

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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

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

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1900

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

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

The Congress makes the following findings:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

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

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

SEC. 3. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

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

SEC. 4. STATUS AS NATIONAL MEDALS.

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

SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

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

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

SEC. 6. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of the Congress that—

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

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

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

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

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

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

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

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

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

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

realized the solitary anguish he must have been going through as a ball player during those years for a while when he was the only African American ball player at all. And even after other black players came into the major leagues, it was Jackie Robinson against whom so much of the hatred and venom was aimed. What he had to go through, the way he was attacked and criticized in stadium after stadium, it took enormous courage on his part to stand up to that, and he did. He always showed class and dignity. He was always tough, but he always lived up to the highest ideals of Americanism. Because of that our society has advanced as much as it has.

In awarding the Congressional Gold Medal, we try to single out those individuals who have really made special contributions; and I cannot think of anyone, whether in the world of sports, the civil rights movement, or emerging American society, who has done more to make contributions than Jackie Robinson.

On a personal note, as great as it was for me to watch Jackie Robinson, I also had the anguish as a high school student from my high school window watching them tear down Ebbets Field. To many people, that marked the destruction of the Brooklyn Dodger image and tradition.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is, they could tear everything down, but no one could ever tear down the image of Jackie Robinson; no one could ever tear down the lasting impact that he has had on American society. So this is, as I said, a resolution which is long overdue. It is legislation that is long overdue, but it is something which is fully warranted and deserved.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me state how proud I am to stand here and manage the time on this important piece of legislation as a New Yorker. Jackie Robinson, as the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) pointed out, was as much a New Yorker as he was a baseball player.

I also want to state my admiration for the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL). The gentleman and I have had the opportunity to work on many pieces of legislation during my 5 years here in Congress; and I want to suggest that it takes a tremendous amount of courage for a man from Massachusetts at this time, when a New York team is poised to defeat a Massachusetts team in a playoff series which is about to take place in a couple of days, to have the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) offer this bill here today to honor someone who became an honorary New Yorker we all appreciate. We really appreciate the motivation and the efforts of the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) to Jackie Robinson.

Baseball player Jack Roosevelt Robinson, who is popularly known as Jack-

ie Robinson, was born on January 31, 1919, in Cairo, Georgia, the youngest of five children. He spent his formative years living in near poverty in Pasadena, California, and later went on to attend the University of California in Los Angeles. His athletic gifts came to the fore when Jackie became the first athlete in UCLA history to letter in four sports: baseball, football, basketball and track. As a result, Jackie Robinson was considered one of the most versatile athletes of his generation and went on to prove it when he played for the Kansas City Monarchs in the Negro leagues and later signed a contract with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1945, the first African American to do so for the majors in the 20th century.

With the Dodgers, Jackie excelled in his game and inspired a generation of American fans and baseball players alike. The great home-run hitter of the Atlanta Braves, Hank Aaron, once remembered Jackie Robinson as an important influence in his life: "I had just turned 20, and Jackie told me the only way to be successful at anything was to go out and do it. He said baseball was a game you played every day, not once a week."

Jackie's career statistics tell a remarkable story. He helped the Brooklyn Dodgers win six pennants in 10 seasons. He was named Most Valuable Player in 1949 when he scored 108 runs, 203 hits, 16 home runs, and 124 RBIs. Jackie led the National League in stolen bases in 1947 and 1949 for a total career of 197. His career batting average was .311.

For his achievements in the sport, he was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1962. Despite his remarkable achievements on the baseball field, Jackie still had to contend with the insidious racist environment of his time. While traveling with the Dodgers, he could not always stay in the same hotels, nor eat at the same restaurants as his white teammates. One park in Florida barred the Dodgers from playing an exhibition game because of their inclusion of Robinson on their roster.

At another point, the Cardinals threatened to strike rather than play against Robinson and the Dodgers, but the National League president intervened and the Cardinals capitulated.

Jackie Robinson received hate mail with death threats. Given the racial injustices in America at the time and the racial injustices he was subjected to as a black baseball player, it is no surprise that Jackie Robinson would later turn his attention to fostering racial justice in America. He urged Major League Baseball club owners to hire African Americans to serve as managers, coaches, and administrators in front-office positions. He traveled extensively to raise funds for the NAACP and was a strong supporter of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

After retiring from baseball, Jackie became a businessman. He was vice president of Chock Full O'Nuts, chair-

man of the board and co-founder of Freedom National Bank of Harlem between 1962 and 1972, and founded a construction company in 1970.

