

Madam Speaker, let me begin by commending both the gentleman from Virginia (Chairman TOM DAVIS); the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PLATTS), the chairman of the subcommittee; and the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN), the ranking member, for their tireless efforts in forging a consensus for H.R. 4259, the Department of Homeland Security Financial Accountability Act, of which I am a proud cosponsor. Our work today will move us one step closer to ensuring that the critical resources utilized for protecting our Nation will finally have an appropriate level of management and oversight.

In an era of soaring Federal deficits, along with challenges in managing a dynamic workforce from distinct legacy agencies, the exemption of DHS's CFO from the requirements of all other Cabinet-level CFOs is irresponsible. Therefore, I am happy to say that the bill before us today is a well-crafted compromise forged after months of negotiation and deliberative discussions. There are several key provisions contained in this legislation. Most importantly, however, the bill amends the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990 to include the Department of Homeland Security, ensuring that the DHS CFO is subject to the same reporting requirements, oversight responsibilities, and congressional scrutiny required for all major Cabinet-level positions. The CFO is in the executive branch.

Through thoughtful analysis and consideration, there have been several significant improvements made to this legislation, which I am happy have occurred. These include a provision requiring the CFO to be a Presidential appointee subject to Senate confirmation. The specific language would require the CFO to report directly to the Secretary of Homeland Security, and authorization for the DHS CFO to become part of the statutorily created CFO Council. To address the need for stronger fiscal oversight, the bill requires DHS to annually review its internal financial controls, ensuring that agency standards for financial management and accountability remain intact.

By adding these provisions to the bill, we are strengthening the accountability, management, and oversight responsibilities of the new Department. As we all recognize, Madam Speaker, the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security was an unprecedented effort by Congress to increase our Nation's preparedness and responsiveness to domestic security threats. The Department is one of the largest in the Federal Government, consisting of 22 legacy agencies, and has perhaps the most important mission of any Federal agency as we struggle to counteract new threats to our domestic security.

To conclude, this is a necessary step forward if we are to develop an efficient and effective agency that is ready to achieve its purpose of protecting our citizens, infrastructure, and borders. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PLATTS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to just thank our ranking member, the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. TOWNS), for his work and his staff's work with me and our subcommittee staff on the majority side. It has certainly been a bipartisan effort, and I am grateful for his assistance.

Madam Speaker, I urge all Members to support the passage of H.R. 4259, the Department of Homeland Security Financial Accountability Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to thank the chairman of the subcommittee for his outstanding work in terms of bringing about a coalition to be able to work out some of the disagreements that we had, to be able to come up, I think, with a very strong bill. So I would like to salute him for that. I would like to salute the staff on both sides, the Democratic side and the Republican side, for their hard work as well.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PLATTS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4259.

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.

#### BOB MICHEL DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OUTPATIENT CLINIC

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4608) to name the Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic located in Peoria, Illinois, as the "Bob Michel Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic".

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4608

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

#### SECTION 1. NAME OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OUTPATIENT CLINIC, PEORIA, ILLINOIS.

The Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic located in Peoria, Illinois, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the "Bob Michel Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic". Any reference to such outpatient clinic in any law, regulation, map, document, record, or other paper of the United States shall be considered to be a reference to the Bob Michel Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic.

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

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the chief sponsor of this very important resolution, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD).

Mr. LAHOOD. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time. I appreciate the work of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs in expediting this and also the majority leader's office.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to rise today to express my strong support for H.R. 4608, legislation that would name the Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic in Peoria, Illinois, after Bob Michel, the former Republican leader of the House of Representatives.

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This year, as we mark the 60th anniversary of D-Day, we as a Nation are taking the time to reflect on those members of the greatest generation who served our country during World War II. Bob Michel is one of those heroes. As a member of the 39th Infantry, he served in England, France, Belgium and Germany. He fought from the beaches of Normandy to the Battle of the Bulge, where he was wounded by machine gun fire. His service earned him the Purple Heart, two Bronze Stars and four Battle Stars.

