

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

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the House Committee on Government Reform, I am pleased to join my colleague in consideration of H.R. 4632, legislation designating the United States postal facility in St. Albans, New York, after Archie Spigner. This measure, which was unanimously reported by our committee on July 21, 2004, was introduced by the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) on July 21, 2004. H.R. 4632 enjoys the support and cosponsorship of the entire New York delegation.

A native New Yorker, Archie Spigner was born and educated in New York. He was called early on into the world of politics and community activism.

In 1974, Mr. Spigner began his first term as a city councilman from Southeast Queens. As a member of the New York City Council, Mr. Spigner chaired the committees on Housing and Building, Economic Development, and the Legislative Office of Budget Review.

As a result of his legislative prowess, he was able to assume the post of deputy majority leader, the second highest position in the New York City Council.

Mr. Spigner served on the advisory board of the National League of Cities, the City Council Budget Negotiating Team, and liaison for the Queens delegation. As district leader and executive member of the Guy R. Brewer United Democratic Club, Mr. Spigner was instrumental in electing the first African American Supreme Court Justice, Assembly member, State Senator, and Congress member in the Borough of Queens.

He was also instrumental in the campaigns for the Honorable David Dinkins, former mayor of the City of New York; the Honorable Percy Sutton, former Manhattan borough president, the Honorable Carl McCall, former state comptroller; former Congressman Floyd H. Flake; and my friend and colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS).

Archie Spigner retired from the New York City Council in 2001; and although retired, Mr. Spigner is still involved in politics and community affairs.

Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS), for seeking to honor this political legacy of City Council Member Archie Spigner in this manner. I urge swift passage of H.R. 4632.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY).

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in honoring former Council Member Archie Spigner. I had the great honor of serving with him as a member of the Housing and Buildings and Economic Development Committee of the New York City Council, a committee which he chaired for many years with great distinction, with great judgment, honesty, and fairness. In a city that has a terrific need, a

deep need for affordable housing, he was one of the truly outstanding leaders in our city in the area of working to build more housing that is affordable, and truly as a leader in our city, serving for many years as the deputy majority leader.

He was also active on a national level, with the League of Cities. He dedicated, really, his life to the problems of cities; and he used to say that one of the great challenges of the next century would be who pays for the cities, with their ailing infrastructure and their many, many needs for housing and other areas.

He not only was active in the National League of Cities. He was on the Finance Committee and the City Committee on the Budget, and I had the honor of serving with him on the Committee on the Budget where he was a great bridge-builder. He would often negotiate compromises that would enable us to move a budget to the floor for a vote. He is an outstanding person, kind and wonderful. He is very active politically also and played a major role in the election of one of my good friends and colleagues, the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS), along with many other important leaders in New York City and State.

Even though Archie retired from the City Council in 2001, he has continued to be an important leader and adviser on both the city and local level. He is a terrific person. To know him is to love him.

I am delighted to join my colleagues today in naming this important building after him and in really applauding his lifetime of service to the communities in Queens and the City and the State of New York.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my colleague and fellow New Yorker, Mr. MEEKS in supporting this bill, H.R. 4632, to name the post office in St. Albans, Queens, New York after my old and close friend, Archie Spigner.

Archie Spigner and I go back a long time in the political life of New York; myself in Harlem and Archie in St. Albans. He has been providing leadership in his community for nearly four decades. He has provided the shoulders for many of our current successful leaders. It is unfortunate that term limits have deprived his community of his representation. Archie held his seat from 1974 until term limits ended his service in the New York City Council in 2001.

As District Leader and Executive Member of the Guy R. Brewer United Democratic Club, he was instrumental in electing the first African-American Supreme Court Justice, Assembly Member, State Senator and Congress Member in the Borough of Queens. He was a leader in the campaigns of the Hon. David Dinkins, Hon. Percy Sutton, Hon. Carl McCall, our former colleague Congressman Floyd H. Flake and the sponsor of this bill, the current member from St. Albans, our distinguished colleague GREG MEEKS. He and I have been allies on countless battles in the effort to provide equality, opportunity, and justice for our constituents, for New Yorkers and Americans.

Having a public building in this historic African American community named after as an

esteemed member of the community as Archie Spigner is quite fitting.

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I come before you today to honor a man that has given much to my district and asked for very little.

Former City Council Member Archie Spigner is considered the Godfather of African American politics in my district in southeast Queens. A mentor to many of our current successful leaders, Archie held his seat from 1974 until term limits ended his service in the New York City Council in 2001.

