

needs \$1.8 billion to bring the fiscal year 2004 appropriation to the level set forth by the Budget Resolution. Where are our priorities?

On average, 14,000 veterans have been waiting more than 15 months for their disability claims to be finalized. And 200,000 veterans wait for six months or more for an appointment at VA hospitals. This shabby treatment of our veterans is intolerable. If we can come up with an \$87 billion supplemental appropriation for the war in Iraq, in addition to the \$63 billion already provided by Congress, then surely we can give VA the \$1.8 billion that is necessary to minimally provide for our veterans. We should be ashamed of ourselves.

At this time, more than every, we need to show our veterans that we appreciate them. We first need to pass H.R. 2297, the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003; then we need to give VA the \$1.8 billion it still needs to bring the fiscal year 2004 appropriation to the level set forth by the Budget Resolution. Our veterans should not have to come begging at our doors.

Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to state my support of H.R. 2297. Coming from the First District of Virginia, where roughly 100,000 military veterans live, it goes without saying that this legislation is of enormous importance. For that reason, I want to commend Chairman CHRIS SMITH, Ranking Member LANE EVANS, and their hard-working colleagues and staff on the House Veterans Affairs Committee for getting this bill to us on the floor today. I would also like to share some observations about a few aspects of the bill.

I am pleased that H.R. 2297 restores the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) benefit to those who wish to remarry after 55 years of age. As many of my constituents know, DIC is a monthly benefit paid to surviving spouses of uniformed service members who die either in the line of duty or from a service-connected disability. Until this bill reaches the President for enactment, eligible survivors who remarry after 55 will continue to lose this benefit.

I am also pleased that H.R. 2297 restores some equity in education benefits for those National Guard members who are eligible for Title 38 survivors and dependents education benefits, bringing them in line with their Reserve counterparts. Presently, only Title 38-eligible Reservists, who have been activated post-9/11, have the end date of their eligibility extended by a period equal to the length of the call-up period plus 4 months. H.R. 2297 offers the same extension to eligible members of the Guard.

Finally, I want to commend the committee for expanding Montgomery GI Bill education benefits for self-employment training for veterans and disabled veterans. H.R. 2297 would authorize educational assistance benefits for on-job training of less than six months in specified self-employment training programs. Under the Veterans Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act (Public Law 106-50), Federal agencies are required to support self-employment for veterans directly and through partnerships with the private sector. H.R. 2297 would improve access to related training benefits.

In the present atmosphere, in which many members are having the sincerity of their commitment to fairness for veterans questioned, it is reassuring to see that dedicated people like

my colleagues, Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member EVANS, are bringing their efforts to bear on behalf of veterans in a way that should clearly have a positive impact. I now look forward to the Senate acting on this legislation to expedite its passage.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2297, a bill that will significantly improve the quality of benefits offered to Guam's veterans.

In addition to offering enhanced education, disability and home loan benefits to veterans and their families. H.R. recognizes the efforts of veterans of the Philippine Commonwealth Army or new Philippine Scouts by ensuring their right to be buried at Arlington National Cemetery. I am pleased that H.R. 2297 will honor these brave soldiers whose contributions helped secure victory in the Pacific.

Mr. Speaker, it is important that we demonstrate to our men and women in uniform our nation's continued commitment to members of the armed services, past, present and future. I am committed to improve the conditions of veterans in Guam. They need access to affordable housing and vocational training. Disabled veterans need assistance that recognizes the struggle of daily life they must endure for having served their country.

I commend Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member EVANS for their leadership on this important legislation that will reiterate our nation's commitment to veterans. I look forward to reporting to the people of Guam that this legislation has become law and that we have taken another step in honoring our commitment to veterans.

Mr. REYES, Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2297, the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003. This bill will provide an overdue expansion of several benefits already available to many veterans.

