years on active duty and in the reserve. He is one of the few who was good enough to be a Marine; and of the many awards he received during his public service, among his most cherished were the Iron Mike Award from the Marine Corps League, and the Distinguished Citizen Award from the National Congressional Medal of Honor Society.

All of us, Madam Speaker, learned from the example of Jerry Solomon. I recall so well when he was the ranking Republican member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, again, he always put veterans first. He was always fighting to ensure that there was an adequate veterans budget, particularly in the area of health care. He believed that the VA was one of those commitments that, once we make it, that they had first dibs for every dollar that we would spend.

He was also one of the prime leaders in making sure that we had a cabinet level for the VA, so when it came to allocating scarce resources, that they would be there, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs would be there at the table fighting and fighting hard for veterans' benefits and for veterans' health care.

More recently, following his retirement after 20 years in Congress, President George Bush recognized Jerry Solomon's leadership and wisdom by appointing him to co-chair the Presidential Task Force to Improve Health Care Delivery for our Nation's Veterans.

Like everything else, he launched himself into this new endeavor with enthusiasm and commitment and actively served on that issue and on that commission until his final illness.

Madam Speaker, I had the honor of serving many years in the House with Jerry Solomon and in every case found him to be one of the most outspoken, straightforward, tenacious, and patri-

otic Members of Congress that this body has ever produced. He was a great man; and we honor him in a very modest way, much more could be done for this great man, by naming this important cemetery in his honor.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of our distinguished colleague, Jerry Solomon, and in strong support of renaming the Saratoga New York National Cemetery as the Gerald B.H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery. It is a well-deserved honor for an outstanding public servant.

I want to thank the Speaker of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), and the chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), for bringing this bill to the floor today. I also want to recognize my colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. McNULTY), for introducing a similar bill in the 105th Congress. I am sure he will be pleased by the bill, and I look forward to his remarks.

Throughout his 20-year term in this Chamber, Jerry Solomon demonstrated an unyielding commitment to the men and women who risked their lives for the safety and welfare of this Nation. As a strong advocate of America's military veterans, I appreciate his efforts over the years to improve their benefits and health care through substantive and proactive legislation.

Jerry grew up in New York State and attended Siena College and St. Lawrence University before serving in the United States Marine Corps from 1951 to 1952, and I very much appreciate the chairman's remarks about his affiliation with the Marine Corps. I had some disagreements with the gentleman from New York, and we never took it out in the committee room. So he was a gentleman, and he worked hard to leave a great impression on the people that he met on a day-to-day basis.

Earlier this year, the President appointed Jerry to lead the President's Task Force to Improve Health Care Delivery for our Nation's Veterans.

As an original cosponsor of this measure, I can think of nothing more appropriate than to rename this cemetery. Jerry was interested in this cemetery, which was in large part due to his 15-year personal commitment to establish this cemetery.

It was a privilege to work with Jerry Solomon on the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and on committee issues. I am proud that I am able to join my colleagues in offering this measure in tribute to a great American, Jerry Solomon.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), the distinguished dean of

the New York delegation and chairman emeritus of the Committee on International Relations.

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

Mr. GILMAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank our Speaker, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), for introducing this legislation designating the Saratoga National Cemetery after our good friend and former colleague, Jerry Solomon, and the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), and the ranking minority member, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), for pursuing this measure and bringing it to the floor at this time.

H.R. 3392 is a fitting tribute to Mr. Solomon. It was due to his efforts on behalf of our veterans that the veterans cemetery at Saratoga was created and that the administration was granted cabinet-level status. As a Marine veteran, it is appropriate that we honor Jerry in this manner. Jerry fully knew the sacrifices our men and women in the Armed Forces face each and every day in defending our Nation from aggressors.

Madam Speaker, throughout the House, in the Senate, in New York State, around our Nation, overseas, many of us were deeply saddened last month to learn of the loss of our former colleague and good friend, Jerry Solomon. In New York State's capitol in Albany, Jerry was an assemblyman noted for his energy, determination, and commitment. It was, therefore, no surprise to those of us who knew him when he subsequently brought those same dedicated traits to bear as a member of this body.