As a member of the City Council, Archie rose to the post of Deputy Majority Leader—the second highest position in the Council. His legislative responsibilities included Chairmanships of the Committees on Housing and Buildings, Economic Development and the Legislative Office of Budget Review. He also served on the Council's Budget Negotiating Team and acted as liaison for the Council's 14 member Queens delegation. He was elected to and served on the advisory board of the National League of Cities, an advocacy group for our Nation's urban areas.

As District Leader and Executive Member of the Guy R. Brewer United Democratic Club, he was instrumental in electing Queens' first African-American Supreme Court Justice, the first African-American Assembly Member, the first African-American State Senator, and the first African-American Member of Congress. He played a pivotal role the mayoral campaigns of David N. Dinkins and Percy Sutton, as well as the gubernatorial campaign of H. Carl McCall. Archie helped elect my predecessor to Congress, and of course, provided indispensable support and counsel when I sought this office.

A post office facility bearing Archie's name, located a few blocks from the headquarters from which Archie's political organizing emanated will be a reminder to the community he served long and well of the gratitude they owe to this man who made a difference in their everyday lives and effectively represented them in the corridors of New York City government.

Please join me in designating the Saint Albans postal facility the Archie Spigner Post Office Building, in honor of this accomplished gentleman.

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

Mr. TURNER of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 4632, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TURNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4632.

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.

HONORING FORMER PRESIDENT  
WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON  
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 58TH  
BIRTHDAY

Mr. TURNER of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to

the resolution (H. Res. 717) honoring former President William Jefferson Clinton on the occasion of his 58th birthday.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 717

Whereas former President William Jefferson Clinton was born in Hope, Arkansas, on August 19, 1946;

Whereas William Jefferson Clinton attended Georgetown University as an undergraduate and received a Rhodes Scholarship in 1968;

Whereas William Jefferson Clinton received a law degree from Yale University in 1973;

Whereas William Jefferson Clinton established a record of public service as Attorney General of Arkansas, Governor of Arkansas, and Chairman of the National Governors Association;

Whereas William Jefferson Clinton campaigned for and won the Democratic nomination for President in 1992;

Whereas William Jefferson Clinton was elected the 42d President of the United States in 1992 and was reelected for a second term in 1996;

Whereas during William Jefferson Clinton's time in office the United States experienced 8 years of economic expansion, job growth and the transformation of a budget deficit into a budget surplus;

Whereas William Jefferson Clinton rallied the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to put an end to ethnic cleansing in the Balkans and to depose the murderous regime of Slobodan Milosevic, actions which eventually led to the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords;

Whereas William Jefferson Clinton played a major role in the Good Friday Peace Accords which finally brought peace to warring Northern Ireland; and

Whereas, in the words of President George W. Bush, William Jefferson Clinton "showed a deep and far-ranging knowledge of public policy, a great compassion for people in need, and the forward-looking spirit the Americans like in a President": Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives honors former President William Jefferson Clinton on the occasion of his 58th birthday on August 19, 2004, and extends best wishes to him and his family.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TURNER) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) each will control 20 minutes.

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TURNER of Ohio. 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 the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. TURNER of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the House of Representatives, I gladly wish former President Bill Clinton a happy belated birthday. Last month, on August 19, President Clinton turned 58, and House Resolution 717 salutes our

Nation's 42nd President on that occasion.

Mr. Speaker, our well-known honoree today was born in the small town of Hope, Arkansas, as William Jefferson Blyth, IV in 1946, 3 months after the death of his father. After his mother remarried a few years later, the future President took the name of his stepfather, Clinton, as a teenager. He came to college here in Washington at Georgetown University and later earned a law degree at Yale. He entered politics and went on to become Attorney General and then Governor of the State of Arkansas.

Then, Bill Clinton, the little-known chief executive of Arkansas, shocked the world when he sought and was elected to the Presidency in 1992. Four years later, he became the first Democrat since Franklin Delano Roosevelt to win a second term. His depth of policy knowledge and poignant speaking ability served him very well while he presided over the Nation for 8 years.

A key event of Clinton's Presidency was the brokerage of peace in the Balkans. The Dayton Peace Accords, which ended the war in the Balkans, were negotiated at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, located in my district. Today, the Dayton Peace Accords remains a significant foreign policy achievement of the Clinton administration.

Mr. Speaker, today it is especially gratifying to wish a happy birthday to President Clinton because of all that he has gone through in recent days. As we all know, the former President underwent a 4-hour quadruple coronary artery bypass operation in New York City a week ago today.

□ 1545

Fortunately, we understand President Clinton is doing well and should make a full recovery over the next few weeks. Without question, the thoughts and the prayers of the House of Representatives are with President Clinton.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to wish President Clinton a happy birthday at a time when he has been on the minds of so many Americans.