Mr. Speaker I have long been an advocate for expansion of benefits to those veterans who suffered as a result of environmental exposures during military service. Because we now have the acknowledgment from the Department of Defense that Agent Orange and other similar herbicides were used near the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) in the late 1960's, this bill will allow the children of veterans who were exposed to herbicides in Korea to receive the same benefits from the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) as those provided for children whose parents were exposed in Vietnam.

As you know, the members of the 507th Maintenance Company that were recently interned as prisoners of war in Iraq hailed from the district that I represent. This situation impacted our entire community. I am proud to say that as a member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, I pushed for the removal of the 30-day internment requirement for former prisoners of war (POWs) with certain presumptive service-connection disabilities. These disabilities suffered by these POWs may have occurred within minutes or hours of their internment. I am glad that this issue will be addressed and included in this legislation. Mr. Speaker, this is merely a small recognition of former POWs who deserve more than what we are providing for them.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Chairman and sponsor of this bill, Mr. CHRIS SMITH, as well as Ranking Member LANE EVANS for working with me and for the rapid consideration of this important legislation. I strongly

urge my colleagues to join me in support of passage of this bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). 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. 2297, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. 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.

#### SUPPORTING ERECTION OF NATIONAL RAILROAD HALL OF FAME

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 342) supporting the National Railroad Hall of Fame, Inc., of Galesburg, Illinois, in its endeavor to erect a monument known as the National Railroad Hall of Fame.

The Clerk read as follows:

##### H. RES. 342

Whereas Galesburg, Illinois, has been linked to the history of railroading since 1849 when the Peoria and Oquawka Railroad was organized;

Whereas the citizens of Galesburg supported a railroad to Chicago which was chartered as the Central Military Tract Railroad in 1851;

Whereas upon completion of the Central Military Tract Railroad, the Northern Cross Railroad joined the Central Military Tract Railroad at Galesburg;

Whereas in 1886 Galesburg secured the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway and became one of the few places in the world served by 2 major railroads;

Whereas the National Railroad Hall of Fame, Inc., has been established in Galesburg and chartered under the laws of the State of Illinois as a not-for-profit corporation;

Whereas the objectives of the National Railroad Hall of Fame, Inc., include (1) perpetuating the memory of leaders and innovators in the railroad industry, (2) fostering, promoting, and encouraging a better understanding of the origins and growth of railroads, especially in the United States, and (3) establishing and maintaining a library and collection of documents, reports, and other items of value to contribute to the education of all persons interested in railroading; and

Whereas the National Railroad Hall of Fame, Inc., is planning to erect a monument known as the National Railroad Hall of Fame to honor the men and women who actively participated in the founding and development of the railroad industry in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives supports the National Railroad Hall of Fame, Inc., of Galesburg, Illinois, in its endeavor to erect a monument known as the National Railroad Hall of Fame.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CORRINE BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER).

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bipartisan resolution in support of the National Railroad Hall of Fame in Galesburg, Illinois.

The history of railroading in Illinois began in 1837 with the construction of a rail line linking the Illinois and the Mississippi Rivers. From that small beginning, Illinois emerged as the major connecting point for railroads linking the entire continent.

The National Railroad Hall of Fame in Galesburg, Illinois, was founded to honor the memory of the inventors, the engineers, the surveyors, the financiers and workers who built these great railroads.

Past inductees to the National Railroad Hall of Fame include George Pullman, developer of the famous Pullman sleeping car, and Cyrus K. Holliday, builder of the Atchison Topeka & Santa Fe.

Another great and recent inductee is Ralph Budd, president of the Great Northern and the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy railroads. In the 1930s, Mr. Budd rejuvenated passenger rail service by developing the fastest and most efficient train of its time, the Pioneer Zephyr.

Highly streamlined and constructed of lightweight stainless steel, the Pioneer Zephyr represented a true landmark in the history of passenger railroading. On May 26, 1934, this train made a record-breaking trip from Denver to Chicago, a distance of 1,000 miles, in only 13 hours. Today, that same train trip takes over 17 hours.