In both banking and construction, he sought to improve the living conditions of African Americans in urban areas. He also spoke out against drug abuse in America. He was one of the great heroes of the storied history of our national pastime. He was an inspiration to his generation, and his pioneer spirit and legacy are an inspiration to all of us and will be for many generations to come. His legacy continues to be honored by the good work of the Jackie Robinson Foundation, which his wife, Rachel, founded in 1973, one year after his death, which helps college-bound minority youth in developing their potential. I urge Members to support this legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, regarding the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) and the courage he has shown, I think it is important for the record to state that back in the years when Jackie Robinson was playing in the World Series against the New York Yankees, I was rooting for Jackie Robinson, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) was rooting for the New York Yankees.

In spite of that, we do believe in the ultimate power of redemption; we are glad the gentleman is attempting to atone for his sins today by advancing this legislation, and we certainly welcome him as we welcome all sinners who return to the fold.

Seriously, Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) touched on many of these issues regarding Jackie Robinson. He was a man who served the United States Army during World War II, he was an All-American athlete in a number of sports at UCLA. He played any number of positions, and started all of them. He showed enormous talent and ability while he had this tremendous burden on him, the incredible pressures, the hatred being launched against him; but despite that, he continued to excel as an outstanding ball player throughout his career.

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

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 7 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL).

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) for the effort that they extended on the floor in getting the signatures to bring us to this moment.

Mr. Speaker, our friend and colleague and hero, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), noted just a few months ago that before there was an integrated American military, there was Jackie Robinson.

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Before *Brown v. Board of Education*, there was Jackie Robinson. Before the trauma and turbulence of events at the Edmond Pettus Bridge, there was Jackie Robinson. Before there was a Civil Rights Act of 1964, there was Jackie Robinson. And before the Voting Rights Act of 1965, there was Jackie Robinson. I think that this House tries to honor those who break a barrier, and that is precisely what we are doing today in honoring Jackie Robinson.

Jackie Robinson noted that the great thing about athletics is that you learn to act democracy, not just talk about it. I think he would in some small degree take satisfaction today knowing that this House of Representatives is not going to talk any longer about its legacy; we are going to act on it.

For his many contributions to sports, to civil rights, and to our Nation, Jackie Robinson deserves this important recognition. His remarkable life transcended baseball and helped to transform a Nation in the process.

As a baseball fan since my youth, I always admired his great talent. He was, and by all objective measurements, a true American hero. I am proud to be able to author this bipartisan legislation honoring a trail-blazing legend.

The leadership of Major League Baseball and in particular its Commissioner, Bud Selig, and its President, Bob DuPuy, they also deserve special recognition today as well as the many Members of this House who faithfully secured the signatures to bring this matter up in deserving recognition for Jackie Robinson. And I want to acknowledge the role of Major League Baseball in the passage of this legislation.

And since I represent a portion of Massachusetts, let me recognize the Boston Red Sox today who held a symposium on the life of Jackie Robinson in January at Fenway Park, and it was the Red Sox who gave me the enthusiasm and presented themselves as a consistent partner in our efforts to pass this legislation.

Also, I want to thank the family of Jackie Robinson for their unyielding support of this endeavor. Many of us had the opportunity just a few weeks ago to meet Jackie's daughter, Sharon, and we came away from that meeting knowing that she possessed the same qualities as her dad: strength, courage and conviction. I want to thank the members of that family and particularly Sharon for helping with this historic achievement.

The Nation that we live in today, Mr. Speaker, is much more egalitarian. Our sense of justice which we talked about for decades is much closer to the truth today than it was when Jackie Robinson walked to home plate. America has a much better vision of fairness today than it did when Jackie Robinson stole home plate. He helped to transform that game, but in the midst of transforming that game, just as impor-

tantly, he helped to transform America.

Think of the legions of people who successfully play baseball today who cannot imagine a nation where the premier player on the team could not eat in the same restaurant with his teammates, could not secure a reservation in the same hotel as his teammates, and yet on the next day be the star and central attraction of that team. He not only changed the game; he successfully changed the complexion of the game and thereby helped change the complexion of America.