I thank my colleague in the Committee on Government Reform, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY), for introducing this House resolution.

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

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

On August 19, William Jefferson Clinton, our 42nd President, celebrated his 58th birthday. Today, we honor him not just for serving as our Nation's 42nd President, but for the legacy that President Bush recently described as "a deep and far-ranging knowledge of public policy, a great compassion for people in need, and the forward-looking spirit Americans like in a President."

We honor President Clinton for presiding over our Nation's longest ever

economic expansion, largest ever budget surplus, and the growth of 22 million jobs during his Presidency. We honor President Clinton for projecting American power on the world stage, to further the cause of international peace and understanding, without antagonizing our historic allies, and we honor him for helping to broker the Good Friday Accords for Northern Ireland, engaging in Middle East peace talks, and bringing an end to ethnic cleansing in the Balkans. We honor President Clinton for encouraging Americans to care for their fellow men and women, creating AmeriCorps, which engages more than 50,000 Americans each year in community service.

At this moment, President Clinton is recovering from an unexpected but perhaps life-saving surgery in New York City. We in Congress are thankful for President Clinton's improved health and send forth our thoughts and prayers to him and his family, especially Senator HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON and his daughter Chelsea. We wish him a complete and speedy recovery.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Chairman TOM DAVIS) for moving this resolution through his committee in a speedy manner and to the House leadership for bringing it to the floor for this consideration today.

Mr. Speaker, from his birth in a town called Hope in the State of Arkansas through his education at Georgetown University, Oxford and Yale Law School, to his service in Arkansas as Attorney General, Governor and Chairman of the National Governors' Association, to his two terms as President of the United States, to now as a private citizen, still engaged and thoughtful on our Nation's public policy, we honor President Clinton. President Clinton, happy birthday, and we hope you get well soon.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS).

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, as one who grew up, went to school, still have strong family ties, social ties in the State of Arkansas, on the occasion of President William Jefferson Clinton's 58th birthday, it is with great pride that I stand to celebrate and to honor the life of the man who epitomizes the American dream and makes the Horatio Alger story become real.

Born in the tiny town of Hope, Arkansas, on August 19, 1946, President Clinton demonstrated from an early age the determination and vision that would ultimately take him to the White House and lead our country to a period of economic prosperity that has been unrivaled by any period in American history.

As a man who always fought for those who could not always fight for themselves, Bill Clinton after graduating from Yale Law School spurned

private practice and began a career in public service.

President Clinton began his political career after being elected Attorney General in 1976. He went on to serve as the Governor of Arkansas, and by the time Governor Clinton left Arkansas for the White House the State of Arkansas had been transformed from a State that faced large deficits and polarizing issues into a shining example of what government can do for its citizens when those in government put aside partisan differences in the best interest of what is right.

As America's 42nd President, Bill Clinton faced an even more daunting task, and in 1992, the American people were fed up with government. The economy was in bad shape. Unemployment was at a record high, and it was a time when many American parents struggled with basic financial decisions such as what holiday presents they could afford to buy their children.

By the time President Clinton left office 8 years later, he had led our country out of this darkness and into one of the brightest eras in American history, the lowest unemployment rate in modern times, the lowest inflation rate in 30 years, the highest home ownership in the United States history, and dropping crime rates in many American cities. Contrary to the bogus stereotype thrown at Democrats, he proposed the first balanced budget in decades, balanced the budget, and then went on to produce a surplus.

Since leaving office, President Clinton has continued his lifelong odyssey of working for those in need. Working from his office in Harlem, President Clinton has remained engaged on many social issues. Just last year, he brokered an historic agreement with four generic drug companies to provide low-cost AIDS drugs in developing countries. The world is a better place today because of the 58 years President Clinton has given us so far, and we look forward to many more.

We are pleased to hear that President Clinton is expected to make a full recovery from his bypass surgery. We certainly wish him and his family the best, and take this opportunity to say thank you, Mr. President, and happy birthday.

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

I came to Congress with President Clinton in 1992. It was called the Year of the Woman, where many people voted for women candidates, not as a slogan, but as a force to be reckoned with, and we came to Washington and we worked together, not only for women, children and families, but during this time we doubled the funding for breast cancer research, banned assault weapons, put more police on the streets and more teachers in the classroom. We narrowed the gap between those in poverty and those that are affluent, which is a good trend for this country, an important trend.

During his 8 years, we had really I could say the best economy in my life-

time, the first balanced budget. He came to Washington with a \$250 billion deficit, and when he left, it was a huge, huge surplus.