The mission of the National Railroad Hall of Fame is to perpetuate the memory of great railroaders, such as Ralph Budd, and to serve as an educational resource for our younger generation. I strongly urge approval of this resolution.

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

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I think one of the most valuable lessons we have learned from the tragic events of September 11 is just how important our railroads are to this country. With the aviation system grounded, American railroads were working hard to help both passenger and freight reach their destinations. Not only was this important to keep the economy running, but sent an important message to our enemies that American transportation system was still the strongest in the world.

On November 12, 2001, I was in New York when American Airlines Flight 587 crashed shortly after taking off from JFK Airport, creating a national

panic and shutting down the entire city. Fortunately for me and many other Members of Congress who ended up at Penn Station that day, Amtrak was still running, and returned us safely to Washington to deal with this latest tragedy. I realized once again just how important Amtrak is to the American people and how important it is for this Nation to have alternate modes of transportation.

I personally fell in love with railroads as a child watching the Silver Meteor passenger train pass my house in Jacksonville, and today I get firsthand information on the railroads from my friends, constituents and my brother, who worked with CSX for over 30 years, which I proudly say is headquartered in my district.

Since the first horse-drawn cars hauled coal on steel rails, the success of the U.S. economy has been directly linked to the success of the railroad industry. It is only right to pay homage to the men and women who have worked so hard to build this Nation's railroad infrastructure.

The National Railroad Hall of Fame's goal is to promote and encourage a better understanding of this country's railroads, and is collecting documentation and information that is open to the public. The planned National Railroad Hall of Fame Monument will honor the men and women responsible for founding and developing the U.S. rail industry.

I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS) for introducing this legislation. The veterans of this Nation have no better friend in Congress than the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS). It has been an honor serving with him on the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and I am glad to join him in celebrating the noble history of American railroads.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support this excellent legislation, which educates the public on the vital role our railroad plays in the development of our young Nation and the strong role it plays in the world economy today.

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

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS).

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this legislation that seeks to create a privately-funded museum to help promote a better understanding of the origins and growth of the railroad industry in America. I would like to thank my friend the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS) for introducing this legislation.

The resolution highlights the efforts of men and women whose hard work and resourcefulness helped build one of the Nation's best modes of transportation. Nowhere can this be seen better than in my home State of Illinois. Illi-

nois has had a pioneering role in the Nation's railroad industry since 1837 with the creation of the Northern Cross Railroad, linking the Illinois and the Mississippi Rivers together for commerce and transportation. Railroads are just one of the reasons why Illinois is considered the transportation hub of the country.

The National Railroad Museum would be located in Galesburg, Illinois. Galesburg has a rich history of railroads, being first connected to Chicago by rail in 1854 and being home of the Carl Sandburg College, one of the first colleges to establish an educational curriculum in railroading.

Mr. Speaker, we all rely on staff. Many times their work goes unrecognized. I also wanted to take this time to thank Ken Johnson of the Committee on Energy and Commerce and a native of Galesburg, Illinois, for his work on this issue. I know his folks, family and friends from Galesburg are very proud of his efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS).

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 342, a resolution recognizing the National Railroad Hall of Fame in my district in Galesburg, Illinois.

Galesburg is a city rich in railroading history. In 1849, the Peoria and Oquawka Railroad first connected Galesburg to the railroad system in western Illinois. Soon after, the people of Galesburg worked hard to develop connections between Chicago and the Mississippi River, eventually expanding the railroad into the West. By 1886, Galesburg became one of the few places in the world to be served by two major railroads.

Because of this rich history, a private group in Galesburg formed to develop the National Railroad Hall of Fame in Galesburg, Illinois. The mission of the Hall of Fame is focused on honoring the men and women who have developed, maintained and strengthened one of the world's greatest forms of transportation. The Hall of Fame is being built to inspire future generations to continue in America's tradition of growth and ingenuity. This resolution simply recognizes the project put together by the National Railroad Hall of Fame to maintain that history and go forth in the next step in its development.

