

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

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken tomorrow.

□ 1530

COMMEMORATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 326) commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 326

Whereas the Vietnam Veterans Memorial marks the 25th anniversary of its dedication in 2007;

Whereas the Memorial commemorates the sacrifice of more than 58,000 men and women who lost their lives during the Vietnam War;

Whereas the Memorial honors the sacrifice of the 153,303 men and women who were wounded during the conflict;

Whereas the Memorial honors the more than 3,000,000 men and women who served in the United States Armed Forces in Southeast Asia;

Whereas the Memorial has served as a powerful force for national healing;

Whereas over four million people visit the Memorial each year to pay tribute to lost loved ones and remember the sacrifice of those who served the United States during the Vietnam War; and

Whereas the Memorial is a testament to the dedication of the private individuals and corporations that raised \$8,400,000 to build the Memorial: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) honors the sacrifice of the men and women who lost their lives in service of the United States during the Vietnam War;

(2) recognizes the service of the men and women who were members of the United States Armed Forces during the Vietnam War; and

(3) commemorates the 25th anniversary of the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDEN). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Hampshire (Ms. SHEA-PORTER) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Hampshire.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 326 commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial right here in America's capital city. I thank the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOOLEY) for bringing this measure before the House.

In capturing the tremendous sacrifice of our servicemembers, this memorial has helped our Nation heal from the losses our communities suffered throughout the Vietnam war. Maya Lin, the wall's designer, created the monument in such a way as to "convey the sense of overwhelming numbers while unifying those individuals into a whole." The Vietnam Memorial is a testament to the ultimate sacrifice those who serve in uniform have made in defense of our Nation.

Over 4 million people visit the memorial each year. No one leaves unaffected by the experience. House Resolution 326 is our way, as Members of the United States Congress and citizens of this great Nation, of taking an important moment to pause in reflection and in gratitude for the freedoms we share today because of the contributions of our brave men and women in uniform in Vietnam.

Let us also take this opportunity to recognize those who are serving us on the front lines of battle in Iraq and Afghanistan and other hotspots around the world. Their sacrifice and devotion to duty continue in today's warriors. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 326 which commemorates the 25th anniversary of the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

The idea of the memorial began in 1977 as a way to make amends for the indifference that had met Vietnam veterans who returned home to this country. It was also conceived as a place of honor for the brave young men and women who served and died in the Vietnam war including, Mr. Speaker, my Pony League baseball teammate, Dick Ulmer, and to give the estimated 43 million Americans, parents, brothers, sisters, wives, husbands and children, and yes, including those of 1st Lieutenant Ulmer of North Augusta, South Carolina, so directly affected by the losses in Vietnam a place to remember, to mourn, to reflect, and hopefully to heal.

Five years later, in 1982, ground was broken for the memorial and the first panel of the Wall, as the memorial is called today, was unveiled. Since that time, the Wall has become not only the most visited memorial on the National Mall with more than 4 million visitors annually, but also a very powerful and a moving place for recollection, solace and comfort for Vietnam veterans and their families.

As a place to honor the more than 58,200 servicemembers who died during

the Vietnam war, and that number is just astounding as we think about the current situation in Iraq; and, of course, we mourn each and every one of those 3,600 lives that have been lost over a 4-year period of time. But Vietnam, 58,200 servicemembers died. The Wall has also become a national symbol of healing and coming together.

In short, the Wall has achieved a purpose and effect well beyond the original purpose, and no one who goes there can escape the emotional, deep impact that it conveys.

Mr. Speaker, it is entirely proper and fitting to commemorate the Wall's 25th anniversary. It honors the selfless sacrifice of not only those who died, but also the service of more than 3 million Americans who served in the Armed Forces in Southeast Asia. And beyond that, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial has helped this Nation reunite after one of the most divisive times in this Nation's history. For these reasons and many more, I urge all Members to support this resolution. I look for a unanimous vote.

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

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOOLEY).

Ms. HOOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding me this time.

I first want to thank Chairmen SKELTON, RAHALL and FILNER for their strong support of this resolution and their continued leadership on issues impacting our veterans.

I rise today to urge my colleagues to join me and the 108 cosponsors of House Resolution 326 in commemorating the 25th anniversary of the dedication of the Vietnam Memorial on the National Mall in Washington, DC.