I remember very much his hard work on his initiative to reinvent government and to make government more accountable to the people that we serve.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Indiana (Ms. CARSON).

Ms. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, one of my favorite passages is that all good and perfect gifts come from on high, and we are here today to renew a celebration of a President on the occasion of his 58th birthday, William Jefferson Clinton, 42nd President of the United States.

What I admire most about President Clinton, he was an extraordinary individual who related very well to ordinary people, and the ordinary people of this world loved Bill Clinton.

He was born on August 19, 1946, in Hope, Arkansas, and began a record of stellar public service to the country and humanity as a very young man.

President Clinton's administration would be noted for the creation of 22 million jobs, the rallying of international support to stop the ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, and reaffirming U.S. recognition of Africa as a continent of the birthplace of humanity with many countries, cultures and vast potentials.

I had the privilege of going to Africa with Mr. Clinton and saw his concern and compassion for the women and children and men who were battling AIDS and saw how he has made the battle against AIDS and HIV a focal point of his foundation's activities, which does not surprise me.

I want to say to the President, in the event that he receives this video message of his colleagues in the United States House of Representatives, I wish you a rapid recovery. You, unlike me, knew what you were going into as an open heart surgery recipient. I did not know it and was not fast enough to have it explained to me. I just got it, and I want to wish you well. I am so happy it turned out for you as well as it did, and God bless.

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

President Clinton's leadership was instrumental in expanding freedom and democracy around the world and really uniting a divided world. He was a uniter, and he worked to bring people together, and he was very, very loved. People felt very comfortable about Bill Clinton and everybody liked him.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CORRINE BROWN).

(Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I, along with my con-

stituents and all of the American people, want to extend a happy birthday to William Jefferson Clinton. His leadership in so many areas is sorely missed, in particular as today on the assault rifles that without his leadership we would not have passed. Many Members gave up their seats in the House of Representatives because they felt it was the right and honorable thing to do to protect the American people from these assault rifles.

We had leadership in President Clinton in so many areas. He had the foresight to appoint Jesse Brown as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, who fought for the veterans. His contributions as far as economic development, housing, laying the foundation for a program that is being gutted under this last administration, it just goes on and on.

So I would like to put my comments in the RECORD and let President Clinton know that I dearly love him and the people dearly miss him.

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

I want to express the admiration and support of the New York delegation, many of whom are in New York City now at 9/11 events and will be joining me in this Congress in tributes in writing later.

Let me just end by saying that Bill Clinton is loved and admired by millions of Americans and by countless others around the world, and we want him to know that he, as he is recovering, is in the thoughts and prayers of this Congress and the country. We are with him in his courageous battle to heal himself so that he can return to his good works and helping other people.

So happy birthday, Mr. President, and get well soon.

Mr. Speaker, seeing no other speakers, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TURNER of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It was during the Clinton administration when Congress was controlled by Republicans that the Federal deficit started to shrink. It was not until the fiscal year 1995 that the Republican budget was in place that deficits turned into surpluses.

□ 1600

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support the adoption of House Resolution 717 that honors former President William Jefferson Clinton.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in enthusiastic support of H. Res. 717, honoring former President William Jefferson Clinton on the occasion of his 58th birthday. I wish him happiness—and health—in his 58th year.

The outlines of President Clinton's story have become familiar to us. Born in the small town of Hope, Arkansas, the young Bill Clinton began cultivating the values—compassion, perseverance and commitment to social justice—that would guide him throughout his Presidency.

He benefitted from the love and will of his mother—Virginia Clinton—a widow and survivor of domestic violence who worked tirelessly to support her children. He was a dutiful son, a protective brother, and a gifted student. In college, Clinton juggled coursework with an internship for Senator Fulbright, relishing his introduction to politics. Awarded the prestigious Rhodes Scholarship, Clinton went on to Oxford University and Yale Law School. There he met his match and wife-to-be in the form of a driven Hillary Rodham.

Mr. Speaker, it was as President that Mr. Clinton captured the hearts, the imagination, the hope, of so many Americans. A post-Cold War President, Bill Clinton believed we must become a domestic as well as a military superpower. He knew our strength came from more than just our military might, but from our commitment to the ordinary men and women of this country. He nurtured our country's strength through economic growth, support for the middle class and a ladder for the poor.

Bill Clinton forged a Third Way, a new path to bipartisanship that remains a model for lawmakers and citizens alike. He made our streets safer with the Brady bill, he made our working families stronger with the Earned Income Tax Credit, and he made our economy soar by balancing the budget and erasing the deficit. He protected our environment, he created jobs, he strengthened alliances across the world and he labored for peace.