Before I finish, I would like to thank my colleagues, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS), for their support. This would not have happened without the support of their staff people. I also want to thank the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for their quick action on this bill.

I want to thank Bob Bondi of Galesburg, who has worked tirelessly to get

this organization on its feet and with my staff to pass this resolution. Also I would like to thank Ken Johnson, who has been of tireless help to us. Ken, it would not happen without your support.

Finally, I would like to thank the Committee on Energy and Commerce and Erin Doyle on my staff for her work on this bill.

This represents good bipartisan support. It is something long overdue.

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

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Florida for yielding and also commend her for her tremendous leadership. I also want to commend the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), my good friend, for introducing this legislation. I think it is so timely and so important.

I grew up during the era of trains, and I can remember being a small child and seeing trains zip by. I was also part of what we call the Great Migration, and that is people who lived in the area of the country where I lived, in the south, in Arkansas, migrating to the Midwest, to the north, going west to California. I also remember the cultural experiences that people had with trains. Writers and blues singers: "C.C. Rider, See What You Have Done"; "Take the A Train"; "The Wabash Special"; "The Chattanooga Choo Choo: Pardon me, boy, is that the Chattanooga Choo Choo."

So trains were a great part of the history and development and the culture of this country, and for the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS) to capture that in terms of a Railroad Hall of Fame I think is indeed commendable. I simply voice my support for it; and once again, it indicates what a great Nation the United States of America is, and all of the different entities that have played a part in its development. As a student of history, I say to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS) I commend him for this legislation, I strongly support it.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 342, a resolution which recognizes the National Railroad Hall in Galesburg, Illinois.

The development of a national railroad system from coast to coast in the United States had major impacts on our economy, national defense, and national lifestyle. As the railroad grew, it allowed an increasing ease in transporting goods and people. However, the development and expansion of the railroad could not have occurred without the hard work and ingenuity of individuals in the industry.

For that reason, a private group has gathered in Galesburg, Illinois to create a National Railroad Hall of Fame. The mission of the Hall of Fame focuses on the men and women who developed and maintained one of our nation's greatest forms of transportation. They are

building the Hall of Fame to inspire us to continue in the American tradition that built our railroad system. To show how this tradition has continued through history, inductees are selected from three eras in railroad history. The first is the Birth and Development Era, from 1800 to 1965. The second is the Golden Era, from 1866 to 1945. And the final period is the Modern Era, from 1946 to present day. The reason the founders of the Hall of Fame choose these time periods is to reflect the different stages of railroad development and the continuing growth through today into the future.

In 2002, they introduced three inductees. The people that they recognized were George Pullman, Sanford Fleming, and Louis Menk, all of who provided enormous contributions to the success of the railroad industry. George Pullman is probably the most recognized of the inductees, having invented the Pullman sleeper car and an entire village for the employees who made it. His contribution to American railroading was profound because it made traveling great distances over rail comfortable, even luxurious.

Sanford Fleming, the inductee from the Golden Era, arranged a system that each of us utilize when we travel, Standard Time. Prior to Mr. Fleming's system, train stations ran on local time. Local time was determined by the sun. Traveling on a schedule set by each station's local time became a headache for station managers and railroad passengers alike. To address this problem, Sanford Fleming divided the world map into 24 sections, thus creating the Standard Time which we all follow now.

Finally, Louis Menk was inducted from the Modern Era. Mr. Menk is an example of the American dream. Having started out as a telegraph messenger for Union Pacific Railroad, he worked his way to the top of the railroad industry to become President and CEO of Burlington lines. He doubled the size of the company and merge it with a number of other lines to stretch across the Western United States.