This November marks the 25th year of the memorial's healing presence. As a Nation, we are eternally grateful to the 58,253 men and women who lost their lives because of their service to the United States during the Vietnam war. I particularly want to honor and remember the 709 Oregonians whose names are etched on the Wall for their service to our country. Every time I visit the Wall, I am profoundly moved by their sacrifice. I know my fellow Oregonians and I will never forget them.

As Americans, we must always remember those who have given the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country. At a time when we are asking so much of our men and women in uniform, I believe it is vital to show by example that the United States never forgets those who served. Providing a clear demonstration of that gratitude was at the core of constructing the memorial 25 years ago and is the purpose behind this resolution today.

The memorial not only remembers those who gave their lives during the conflict, but also honors the more than 3 million men and women who served in the Armed Forces in Southeast Asia and the 153,303 individuals wounded in action.

The power of the memorial is just as strong today as it was 25 years ago. The millions raised by private individuals and corporations to erect the Vietnam Memorial demonstrated the widespread respect and appreciation for our Vietnam veterans 25 years ago.

That powerful sense of gratitude has continued as an estimated 4.4 million people visit the memorial each year to pay their respects to those who served and those who died during the Vietnam War. A grateful public has left more than 100,000 items of remembrances at the memorial for lost family, friends and comrades in arms. Pilgrimages to the Vietnam Memorial by new generations will also ensure that those who have no recollection of the strife from the Vietnam war era will still remember the service of the millions who fought for our country with honor and distinction.

The elegant simplicity of the monument's black granite wall refuses to render judgment on a conflict that sharply divided our country.

The memorial has played an important role of national reconciliation by helping to heal old wounds through enabling people of any opinion to express their gratitude for the men and women who paid the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

I once again urge my colleagues to support this important remembrance of those who served, and especially those who gave their lives for our country during the Vietnam war.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield at this time such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Minnesota, Colonel JOHN KLINE.

Mr. KLINE of Minnesota. I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, along with my colleagues. Though the memorial stands primarily as a tribute to the 58,000 who were killed in Vietnam, the Wall, as it is more commonly known, continues to surpass its original purpose by acting as a quiet reminder of the price of our freedom and honoring the more than 153,000 men and women wounded in action. Perhaps most importantly, it serves as a source of healing for the 3 million men and women who served in the United States military during this war.

The design was inspired by a need to bring reconciliation and healing to a country that was deeply divided. Its simplicity is transcended by a powerful message of remembrance. Each name is a person with a story. These soldiers served with honor and distinction, and the memorial helps us to remember them with the highest regard.

As a Vietnam veteran myself, the memorial carries particular significance. I am reminded of the friends and comrades who gave their lives and of a far different time and place in my life.

It is with these memories in mind that I express my sadness and disappointment at the reports of the re-

cent desecration of the Wall. The people who did this have violated a sacred trust, and I consider their actions deplorable. If there are those who applaud this behavior, I would only remind them of the hypocrisy of their beliefs. Our freedom was won by brave men and women such as those honored on this Wall, and we should hold them all reverently in our hearts, as I know that we do when we visit that very powerful memorial. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, I hope these reports are not true or are exaggerated. I was appalled to hear them.

I cannot help but draw parallels between the Vietnam war and the situation in Iraq. We have men and women today who are carrying the mantle for this generation. We must be mindful to accord them the respect that they deserve and honor their service.

After 25 years, the memorial is unparalleled in terms of the sheer power of its presence. And there is irony because it was built into the ground. I remember the great debate that was taking place in this city and around the country when that memorial was put into place. There were those who thought it was a dishonor, frankly, to the men and women who served, to have this memorial be in the ground. But I know that every Vietnam veteran and their family and friends and Americans who have taken that walk down and stood at that powerful wall has reevaluated that opinion. Everyone who has been there has been moved, and for that I am very thankful.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCNERNEY).

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time, and I rise in strong support of H. Res. 326, commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

It is important to recognize the contributions of our men and women in the armed services no matter when they served. In particular, we should pay tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice during their service.

Although the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was dedicated nearly 25 years ago, the families of the fallen and their fellow soldiers find the same peace and solace there today. The memorial is a somber reminder of the devastating human costs of the Vietnam war and the massive losses this country sustained.