Mr. Speaker, President Clinton continues to be a devoted public servant, crusading against the global AIDS pandemic. His foundation has succeeded in lowering the cost of HIV/AIDS tests and treatment for millions of people in developing countries across the world.

I am fortunate to call Bill Clinton a friend. I have seen him light up a crowded room, and I have seen him connect with struggling individuals in a way that only he can. A musician and a musician, he is a Blues man with soul. He knows the sorrow of life's harsh realities, and he knows the joy that comes from striving towards our collective potential. Most of all, Bill Clinton is a man of heart. I wish him—and his heart—continued health. I thank Congresswoman MALONEY for sponsoring this resolution and I urge my colleagues to support its passage.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to add to the overwhelming support of this House for this resolution honoring former President Bill Clinton as he celebrates his 58th birthday.

President Clinton is a gifted and charismatic leader who has devoted his professional life to public service.

His administration was marked with great economic success, transforming quadrupled budget deficits into a budget surplus. He achieved the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the lowest percentage of Americans on welfare 29 years, and the lowest inflation rate in 33 years.

During his presidency, the economy expanded by 50 percent in real terms, and when he left office, the U.S. had a gross national product of \$10 trillion—one-quarter of the entire world economic output.

During his administration, 15 million jobs were created and average wages rose. Home ownership rates were the highest in history. Funding public education, saving Social Security, and ensuring health care for all Americans were priorities.

Our economic success was a sign of stability that sparked growth in domestic and international markets.

He was a great supporter of human rights and promoting peace through humanitarian relief efforts, refugee assistance, and aiding in peace process negotiations.

I was honored to accompany President Clinton on historic trips to Northern Ireland and Africa. We went as ambassadors of peace and reconciliation, and it was heartening to see how well received we were by our international hosts. The people of this country were welcomed and well respected abroad.

I have great respect and admiration for him personally and for his outstanding leadership of our great country, and I believe his legacy will long enjoy the approval of a grateful nation.

I extend to him my best wishes for a happy birthday, and I offer my wholehearted support for this resolution.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PETRI). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TURNER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, House Resolution 717, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### THOMAS E. CREEK DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4836) to name the Department of Veterans Affairs medical center in Amarillo, Texas, as the "Thomas E. Creek Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center."

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4836

*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 MEDICAL CENTER IN AMARILLO, TEXAS.

The Department of Veterans Affairs medical center in Amarillo, Texas, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the "Thomas E. Creek Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center". Any reference to that medical center in any law, regulation, map, document, record, or other paper of the United States shall be considered to be a reference to the Thomas E. Creek Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

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

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

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4836 would name the VA Medical Center in the City of

Amarillo, Texas, for Lance Corporal Thomas E. Creek. This heroic Marine gave his life on February 13, 1969, to save fellow Marines by falling on a grenade near Cam Lo, Vietnam. He was awarded our Nation's highest military declaration, the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Lance Corporal Creek was only 18 years old when he went above and beyond the call of duty while serving as rifleman with Company I, 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines. He was one of three Medal of Honor recipients who served with the 9th Marines during the Vietnam War.

I commend my distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. THORNBERRY), for introducing H.R. 4836 to honor one of our Nation's heroes, and I will momentarily yield to him.

The VA medical center in Amarillo, Texas, Mr. Speaker, opened in 1940 and played an important role during and after World War II in caring for and rehabilitating U.S. servicemembers. The medical center today provides general medical and surgical treatment and alcohol rehabilitation and vocational rehab services for veterans. Expansion and renovation projects have kept the facility modern, and it currently has some 69 inpatient beds and 120 nursing care beds. I think it is entirely fitting and appropriate to remember the ultimate sacrifice of this young brave Marine by naming the Amarillo VA Medical Center for him.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. THORNBERRY), the prime author of this bill.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH); and the ranking member, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS); the subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS); and all the members of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, including John Bradley of the staff, for their assistance and support with this measure.

I also want to thank all my Texas colleagues. Each of them is a cosponsor of this bill, as is the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL), to whom I am also grateful.

I want to acknowledge my staff members who have worked on this issue, especially Sylvia Nugent and Bryan Whitworth.

I also want to recognize Larry Milam, Selden Hale, Pat Cunningham, Marvin Graham, and the other veterans of the Texas panhandle region who initiated this effort, as well as the veterans organizations which have lent their enthusiastic support, including the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Vietnam Veterans of America, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and AMVETS.

I want to acknowledge as well the excellent work in exploring Thomas