America, as I have indicated, has a much better sense of itself today because of the barriers that were broken. We serve in a Congress that is much more reflective today of this Nation than it would have been when Jackie Robinson broke the barrier. Congress takes this rightful moment, I think, to ensure that as we have deliberatively and time and again created a bit of an obstacle to getting these things done so that those who are undeserving might not secure this honor that we are going to bestow on Jackie Robinson, and rightly so. But I thank Members on both sides, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) in particular, and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY) as well; and on our side the people who went out and got these signatures day in and day out to bring us to this moment.

This is a really nice thing for the Robinson family. It is a great thing for this Congress of the United States. But most importantly, it is a great thing for the country we all love, the United States of America.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN).

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) for yielding me this time.

It is a special honor and privilege today to rise in support of H.R. 1900, legislation sponsored by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the late, great Jackie Robinson in recognition of his many contributions to the Nation, and to express a sense of Congress that there should be a national day of recognition in his name. I applaud my colleague for sponsoring the bill which should be supported by everyone in this body.

Mr. Speaker, in the spring of 1947, Jackie Roosevelt Robinson played his first game with the Brooklyn Dodgers, breaking down baseball's decades-old color line and changing the face of baseball forever. Over the past few years, I too have had the pleasure of working with Jackie Robinson's older daughter, Sharon Robinson, on a number of activities and programs of the Jackie Robinson Foundation, which continue his legacy for our children and which has brought to my and many of my colleagues' districts.

On a broader note, my constituents and I owe a debt of gratitude to Jackie Robinson for opening the door and paving the way for all of us, but especially for several Virgin Islands major leaguers like Valmy Thomas, Elrod Hendricks, Al McBean, Elmo Plaskett, Horace Clarke, Jerry Browne, Joe Christopher, Henry Cruz, Midre Cummings, Jose Morales, and Calvin Pickering, as well as Bernie Williams whom we share with Puerto Rico.

Mr. Speaker, the bill before us is a long overdue tribute, and I rise on their behalf and on behalf of all Virgin Islanders. I only wish it had been bestowed on Jackie Robinson while he was still alive.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1900.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, we have listened to statements today in support of this legislation, in support of this great honor being awarded to a great man, Jackie Robinson, with number 42 on his uniform, but who certainly was first in the hearts of so many Americans.

I want to again emphasize my gratitude to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) for his efforts in bringing this forward and also express the personal honor it is to me. When I was a kid growing up in New York, I never thought I would have the opportunity to be supporting legislation for one of my childhood heroes. So it really is a great moment for this country, and I can speak on behalf of the many millions of New Yorkers who lived during the 1940s and 1950s who were thrilled by Jackie Robinson's excellence on the ball field.

But more important than that, I can speak for tens of millions of Americans who will always be in his debt and will always have tremendous gratitude to him for being such a pathfinder, for being so courageous, for having the guts to go forward when very few others would. I ask that this bill be passed.

I include in the RECORD a statement of Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig.

STATEMENT OF BASEBALL COMMISSIONER ALAN H. SELIG

I have often said that Jackie Robinson's entry into the Big Leagues was Baseball's proudest moment and most powerful social statement.

Today, the United States House of Representatives codifies the historic importance of Jackie Robinson's legacy by awarding, posthumously, its prestigious Congressional Gold Medal to Jackie.

On behalf of Major League Baseball, I express my gratitude to the House of Representatives for enacting this legislation, to Congressmen Neal (D-MA) and King (R-NY) for proposing the bill, to the nearly 300 House co-sponsors, and especially to those members who worked hard to achieve the bill's passage.

Before America's Armed Forces were integrated and before the United States Supreme

Court struck down segregation, Jackie Robinson became the first black man to step onto a Major League ball field. That memorable day in 1947, in Brooklyn, New York, our National Pastime truly achieved greatness. And people of color felt the promise of greater freedoms to come.

In April of 1997, it was my great honor to retire Jackie Robinson's Number 42 in perpetuity. It was the first time in any sport that such a gesture was bestowed upon an athlete. It was a recognition that Jackie Robinson was an exceptional man who fought racism by exhibiting athletic greatness on the ball field and grace off the field.

On behalf of Major League Baseball, Jackie's wife, Rachel, his children Sharon and David, and Jackie's millions of fans, I thank the United States House of Representatives for this special and appropriate tribute to a great ballplayer and an even greater human being.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments of Jackie Robinson, who richly deserves the award of a Congressional Gold Medal as a pioneer in opening professional sports to all Americans. Like my colleagues, I am proud to remember him as an American hero.