After the war, Bob Michel continued his service to our country and to our community, first as a congressional staffer, then as a Member of this House for 38 distinguished years.

He served 6 years as the minority whip and 15 years as the Republican leader, the longest-serving Republican leader in the history of the House of Representatives. During his career, he never forgot about those who served with him in World War II and those who served in uniform after him in peacetime and conflicts that followed.

He knows firsthand the sacrifice veterans have made for our country, so he was instrumental in gaining funding that established the VA clinic in Peoria, Illinois, in 1979, a source of care and comfort for thousands of veterans throughout central Illinois. In 2003, there were more than 42,000 visits to the Peoria clinic.

Respect for Bob Michel is certainly widespread. In 1989, President Reagan awarded the Presidential Citizens Award Medal, which recognizes individuals who performed exemplary deeds for their country and fellow citizens, to then minority leader Bob Michel.

In 1994, President Clinton honored Mr. Michel with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Nation's highest civilian award. In 2003, Mr. Michel became one of the first recipients of the Congressional Distinguished Service Award presented to him by the gentleman from Illinois (Speaker HASTERT), and in June of this year, Mr. Michel returned to France with the gentleman from Illinois (Speaker HASTERT) and was one

of only 100 people to become a Knight of the Legion of Honor, one of the highest honors paid by the French Government to a noncitizen.

Bob Michel, a member of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, AMVETS, the Distinguished American Veterans and the Military Order of the Purple Heart, continues to be an example of patriotism and the exemplary public service to which we all aspire. I am honored to call him my mentor and my friend of more than 20 years, and I know many in this House, both staff and fellow Members alike, share these feelings with me.

On the top of many other accolades and honors, I can think of no better way to honor his lifetime of public service than to add his name to a facility that serves other patriots during their time of need. So I urge my colleagues today to help honor Bob Michel by designating the veterans clinic in Peoria, Illinois, as the Bob Michel Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic.

I want to particularly thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Chairman SMITH), and as I said, the majority leader's office, the staff on both sides of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs for so quickly taking action on this legislation, and I urge passage.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4608, a bill introduced by a former member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) to rename the Peoria, Illinois, VA clinic after former Congressman Bob Michel. For 2 decades, Congressman Michel served Peoria as a Member of this body. In the last 6 years of his tenure, he was elected to serve as minority leader, a post he maintained until his retirement in 1995.

While I missed the opportunity to work directly with Congressman Michel, I understand he was an effective and highly respected leader who worked well with both sides of the aisle. He is remembered here for expert political insight, a congenial manner and being a true gentleman. I hope all Members will join me in supporting this bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Let me urge all of my colleagues to vote for H.R. 4608, offered by my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD), which would name the outpatient clinic in Peoria after the very distinguished former minority leader, Bob Michel. I cannot think of a person more deserving of this honor.

Bob Michel had an illustrious career as a Member of this body for 38 years. Having been elected in the 85th Congress, Bob was the minority leader for

14 years of his time here. Prior to that, he was the whip for three Congresses.

Madam Speaker, aside from his political career, which was outlined by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD), Bob Michel was a distinguished veteran of World War II. Our colleague, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) talked about that, and for those of us who serve on the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, we look at a guy like Bob Michel and say, he is the quintessential veteran. He is a guy that served honorably, rarely talks about it, was honored by our country for his valor, and for his suffering with a Purple Heart, and he is a real example of the greatest generation.

He continues to give and to give mightily. Bob set an example as minority leader of statesmanship and civility in both his words and his actions. He taught those of us who were fortunate enough to serve with him, and I was elected in the 97th Congress, that one can disagree without being disagreeable, and that life in politics can and should be balanced with outside interests and pursuits.

Bob Michel was a patriot in all of the meaning that that word has. He was an outstanding Member of Congress, and I salute his fearless leadership, his long service and I salute him for his humility, something you do not hear about too often in this place. He could do great deeds, and he was the last person who would ever tell you about it.