Jerry came to the House of Representatives in January of 1979, serving here for 2 decades diligently, meritoriously representing the constituents of the 22nd district in upstate New York. When Jerry came to the floor of this House, he was always ready to stand up vociferously for what he believed, especially when it came to our Nation's defense and our Nation's veterans.

Last month, upon learning of the passing of our former colleague, President Bush said that "Jerry Solomon was a true patriot who will always be remembered as true to his creed, duty, honor, and country." The President's words remind us that as our military goes into battle against those who perpetrated the atrocities of the barbaric September 11 attack, our troops are relying on advanced weapons systems and technologies that Jerry Solomon fought so hard to obtain for them.

Congressman Solomon was proud to be labeled a hawk on defense, always arguing that our Nation had to be fully prepared and strong for the new challenges in the post-Cold War world. Today we fully recognize the wisdom of

his policy as we pay tribute to this great American by honoring both him and all our veterans by designating the Veterans' Cemetery at Saratoga Springs as the Gerald B.H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery.

Accordingly, in honoring our good colleague, Jerry Solomon, I urge our colleagues to fully support this legislation. Semper fi, Jerry.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. SWEENEY).

□ 1815

Mr. SWEENEY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Madam Speaker, as the one who succeeded Jerry Solomon in Congress, I am proud today to stand and speak on behalf of this important piece of legislation.

As it has been pointed out, Jerry Solomon served in this body for over 20 years since 1978. He has many friends in this House and I count myself among them. I doubt there is one among us who did not respect him. He was an American's American, a Marine's Marine, a veteran's veteran.

Devoted to his wife, Freda, his 5 children, and his 6 grandchildren, Jerry Solomon became a great statesman, but always remained a loving husband, father and grandfather.

He was a man who called them as he saw them, Madam Speaker. Over his career he led the way on veterans' issues, culminating in the establishment of a Cabinet post for veterans' affairs.

He led the way in fighting to cure an amendment to our Constitution to protect our flag.

He brought a national cemetery to Saratoga, New York, which happens to be my home county as well, where he himself has been laid to rest. Thanks to this legislation, it will now bear his name.

It is the right thing, an honorable gesture by this body to remember a patriot and his work.

In his final years in this House, Jerry Solomon served as chairman of the Committee on Rules. That achievement speaks volumes about the man, the leader, and the legislator.

What I learned about Congressman Solomon many among us know. If he cared enough to tell someone something, they had better listen.

Madam Speaker, Jerry Solomon has left us, but neither he nor his achievements will ever be forgotten. It is with great pleasure that I support this legislation to rename the Saratoga National Cemetery to the Gerald B.H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery.

Mr. EVANS. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. McNULTY).

Mr. McNULTY. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding me time.

Madam Speaker, as he pointed out earlier, this is not the first time a bill has been introduced to accomplish this purpose. On August 3, 1998, I introduced H.R. 4385 to name the Saratoga National Cemetery in honor of my friend and late colleague, Jerry Solomon.

We quickly rounded up 88 cosponsors to that bill, very enthusiastically supporting it. We were moving forward with the bill and then some very small-minded people, bureaucrats in the Department of Veterans Affairs, raised an objection. Their objection, Madam Speaker, was simply this: Something like this has never been done before.

Imagine the kind of world we would live in if we all had that attitude. We cannot do it because it was never done before. I said, well, it ought to be done now.

The next day Jerry Solomon called me over to his side of the aisle, and we sat in that seat right over there, and he asked me to withdraw my bill. Jerry Solomon and I were a team for 10 years, and he was always the one that was a little bit more, let us say, excitable. But on that day I was the one who was agitated, and I said, Jerry, I want to fight this. And he very calmly said to me, very characteristically because of his love for veterans, I do not want any controversy associated with that cemetery, and if one person in the bureaucracy objects, I want you to withdraw the bill.

I have conceded to the request of my friend and colleague. But today I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT). I thank the Speaker of the House for using the power and influence of his office to do the right thing and to name this cemetery for this soldier and patriot.