Mothers and fathers lost their children, and families throughout the country lost their loved ones. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial is a serene place that helps the country deal with one of the most difficult periods of our history, and it is important that we recognize such a lasting tribute.

Today, when we remember the Vietnam war, we should not forget the soldiers who laid down their lives in defense of this great Nation. Nor should we forget those who returned home with posttraumatic stress disorder.

As we reflect upon the commitment of our veterans from past conflicts, it is important to remember the 168,000 American soldiers currently serving overseas. We must do more for our Nation's veterans, those of past wars, current conflicts, and those who will defend our flag for generations to come.

We should never forget the deep sacrifice of our men and women in uniform, and it is fitting that we pause today to commemorate one of the most important and emotional events in our history. I urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

□ 1545

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. BOSWELL).

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

Mr. BOSWELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for the opportunity to share this resolution that I am a cosponsor of, and I think it is the right thing to do, to honor those who made the sacrifice that they did in the Vietnam War.

Some of us in this body have served in that war. I would like to associate myself with those who have previously spoken. We are never wrong to take a moment and remind ourselves of those who gave the supreme sacrifice and laid their lives on the line, as so many did.

So it is a reminder to us that freedom is not free. I just had the opportunity a couple of days ago in a large group down in Iowa to ask all the veterans to make themselves known and to ask all those in the audience if you would please turn and thank your veterans. Because of them, we can have that opportunity to gather together on that hillside and share the freedoms that we take for granted so often.

So today on this 25th anniversary we are reminded particularly of the Vietnam veterans. Some of us 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 years ago went down and had kind of a picture-taking opportunity with Members in the Congress with Vietnam veterans at the Wall. And for all of us, we had to stop and realize our names could have been there, too.

We recognized names of our colleagues and comrades that fell and paid the price because the country asked them to do that. That is happening this very day, of course, in other parts of the world.

So I thank you, gentlewoman, for the time. I appreciate you bringing this forward. I certainly urge its passage.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, in my concluding remarks I just want to say that as I listened to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE), my colleague on the House Armed Services Committee, talking about the Vietnam War Memorial, the Wall, as he pointed out, I reflected back maybe almost 25 years ago when I went to the Wall for the first time.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think I had ever been to any other war memorial. The World War II Memorial, as we know, was not there at the time. But I went to the Wall, the Vietnam War Memorial, to look for the name of a friend. It is kind of hard to find, as we all know, the small engraved names on the wall. Of course they direct you how to do that. I think a lot of us just go to the wall and start looking.

As I think back on those years ago when I looked up to see my friend Dick Ulmer's name, and think about that classmate, teammate, friend, weight-lifting buddy when we were in the sixth, seventh, eighth grade, and thinking about the fact, Mr. Speaker, that he had given his life. I thought about his parents, who are now deceased, and of course his wife and his sister.

This opportunity today to control the time on our side, and I thank Ms. SHEA-PORTER for that opportunity, to reflect back on a great hero. I think an important thing for us to remember today as we vote, and I think we will have a unanimous vote on this, is that no matter how popular a conflict, or maybe in the case of the Vietnam War, with many people unpopular, the men and women that paid the price, the ultimate sacrifice, and their families, it doesn't matter what the conflict, they do their duty.

God bless them and God bless America.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, our nation prides itself on establishing monuments and memorials in remembrance of the past. We shape marble, bronze, granite and stone into physical commemorations, hoping that they will reflect particular ideals of justice, principles, and beliefs from our country's history and encourage those who visit to embody the same ideals. Twenty-five years ago, the Nation found itself dedicating a memorial to a war that was bitterly fought both at home and abroad and trying to find within that memorial the peace and solace that had been elusive for so long.

The memorial design created by 21-year-old Yale University undergraduate Maya Lin, and managed by the National Park Service, wrought emotional reactions from the crowd when it was dedicated in November 1982. Thousands of veterans, regardless of their personal feelings on what the war had meant to them, found themselves moved by the Wall. Their faces reflected against the names of the dead etched into the black granite, visitors found that this memorial was not simply a standing block of stone, but instead was a moving tribute that refused to separate the past from the present, merging the two and forcing them to coalesce into a semblance of calm.