He was just a tremendous human being, and is a tremendous human being, and this, plus all of the other accolades that he gets and should get, is just one more that says, "Bob, we love you, we thank you for your service, and you deserve this."

Again, I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) for his sensitivity and his foresight in naming this outpatient clinic in honor of our very distinguished former leader, Bob Michel.

Mr. MICHAUD. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS) who has continually fought for veterans' issues.

Mr. EVANS. Madam Speaker, I am proud to have served with Bob Michel. In the 1980s he represented the greater Peoria region, and the Peoria clinic serves many of my constituents in Fulton and Knox Counties.

Bob Michel is a rare breed in today's Congress. He knew the art of compromise well. He worked well with Members on both sides of the aisle, was a worthy adversary on the floor, but forgot about the battles once he was out of the Chamber. He was really everybody's friend here. He worked with Members on both sides, and most importantly, he played fair. This is a fitting tribute to a former colleague and friend.

We have a lot of good memories of Bob, and my good friend, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) has done an excellent job of filling his shoes. I want to thank him for bringing

this legislation to the floor and I thank the chairman for your tribute.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER).

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I thank my chairman for yielding me the time.

It is my great privilege to rise this afternoon as the House considers H.R. 4608, a bill to name the Peoria, Illinois, Department of Veterans' Affairs Outpatient Clinic for Bob Michel, a great statesman and former minority leader in this very body.

Much has been said and much more will be said today about Bob Michael's valiant military service, about his service to God and country above self and about his contributions as minority leader of this great body.

After spending the 60th anniversary of D-Day with Leader Michel on the shores of Utah Beach, he was there on D-Day plus four, I cannot think of a better way to reflect upon this great patriot's leadership than through his own words. Bob Michel understands that a strong national defense and the sacrifices necessary in order to reach and maintain it are fundamental to this Nation's greatness.

I reflect on a speech from Memorial Day 1992 at Washington, Illinois, where he said, "We cannot afford to go through that old American three-step dance with national defense. It goes like this: In time of danger, unity. In time of victory, euphoria. And in time of peace, amnesia. We just forgot what the world is like, and we think that peace is just given to you. Well, it is not given. It has to be won by sacrifice, by vigilance, by courage. Each generation has to be prepared to do the job."

These words are of particular value to the generation at war today, and we can find guidance in a 1993 Washington Times article in which Leader Michel spoke of the need to have government that is at once limited and strong. "Government is not the enemy. Wasteful government, intrusive government, irresponsible government, corrupt government is the enemy. The people of the United States are not happy with the government when it does not work well, but make no mistake about it, Americans from the beginning have realized that the government system left to us by the Founding Fathers is the best in all the world."

Well, this statement could very well have been made by one of my constituents in the Florida panhandle who sent me here to represent the very same ideals. Leader Michel held himself to the highest standards of integrity and expected the same from his House colleagues.

To the New York Times in 1988, he said, "In over 30 years as a Member of this institution, I have kept my word, and I expect others to do the very same."

There is a lesson in those words for every public servant. As minority leader, Bob Michel never forgot who sent

him to Washington or what they sent him here to do. To a newspaper back home in 1987, he said, "I have come to learn that leadership does not mean two hoots in hell to most folks back home if it tends to distract you in any way from your primary concern for them." I think most Americans would agree today.

In a speech before the Illinois State Convention of AMVETS in 1956, this veteran who served with the 39th Infantry Regiment as a combat infantryman in England, France, Belgium and Germany for nearly 10 years was wounded by machine gun fire and subsequently awarded two Bronze Stars, the Purple Heart and four Battle Stars, said this, "As veterans of World War II and Korea, the awful imprint of those conflicts is still fresh on our minds, and no one appreciates more than we that we are at peace today. Just as the fate of our country and the freedom-loving nations rested on our shoulders in time of war, so are we obliged to shoulder the responsibilities of establishing and preserving a lasting peace."