I am just so happy that Jerry lived to see the day when Communism fell apart in Eastern Europe; to see Lech Walesa and the Solidarity movement succeed; to see the downfall of Eric Honneker and Egon Krenz; to see the people out there tearing down the Berlin Wall piece by piece; to subsequently see the dismantling of the Soviet Union, dissolving into 15 individual democratic republics; to see the people of Armenia, one of those former republics, standing up in September of 1991 and voting 98 percent for independence and shouting the next day, "Ketze azat ankakh hayastan," long live free and independent Armenia; and then pointing to the United States of America as their example of what they wanted to be as a democracy.

Yes, we live in the freest and most open democracy on the face of the Earth, but Jerry Solomon understood that freedom is not free. We have paid a tremendous price for it. And he did not let a day go by without remembering with gratitude all of those who made the supreme sacrifice and all of those who served, put their lives on the line, came back home, rendered outstanding service to our country, the veterans of our country, and raised beautiful families to carry on in their fine traditions.

That was Jerry Solomon, and he spent 15 years of his life to make sure that that cemetery came to Saratoga. And I can say without any fear of anybody positing anything to the contrary, that cemetery would not be in Saratoga if it were not for Jerry Solomon. That is just a fact.

So today I ask my colleagues to support this bill, to support the Speaker, and to pay tribute to the memory of Jerry Solomon and, in doing that, to say thank you to Freda and Jerry's children and, yes, to all veterans.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 10 seconds to thank my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. McNULTY) for his powerful statement on behalf of Jerry Solomon and for introducing, as he pointed out, a resolution earlier that would have named this important asset, this cemetery, in honor of Jerry Solomon. And customary and just so characteristic of Jerry, he wanted to be self-effacing and did not want any fuss being made about him. It does not surprise me that he approached the gentleman and said, hey, do not push it. That is just so typical of Jerry Solomon.

I want to thank the gentleman for his leadership. I think that epitomizes the best of bipartisanship. That this is what it is all about. We care for each other. The gentleman cared for Jerry, and he showed it while he was alive in trying to get this cemetery named in his honor. I want to congratulate and thank the gentleman for that.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER).

Mr. BUYER. Madam Speaker, I would also like to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. McNULTY) because I do not have the words to follow the articulation.

Each of us individually have our own memories of our dear friend, Jerry Solomon. And I compliment the gentleman for his statement.

I rise and encourage all Members to support H.R. 3392. It is fitting that a national veterans' cemetery in Saratoga, New York be named after our colleague, Jerry Solomon. It honors not just the person but the contributions to our country.

I know Marines are proud of their military service but it is much more. It is the cohesion of the brotherhood that only combat Marines understand and it survives beyond the distant battlefield. It becomes a way of life, led by the attributes of honor, integrity, courage, and commitment. Jerry Solomon emulated these virtues and values during his life and left a distinct impression upon our country, his constituents, friends and family.

I am quite sure the comrades who he lies with are equally proud to have their remains rest in perpetuity in a national veterans' cemetery that bears the name of Jerry Solomon. We miss you, Jerry.

Mr. EVANS. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Rules.

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

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution and, as has been said by many of my colleagues, we all have our memories of Jerry Solomon. I have to stand here and say that I miss him. I miss the fact that we are no longer able to talk regularly on the phone. I miss his service here in this institution.

I believe that this is an appropriate action that we can take here because of his extraordinary service not only here in the Congress, but his service as a proud Marine.

My late father and Jerry became good friends. My father was a drill instructor in the United States Marine Corps and my father regularly encouraged Jerry to crack the whip on me. And Jerry followed my father's direction extremely well.

On more than a few occasions I was taken to the woodshed by Jerry Solomon. I was encouraged to step outside, and I will say that it was good for me. And while at the time I may have been a little miffed with some of the things that Jerry said, as are many experiences in life, it was a great growing experience for me.

I appreciate the leadership that Jerry Solomon showed in so many areas. He was a Korean War hero veteran, and there was no one in this institution who fought harder for, as the gentleman from New York (Mr. McNULTY) said, the demise of the Soviet Union than Jerry Solomon.