Placing this history in Galesburg, Illinois is appropriate to the history of the railroad as well. Galesburg has a long history with railroading. In 1849, the Peoria and Oquawka Railroad was established providing Galesburg with the opportunity to connect to a rail system. After that, Galesburg quickly became an important link between Chicago and the West. Finding a need to connect Iowa with the east coast, Galesburg worked as a community to expand the rail system from Chicago to the Mississippi River and then over into Iowa. This allowed for the extension of a rail system that eventually reached coast to coast. By 1886, Galesburg secured the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway and became one of the few places in the world served by two major railroads. Currently, Galesburg is still a central point in the railways for shippers moving good across the country.

Additionally, Carl Sandberg College of Galesburg, Illinois, was one of the first institutions to establish an education curriculum in railroading. Currently, the College continues this program offering a certificate program and an associates program in railroad operations. This shows how basic the tie between Galesburg and the railroad is.

In honor of this history in Galesburg and the history of the ingenuity of those that shaped

the railroad industry, a group of people got together in Galesburg, Illinois and developed the National Railroad Hall of Fame, Inc. The main purpose of the Hall of Fame is to continue the memory of the leaders, inventors, engineers, riders, teachers, and all other participants in this proud industry. However, the Hall of Fame also seeks to inspire future generations to continue this proud tradition of growth and invention. Finally, they seek to provide a home to research surrounding the railroading industry and provides an opportunity for local history students to work on the history of the railroad industry. By working with local college students to enhance the background information for recommended inductees, the Hall of Fame expands the historical information and the people that study it.

What the National Railroad Hall of Fame in Galesburg has asked for its simple recognition of its and its mission. The people who have put this project together have raised the money necessary for the building on their own. Additionally, they simply wish to continue the project of creating a deposit of history and inspiration for the work ethic that built the industry that built this country. In return, all they request is recognition.

Before I finish, I would like to thank my colleague Mr. LAHOOD for working with me to pass this resolution, and Andrea Tebbe on his staff. I also want to thank the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Transportation Committee for this quick action on this bill. I want to thank Bob Bandi of Galesburg, who has worked tirelessly on to get this organization on its feet and with my staff to pass this resolution. Also, I would like to thank Ken Johnson from the Energy and Commerce Committee for his assistance and enthusiasm for his hometown. Finally, I would like to thank Erin Doyle on my staff for her work on this bill.

Once again, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and pay tribute to the history of the railroading industry.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 342, legislation supporting the National Railroad Hall of Fame, Inc.'s endeavor to erect a monument supporting the Hall of Fame in Galesburg, Illinois. The National Railroad Hall of Fame, Inc. is a not for profit organization dedicated to preserving the legacy of the railroad industry and educating the public regarding its role in American history. Galesburg has been intricately linked with railroading since 1849, when the organization of the Peoria and Oquawka Railroads began an era of massive expansions of railroads across North America.

Too often we forget one of the most important aspects of American history—the development and expansion of our transportation system. Modern and efficient transportation links, whether by road, air, or rail, have, and will continue to be, integral to sustaining and expanding our economic development. Railroads were one of the first modes of transportation to efficiently move goods and people across North America. They have helped expand our economy and played an important role in social and cultural life during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

I applaud the National Railroad Hall of Fame, Inc. for their dedication to preserving this history and for their work to educate the public about the important contributions railroads have made to our society. I would like

to thank Congressman LANE EVANS for offering H. Res. 342, and I urge my colleagues to pass this historic legislation.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 342.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on House Resolution 342.

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

There was no objection.

#### BRIAN C. HICKEY POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. PLATTS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2452) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 339 Hicksville Road in Bethpage, New York, as the "Brian C. Hickey Post Office Building".

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2452

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

#### SECTION 1. BRIAN C. HICKEY POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 339 Hicksville Road in Bethpage, New York, shall be known and designated as the "Brian C. Hickey Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the Brian C. Hickey Post Office Building.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PLATTS) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PLATTS).