Madam Speaker, I commend my colleague, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD), for introducing this measure. It is my hope that upon its passage, the Senate will act swiftly so we can get on with providing this tribute to the service and life of a man who has done so much, not only for the Land of Lincoln, but for the man whose valiant military service, conservative leadership and steadfast commitment to traditional American values have helped reshape this Nation; and I urge my colleagues to support this measure, a befitting recognition of the legacy of this man who has borne the fate of this country and freedom-loving nations upon his shoulders.

Madam Speaker, it is very richly deserved.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS).

Mr. LEWIS of California. Madam Speaker, I thank very much my colleague for yielding me time.

I come to the floor to express my deep appreciation for the House's recognition of our colleague, former Member of the House and Republican Leader, Robert Michel, as the House goes about naming a veterans medical clinic after Robert H. Michel, a fabulous Member of the House who reflects much of that which is the best of this place.

He was a Member of the House who for many years served as the minority leader during much of the time that I was a member of that caucus. As he carried forward that responsibility, he also carried forward some of the most important qualities of leadership in this House. He absolutely recognized that beyond the policy work that we do, that friendship on both sides of the aisle was fundamental to our success. And Bob Michel understood that as we walked away from the Chamber, we

could be friends. And time and time again, he demonstrated the value of that because he was able to accomplish things as minority leader that all too often these days we find not getting accomplished.

But, indeed, more important than all of that, Bob Michel represented his people in Illinois in a way like few ever have. He is a fabulous person and to have a medical clinic named after him is very, very appropriate, but particularly appropriate in this sense. It is a part of the past history, but at one time I had the privilege as serving as chairman of the subcommittee that handles veterans affairs and medical care problems. We all know that we are all very proud of the amount of money that we are, from time to time, able to get appropriated for veterans services. All too seldom, however, are the people who work here in an organized sense on behalf of veterans, all too seldom are they willing to go down to the communities where those services are actually delivered.

We have known for a long, long time that the big hospitals too often are too far away from where the services are needed, and too often the VSOs do not worry too much about whether the veterans are getting the service they need at home.

These medical clinics are designed to recognize that the huge hospital of the past is not necessarily the best way to deliver service in a local community either today or in the future. So this medical clinic as a part of the VA system appropriately reflects the changing demands and needs for medical services for our veterans; but most importantly in this instance, we recognize the fabulous service and the understanding of veterans' needs exhibited by our colleague, Bob Michel.

Mr. MICHAUD. 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, we have no further requests for time, and 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. 4608.

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. LAHOOD. Madam 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.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LAHOOD. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4608.

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

There was no objection.

#### PRINCIPAL OFFICE OF UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS AND SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING NEW VETERANS COURTHOUSE AND JUSTICE CENTER

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3936) to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the principal office of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims to be at any location in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, rather than only in the District of Columbia, and expressing the sense of Congress that a dedicated Veterans Courthouse and Justice Center should be provided for that Court and those it serves and should be located, if feasible, at a site owned by the United States that is part of or proximate to the Pentagon Reservation, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3936

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

#### SECTION 1. PRINCIPAL OFFICE OF UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS.

Section 7255 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking "District of Columbia" and inserting "Washington, D.C., metropolitan area".

#### SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING NEW VETERANS COURTHOUSE AND JUSTICE CENTER.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Every Article I court of the United States other than the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims is located in a dedicated courthouse.

(2) The United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims has since its creation in 1988 been located in a commercial office building in the District of Columbia.

(3) That court should be housed in a dedicated courthouse, as are all other Article I courts.

(4) A dedicated courthouse for that court constituting a Veterans Courthouse and Justice Center would express the gratitude and respect of the Nation for the sacrifices of those serving and those who have served in the Armed Forces, and their families.

(5) Location of such a courthouse and judicial center in an area proximate to the Pentagon, Arlington National Cemetery, and the Air Force Memorial (as planned) in Arlington, Virginia would be symbolically significant of the high esteem that the Nation holds for its veterans.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) a dedicated Veterans Courthouse and Justice Center should be provided for the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims; and

(2) the Secretary of Defense, in cooperation with the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, the Secretary of Veterans