I had the opportunity to travel with him throughout the world. We traveled in the Mideast. We traveled to Asia. He took me on my first trip to Vietnam on February 14 of 1986. I remember being there on Valentine's Day. We traveled numerous times to Central America.

I thought a lot about Jerry as we just saw a few weeks ago the successful election of a democratic, small "d," leader in Nicaragua, because we all know through the 1980s we had this amazing struggle providing assistance to the democratic resistance in Nicaragua so that we could encourage the kind of freedom and political pluralism and recognition of human rights and encouragement of the rule of law that Jerry had fought for through his entire life.

So to be able to name the Saratoga National Cemetery the Gerald B.H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery is a very fitting tribute.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the Speaker of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT) for moving this resolution forward and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr.

SMITH) and the distinguished ranking member, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS) for moving this as expeditiously as they have. And I want to say once again to Mr. Solomon and his wonderful family, to the members of his family, that our thoughts and prayers continue to be with all of them during this very difficult and challenging time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Rules for his very eloquent remarks. We all have very fond memories. I know my first trip to Vietnam along with the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) on behalf of POWs was in 1984.

Mr. Solomon was again tenacious in trying to ensure that there was an absolutely thorough accounting and that any live sightings be followed up as aggressively as possible to ensure that nobody was left behind.

Mrs. KELLY. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this measure honoring my friend and colleague Jerry Solomon.

As the rest of my colleagues, I was deeply saddened by his passing in October. Jerry Solomon was my friend. His gruff exterior belied the thoughtful and kind man's interior.

Jerry fought for his Nation, his family, and his district like the admirable Marine he was. If the Hudson Valley had a need, Jerry was there to help, either with legislation of his own or by supporting legislation of those of us representing the Hudson Valley.

To meet Jerry was to fall under this great driving strength and to be offered an invitation to join him in whatever battle he was engaged in, and the Saratoga National Cemetery was a battle he fought for and won.

He was a great man, and we remember and honor him with this action today.

Mr. HASTERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of this legislation which would name the national cemetery in Saratoga, NY, the "Gerald B.H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery." This is a fitting tribute for my friend and our former colleague.

I would like to thank Chairman SMITH, my colleague from Illinois Mr. EVANS, and the Veterans Affairs Committee for allowing this important legislation to move so quickly. As the sponsor of this legislation, I would also like to thank the numerous cosponsors, especially Mr. GILMAN and all the members of the New York Congressional Delegation.

I had the honor and privilege of serving with Jerry Solomon during many of his 20 years of service in the House. We all remember Jerry as someone who fought for what he believed in. He was your most tenacious advocate when he was on your side and a "pit bull" of an opponent when he wasn't. He was truly a man of principle, and you always knew where he stood.

Before being elected to Congress in 1978, Jerry Solomon had an impressive career of public service. He was, among other things, a U.S. Marine, successful businessman, volunteer fireman, scoutmaster, and a member of numerous organizations such as the National Rifle Association, the American Legion, Marine Corps League, Disabled American Veterans, and the Korean War Veterans Association.

When Jerry was elected to Congress, he took on several important issues. For starters, Jerry Solomon spent many years devoted to ending the scourge of drugs, where I had the opportunity to work closely with him. In this capacity, he successfully championed many pieces of legislation requiring random drug testing and penalizing users and sellers of illegal drugs. He was a strong believer that illegal drug use is one of the most pressing issues facing our Nation's youth and fought it wherever and whenever he could.

In addition, when Republicans took control of the House, Jerry Solomon served as the Rules Committee chairman, where he presided over sweeping reforms in the way the House operates. Among other things, his committee abolished proxy voting, opened all meetings to the media and the public, and made Congress subject to the same laws that the American people live under. These were important reforms that fundamentally changed the way this House conducts its business.