Now 25 years later we continue to see the effect of the memorial. Families and friends leave at the base of the memorial personal belongings of those whose names lie above. Boisterous crowds traveling noisily from monument to monument fall silent when entering the cut of earth that starts the Wall, their eyes skipping from name to name, recognition on their face that each one represents an individual who gave their life for their country. And those who fought and returned home see the

names of fellow soldiers, an attempt not to justify or explain those losses, but simply to honor and remember them.

Early this month, the Wall was vandalized and the face of the granite desecrated. While long-term damage is not expected, this act of dishonor flies in the face of what the memorial represents. I hope that every single one of my colleagues will join me in denouncing those who committed this vandalism.

With each new year the wounds of the Vietnam War further heal, the passage of time helping to wear away the dissonance and divide. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial plays a large role in this process, bringing us together not only to remember what occurred and what was lost, but also to ensure that we do not forget. It is fitting that we commemorate the anniversary of this memorial and again offer the grateful thanks of our Nation to those who served.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 326, commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Comprised of the Wall of names, the three Servicemen Statue and Flagpole, and the Vietnam Women's Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial honors the 58,000 members of the United States Armed Forces who lost their lives in service to the United States in the Vietnam War and recognizes all those individuals who served during that time.

The Memorial is a national treasure. When seen from a distance, the smooth angular blackness of the Wall of names cuts into a gently rising knoll of green grass on the National Mall, symbolizing the collective sacrifice made by the tens of thousands of American youth who, in the prime of their lives, fought and perished in distant fields of battle in Southeast Asia to defend democratic government under siege. Standing at arm's length the sacrifice honored by the Wall comes into clearer focus. The white letters etched in black stone reveal the names of soldiers lost forever to their country, to their military service and, tragically, to their families and loved ones. Closer still, the image of our reflection seen in the Wall's mirror-like stone reminds us each name recorded there represents a person—an individual no different than us. The act of reading their names keeps alive our cherished memories of them. The act of the reading their names also helps keep them alive and well in our hearts.

On the occasion of the anniversary of the opening of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial we recall all of those individuals involved in its authorization, design, construction, and dedication. Most especially, we acknowledge the work of Maya Ying Lin, and we recognize the vision, sentiment, and artistry she has shared with the world through this project. We also recognize the work that is being undertaken today pursuant to an Act of the 108th Congress to construct the visitor center at the site, which will contribute to visitors' understanding and appreciation for the Memorial and what it signifies.

Mr. Speaker, etched and engraved on that Memorial Wall are the names of 70 sons of Guam. Our community suffered the highest casualty rate per capita of any State or Territory in the Nation during the Vietnam Era. Today, we recall the members of our own community, in addition to their fellow soldiers, who were the uniform and served in the Vietnam era.

To visit the Wall of names, the three Servicemen Statue and Flagpole, and the Vietnam Women's Memorial is to pay respect to those Vietnam Veterans Memorial honors and to renew our commitment that their mission, their sacrifice, and their lives will never be forgotten. This resolution commemorating the Memorial on its 25th anniversary also helps accomplish those goals.

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the bipartisan Vietnam Memorial Resolution commemorating the 25th anniversary of the construction of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, H. Res. 326. This memorial honors the more than 58,000 brave men and women who paid the ultimate sacrifice during the Vietnam war for our great Nation. We must never forget the brave service members who served in Vietnam.

Millions of people visit this breathtaking memorial to pay their respect to those people who lost their lives between 1956 and 1975 or are still missing in action. The memorial has been a source of comfort and healing for those families and friends who have lost loved ones in the Vietnam war.

I also wish to express my support and gratitude for all the men and women who served with valor in our armed services protecting our freedom and democracy. I believe that the Vietnam memorial encourages all people of the United States, and the world, to remember the sacrifices of American veterans of this war, especially those who served in Vietnam. This memorial is a beautiful work of art and this resolution has my full support.

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

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. SHEA-PORTER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 326, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF THE 65TH INFANTRY BORINQUENEERS

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 443) recognizing the service of the 65th Infantry Borinqueneers during the Korean War, honoring the people of Puerto Rico who continue to serve and volunteer for service in the Armed Forces and make sacrifices for the country, and commending all efforts to promote and preserve the history of the 65th Infantry Borinqueneers, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 443

Whereas the 65th Infantry Regiment, the only Hispanic-segregated unit in United States military history, was mandated by