But as a proud graduate of the University of California at Los Angeles, I wanted to remind my colleagues that Jackie Robinson was already known to American sports fans even before he made history by joining the Brooklyn Dodgers. In fact, he is one of UCLA's most distinguished alumni and was considered one of our nation's most important athletes during his college days.

Robinson's true passion was athletics and he excelled at every sport he tried. Regarded as the finest all-around athlete in the United States during his lifetime, he was the only Bruin to earn varsity letters in four sports: football, basketball, track, and baseball.

As a football player, at UCLA Robinson led the nation in punt return average in 1939 (16.5 yards) and 1940 (21.0 yards) and his career average of 18.8 yards ranks fourth in NCAA history. During his senior year he led UCLA in rushing (383 yards), passing (444 yards), total offense (827 yards), scoring (36 points) and punt returns (21.0 yards). In his career, he rushed for 954 yards (5.9 average) and passed for 449 yards.

As a basketball player, Robinson led Pacific Coast Conference's Southern Division in scoring in both 1940 (12.4 average in 12 league games) and 1941 (11.1 average in 12 league games) and was named All-PCC Southern Division in 1940.

Robinson's UCLA track career was abbreviated because he missed most of the 1940 season while playing baseball, but he still managed to win the NCAA title in the broad jump (24' 10 1/4") as well as the broad jump at the Pacific Coast Conference meet with a leap of 25' 0".

He did not even consider baseball his best sport, but in his first collegiate game, he totaled four hits and stole four bases, including home base.

Despite his achievements in the realm of sports, Robinson, like other black athletes, was often confronted by the harsh realities of the times. I am proud to say that race was not an issue on Bruin teams, but in those days much of the rest of the nation wasn't as accepting. Ned Mathews, a football teammate of Robinson, recalled an incident at Stanford University where black athletes were turned away

from dining in a restaurant. The Bruins left. "If they didn't fit, we didn't fit," Mathews told the UCLA faculty newspaper, "and that's the way it went."

The support of his UCLA teammates and the heroism Jackie Robinson showed in facing this early discrimination would provide the foundation for his history-making career in major-league baseball. Shortly after his time in college, Robinson signed a contract with the Brooklyn Dodgers, ending decades of discrimination against blacks in the major leagues. In spite of enduring torment and abuse through much of his professional career, he remains one of the sport's all-time athletic stars. Robinson was posthumously named a charter member of UCLA's Athletic Hall of Fame in 1984.

Robinson once said "A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives." His impact on the sporting world and our nation cannot be overstated. By showing us that athletes—and indeed all Americans—should be judged by their talent and character rather than their skin color, Jackie Robinson's life has brought us closer to fulfilling our creed that "all men are created equal."

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1900, a bill to award a congressional gold medal to Jackie Robinson (posthumously), in recognition of his many contributions to the Nation, and to express the sense of the Congress that there should be a national day in recognition of Jackie Robinson. Mr. Robinson was not only an amazing athlete he was a man of unsurpassed character and an agent of social change. On behalf of the people of the 18th Congressional District of Texas, I am pleased to be an original cosponsor of this bill. By posthumously awarding the congressional gold medal to Jackie Robinson, we are recognizing the achievements and the life of an exceptional man.

Mr. Robinson was born in 1919 in the state of Georgia. His parents were sharecroppers and he was the youngest of five children. During his rise as a student, an athlete, and a national hero, he would travel from coast to coast and from north to south across the country. While attending the University of California Los Angeles he was the first student to earn varsity letters in four sports: baseball, football, basketball, and track.

In 1947, Jackie Robinson signed with the Brooklyn Dodgers and became the first African American to play in Major League Baseball. During his first season, he won the National League's Rookie of the Year Award. In 1949, Jackie Robinson was also voted the National League's Most Valuable Player by the Baseball Writers Association of America.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to note that a few weeks ago this body had occasion to honor Larry Doby. He was the second African American to play Major League baseball and the first to play in the American League. It is wonderful that people's House should take time to honor both of these national heroes.

Now, after the 1956 season, Mr. Robinson retired from the game of baseball. In 1962, he was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame. He was the first African American player to receive that honor. Clearly, none can question Jackie Robinson's contributions to America's greatest pastime but many are unfamiliar with his achievements off the field of play.