In addition to this important work, Jerry served as ranking member on the Veterans Affairs Committee, where, as a veteran of the Korean war, he understood firsthand the importance of meeting the needs of our military veterans to the fullest extent possible. In this capacity, Jerry made sure that veterans were heard and represented when he sponsored the bill that created a cabinet level Department of Veterans Affairs. And, of course, he made certain that we remembered our country's military veterans when he fought for 15 years to see that the Saratoga National Cemetery was established.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation. This country cannot and should not forget the efforts of those like Jerry Solomon who by word and deed made this country a better place.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3392.

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.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3392.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1830

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THAT VETERANS DAY CONTINUE TO BE OBSERVED ON NOVEMBER 11

Mrs. MORELLA. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to

the resolution (H. Res. 298) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Veterans Day should continue to be observed on November 11 and separate from any other Federal holiday or day for Federal elections or national observances.

The Clerk read as follows:

Whereas the veterans of the Armed Forces are owed a tremendous debt of gratitude for their service and bravery;

Whereas veterans play important roles in communities throughout the United States;

Whereas maintaining Veterans Day as a legal public holiday separate from all other Federal holidays and days for elections or national observances is the least that a grateful Nation should do in recognition of its veterans; and

Whereas November 11 is a solemn commemoration of the contributions of those who have served and defended the Nation, especially those who gave their lives securing the freedoms enjoyed by all citizens of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that Veterans Day should continue to be observed on November 11 and separate from any other Federal holiday or day for Federal elections or national observances.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MORELLA. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 298.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. MORELLA. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of House Resolution 298. The message of this resolution is simple and straightforward. It is the sense of the House of Representatives that Veterans Day should be observed on November 11. It should be observed separate from any other Federal holiday, election day, or any other national observance.

Madam Speaker, Veterans Day is the one day on which America honors all of those who have served in our Armed Forces. Its roots trace back to Armistice Day, which established November 11 as the day to honor veterans of World War I; but in 1954, after World War II and the Korean War, the name of the holiday was changed to Veterans Day.

For a brief period, from 1968 to 1975, Veterans Day was not observed on November 11. By law it was observed on a Monday in order to provide Federal employees with 3-day weekends, but in 1975 President Ford signed legislation to return the observance of Veterans Day on November 11, where it remains to this day.

President Ford's action supported the expressed will of the overwhelming majority of State legislatures, veterans service organizations and the American people. Yet today, there are those who would alter this distinct opportunity to honor our veterans by merging Veterans Day with other public activities such as election day.

This would be wrong, Madam Speaker. Since our Nation's founding, some 48 million men and women have stepped forward to defend our way of life. There are more than 25 million living veterans who have served in peace and war. More than a million died in service to America; and more than a million and a half have been wounded, and some very seriously.

As we debate this resolution today, America's servicemen and women are fighting in Afghanistan to defend us and our way of life from the terrorists who attacked us on September 11. As President Bush said in his Veterans Day proclamation this year: "Our Nation will always be grateful for the noble sacrifices made by these veterans. We can never adequately repay them, but we can honor and respect them for their service."

It would be a shame and a travesty, Madam Speaker, to allow the special meaning of Veterans Day to be submerged amid a welter of campaign activities. Election campaigns focus on issues that divide us. That is how our democratic system works. We engage in a great national debate over a variety of serious issues. Campaign ads flood television and radio. Campaign activities dominate the news, and then the American people vote and determine who will represent them.

This is a great process, Madam Speaker; but we would lose something very special if it were combined with Veterans Day. We would lose the opportunity to pause and honor our veterans as a Nation united in gratitude for their service. Maintaining Veterans Day as a legal public holiday, separate from all other Federal holidays, is the least that a grateful Nation should do.

I want to congratulate and thank the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. TERRY) for introducing this legislation; and, Madam Speaker, I urge all Members to support this important resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, as we just listened to the debate and tributes being paid to Representative Solomon, I think that gives us one of the reasons why this bill is so important; and so I rise in strong support for H. Res. 298, a bill expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Veterans Day should be observed on November 11 and separate from any other holiday or day for Federal elections or national observances.

Madam Speaker, in 1921 an unknown World War I American soldier was buried in Arlington National Cemetery.