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PLATTS. 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. 2452.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2452, introduced by my distinguished colleague from the State of New York (Mr. KING), designates the postal facility in Bethpage, New York, as the Brian C. Hickey Post Office Building.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation honors an extraordinary American. For more than 2 years now, people all over the world have heard stories of the uncommon courage of the New York City emergency service personnel who responded to the September 11 terrorist attacks at the World Trade Center in New York. When the first plane hit the north tower, numerous firefighters, law enforcement personnel, medical personnel and others traveled to the World Trade Center, entered the building, headed up the stairs towards the fire, and never appeared again.

Captain Brian Hickey was one of these intensely brave patriots whom we lost on that fateful day. Captain Hickey was with the Fire Department of New York for 20 years. He was the leader of Rescue Company No. 4. On the morning of September 11, 2001, Captain Hickey never hesitated as he put the lives of others ahead of his own and marched up the stairs of the south tower to fight the overpowering blaze. Just before 10 a.m. that morning, the south tower unthinkably collapsed, the first of the two towers to fall.

It is very fitting and appropriate for this House to revisit the courage, the patriotism, and the amazing compassion for fellow Americans exhibited by people like Brian Hickey on September 11, 2001. That unbelievably tragic day united all Americans in a way that no event has done in more than a generation. We will be wise to never forget what this Nation went through on that fateful day and to always remember the sacrifices of Brian Hickey. Captain Hickey made the ultimate sacrifice for our Nation and for his fellow citizens. With the passage of H.R. 2452, this Congress can immortalize Brian Hickey's courageous legacy by naming this post office after him in his hometown of Bethpage, New York.

For all of these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support H.R. 2452, which honors the life and service of Captain Brian C. Hickey. I commend the gentleman from New York for his work on such a meaningful piece of legislation, and I look forward to his words regarding Captain Hickey.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of H.R. 2452, the bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 339 Hicksville Road in Bethpage, New York, as the Brian C. Hickey Post Office Building.

As a member of the House Committee on Government Reform, I am honored

to join my colleague in consideration of this legislation. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2452 was sponsored by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) on June 12, 2003. This measure has met the committee cosponsorship policy and has the support of the entire New York delegation.

Mr. Speaker, Brian Hickey, a 20-year veteran of the New York City Fire Department, was fire captain of Rescue 4, an elite group based in Woodside, Queens, New York. On September 11, 2001, Brian was filling in for a Rescue 3 captain when an emergency signal was sent to the men of Rescue 3 from the Bronx to the World Trade Center minutes after a plane hit the north tower. None of the eight men in the company survived. Mr. Hickey was not formally identified until June of this year when a bone fragment was identified as belonging to him. Prior to that, the only item found 2 years ago at Ground Zero was Brian's battered New York City Fire Department helmet.

Who was Brian Hickey? Well, according to Fire Commissioner Bill Ura, a close friend and colleague, Brian was a 27-year member of the Bethpage Fire District. A lifelong resident of Bethpage, Brian served as chief officer of the Nassau County Fireman's Training Center and as an elected official of the Bethpage Volunteer Fire District.

He was noted as being a loving father, husband, and son. Brian was doing what he was trained to do on September 11, 2001, and that is respond to major fires, rescuing his firefighting colleagues and the public from harm.

Captain Hickey's death on 9-11 was especially tragic because he had just returned to duty after barely escaping death a month earlier when an explosion occurred and he was blown out of a building in Queens, New York. He survived, but three of his men died. As I understand it, Brian Hickey, after recuperating from his injuries, returned to work on Wednesday, September 5, 2001, and perished at the World Trade Center on Tuesday, September 11, 2001.

Mr. Speaker, I extend my profound sympathies to the family and friends of Captain Brian Hickey and commend my colleague for seeking to honor the life and work of a firefighter who died in the line of duty.

Brian Hickey really represented the best of what America has been and what America continues to be, that is, made up of ordinary people who are willing to do extraordinary things when situations and circumstances call for them. So I would urge swift passage of this legislation as we honor the life and the legacy now of Brian Hickey.

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

Mr. PLATTS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the sponsor of this legislation, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING).

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for yielding me this time. I