Before entering Major League Baseball Jackie Robinson joined the United States

Army. He earned the rank of first lieutenant in the Army, which was still segregated at that time. Mr. Robinson did not quietly accept such segregation. Rather he protested the Army's discriminatory practices. In fact, while stationed at Fort Hood, in Texas, Jackie Robinson was arrested when he refused a bus driver's order to move to the back of a bus. After court-martial, he was acquitted. Then, in 1944, Mr. Robinson received an honorable discharge from the Army.

Years later, after his career in baseball, Mr. Robinson dedicated himself full-time to the cause of civil rights. In fact, from 1964 to 1968 he served as special assistant for civil rights to Governor Nelson Rockefeller of New York. Mr. Robinson also worked to promote African American business in Harlem. He even co-founded the Freedom National Bank of Harlem.

Sadly, Mr. Robinson passed away in 1972. He was survived by family, friends, and millions of fans. The epitaph inscribed on Mr. Robinson's gravestone is one that he wrote himself. It reads: "A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives." We thank Jackie Robinson for his selflessness, for the permanent impact he made upon our lives, and upon the basic fabric of this country. Mr. Speaker, we thank Mr. Robinson and we honor him.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Jackie Robinson for his contributions to this country. The grandson of a slave, Jackie Robinson used his unmatched athletic talent to clear a path toward equality. As the first African-American to play in Major League Baseball, Mr. Robinson faced virulent opposition and oppressive racism. Through the passion and excitement of excellent athletic performance, Mr. Robinson carried the United States one step closer to racial parity.

I am particularly proud of Jackie Robinson's connection to the city of Pasadena. Mr. Robinson moved to Pasadena as a toddler, and grew up in the shadow of the Rose Bowl. He was an exceptional teammate on the sandlots, and a multi-sport standout at John Muir Technical High School. At Pasadena Junior College and UCLA, he broke records in basketball, baseball, football and track.

Jackie's older brother Mack was also a treasured citizen of Pasadena; the Post Office on Lincoln Avenue bears his name. The Robinson family's contributions to Pasadena echo beyond the realm of athletics to the model they set for the community and the nation.

It seems fitting to honor Jackie Robinson in October, as competition intensifies for the American and National League pennant races. Mr. Speaker I urge passage of H.R. 1900, to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Jackie Robinson, to recognize his powerful contributions to the nation, and to express support for a national day in recognition of one of Pasadena's greatest stars.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1900.

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.

FHA MULTIFAMILY LOAN LIMIT ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1985) to amend the National Housing Act to increase the maximum mortgage amount limit for FHA-insured mortgages for multifamily housing located in high-cost areas, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1985

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "FHA Multifamily Loan Limit Adjustment Act of 2003".

SEC. 2. MAXIMUM MORTGAGE AMOUNT LIMIT FOR MULTIFAMILY HOUSING IN HIGH- COST AREAS.

In the National Housing Act, sections 207(c)(3), 213(b)(2)(B)(i), 220(d)(3)(B)(iii)(II), 221(d)(3)(ii)(II), 221(d)(4)(ii)(II), 231(c)(2)(B), and 234(e)(3)(B) (12 U.S.C. 1713(c)(3), 1715e(b)(2)(B)(i), 1715k(d)(3)(B)(iii)(II), 1715l(d)(3)(ii)(II), 1715l(d)(4)(ii)(II), 1715v(c)(2)(B), and 1715y(e)(3)(B)) are each amended—

(1) by striking "110 percent" and inserting "170 percent"; and

(2) by striking "140 percent" and inserting "170 percent".

SEC. 3. CATCH-UP ADJUSTMENTS TO CERTAIN MAXIMUM MORTGAGE AMOUNT LIM- ITS.

(a) SECTION 207 LIMITS.—Section 207(c)(3) of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. 1713(c)(3)) is amended by striking "\$11,250" and inserting "\$17,460".

(b) SECTION 213 LIMITS.—Section 213(b)(2)(A) of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. 1715e(b)(2)(A)) is amended—

(1) by striking "\$38,025", "\$42,120", "\$50,310", "\$62,010", and "\$70,200" and inserting "\$41,207", "\$47,511", "\$57,300", "\$73,343", and "\$81,708", respectively; and

(2) by striking "\$49,140", "\$60,255", "\$75,465", and "\$85,328" and inserting "\$49,710", "\$60,446", "\$78,197", and "\$85,836", respectively.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on this legislation.

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

There was no objection.

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

Today I rise in support of H.R. 1985, the FHA Multifamily Loan Limit Adjustment Act of 2003. This important piece of legislation introduced by the gentleman from California (Mr. GARY G. MILLER) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) amends the

National Housing Act to increase the maximum mortgage amount limit for FHA-insured mortgages for multifamily housing located in high-cost areas.

The Federal Housing Administration is one of the most effective programs in helping low-to-middle-income buyers purchase their first home. It was originally designed to encourage lenders to make credit more readily available and at lower rates. Through FHA programs, HUD insures mortgages and loans made by HUD-approved lenders for a wide variety of purposes including new construction, rehabilitation, property improvement, and refinancing in connection with a wide variety of types of property. FHA programs include all types of residential property (multifamily, single family, manufactured homes), nonresidential commercial property, hospitals, and certain other health care facilities.

The FHA multifamily mortgage insurance program is a critical source of financing for affordable multifamily rental housing. During the previous 2 years, Congress supported and implemented improvements to the program, including increasing the base loan limits by 25 percent and indexing the loan limits to inflation, which begins in 2004. As a result, loan values have increased significantly in many areas of the country where the program previously, frankly, was not working.

However, there are a number of high-cost urban markets such as New York, Boston, San Francisco, Chicago, and Los Angeles where construction costs are significantly higher than other areas of the country, and the high-cost factors have not been sufficient to allow the use of FHA multifamily mortgage insurance programs. The FHA Multifamily Loan Limit Adjustment Act of 2003 will give the HUD Secretary the discretion to increase the maximum mortgage amount limit for FHA-insured mortgages for multifamily houses located in high-cost areas. In addition, it would change the statutory maximum adjustment percentage for geographic areas from 110 to 170 percent, which would change HUD's maximum high-cost percentage to 270 percent.

Providing the HUD Secretary additional flexibility to increase the maximum loan limits in high-cost areas would greatly improve the FHA multifamily mortgage insurance programs. With severe shortages of affordable rental housing in most of the high-cost markets, this change would enable developers to provide much-needed new affordable housing to low- and moderate-income families.

This is a tremendous bill, Mr. Speaker, and I want to give credit again to the gentleman from California (Mr. GARY G. MILLER) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK), the gentleman from Ohio (Chairman OXLEY) and the staff on both sides of the aisle. It is a good bill. It is a bill that will definitely help people in the

United States, and I would urge all of my colleagues to support this vital housing initiative.

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

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am particularly appreciative of the efforts of the gentleman from Ohio, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity and the other gentleman from Ohio, who chairs the full committee, for helping us bring this bill forward.

The gentleman from California and I began our collaboration on this issue in a previous Congress when this came up as part of an omnibus housing bill, and while we bogged down on that omnibus bill because of some differences between the parties and ideological concerns, it struck us that there was no reason to hold back on something that ought to be, and we believe is, in fact, in everybody's interest with no downside.

I would note that this is one of those times when we can bring forward a bill that will advance an important social purpose dealing with our housing affordability crisis, and this is not for subsidized housing, but as we build housing, multifamily housing, as we increase the housing stock, we deal with the affordability problem because there is a problem here of supply and demand. The affordability program is exacerbated by a shortage of supply, and as we increase the supply even of conventional housing, we are dealing with that.

This also has the unusual aspect of probably helping to reduce the Federal deficit. FHA premiums, given the repayment rate, particularly when we are dealing at this end of the spectrum, make money for the Federal Government. So if this has any impact on the Federal budget, it will be a directly positive one, not simply an economic activity that will be generated, that housing will be built, but specifically in the collections that will come from the FHA.

□ 1530

We do not have a single housing market in this country. We have, for a variety of reasons, some areas which cost more than others. Those are both supply- and demand-related factors. We should not, therefore, have a single FHA rule. Where we are dealing with high-cost areas, given the value that the FHA has as a financing mechanism for housing, we ought to take advantage of that.

I want to express my appreciation also to the gentleman from California (Mr. GARY G. MILLER) for his consistent leadership on this issue. I would also like to acknowledge the role that the National Association of Homebuilders played in helping educate all the Members to the importance of this and to the benefit which we will all receive from it.