

frogman training facility in Fort Pierce, Florida, where this museum is located. During World War II, the Navy trained thousands of volunteers as combat demolition and underwater demolition experts at Fort Pierce. The brave men who mastered these difficult and dangerous skills set the standard for today's SEALs to attain.

The Navy Underwater Demolition Team—SEAL Museum, which we designate today as the official national museum, has an impressive and comprehensive collection of material about these elite Navy fighting forces, providing the public with an excellent education of today's Navy SEALs and their predecessors.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that this bill has been brought to the floor. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MAHONEY), who is an outstanding leader and staunch supporter of the Nation's Armed Forces.

Mr. MAHONEY of Florida. I would like to thank my good friend, the gentlewoman from Florida, and an original cosponsor of this bill for yielding time to me this afternoon. I would also like to recognize the gentleman from Washington (Mr. REICHERT) for his support for this important bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2779, legislation that I introduced to recognize the Navy UDT—SEAL Museum in Fort Pierce, Florida, as the official national museum of the Navy SEALs and their predecessors.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that there are many today watching and asking how important is it to create a national museum recognizing brave men and women who have served in underwater demolition teams as frogmen and today as SEALs. In my life, I have had the privilege and honor of knowing and learning about brave men who have served our Nation and have seen the hell of combat, people like Reggie White, my daughter Bailey's grandfather, who was a combat engineer and who, like the men of UDT, had the job of clearing Omaha Beach that fateful day of June 6, 1944. My uncle, Bart Mahoney, a B-17 pilot, was one of the first to be shot down over Germany. Bart survived combat and then survived German concentration camps. Bobbie Maynard saw frontline action in Korea and survived some of the heaviest engagements in the Korean War. My friend, Pat Kelley, was a medic in Vietnam who had to endure the life-and-death realities of combat. These men are heroes. These men have seen the horrors of war and survived them. These men never bragged about their service. In fact, they rarely spoke of it, preferring to let the horrors of their experience rest. This bill is important because it gives voice to the heroes whose stories and honor need to be captured and passed down to future generations.

The ground upon which the Navy UDT—SEAL Museum rests was the birthplace of the Navy frogmen. Through World War II, thousands of brave soldiers were trained as members of naval combat demolition units and underwater demolition teams at the site. Since that time, the frogmen have evolved into one of the elite fighting forces in the world, the Navy SEALs.

The Navy UDT—SEAL Museum is the only museum dedicated solely to preserving the legacy of the honor, courage, patriotism, and sacrifices of those Navy SEALs and their predecessors, including the underwater demolition teams, naval combat demolition units, Office of Strategic Service maritime units, and Amphibious Scouts and Raiders.

□ 1500

I would like to personally thank Captain Mike Howard, a retired Navy SEAL; Ruth McSween; Rolf Snyder; and others, who have made the UDT—SEAL Museum possible. I would also like to thank all the men and women who worked to preserve the legacy of the Naval Special Warfare community. Since the museum was opened in 1985, thousands of visitors have learned of the accomplishments of the Navy SEALs through the museum's artifacts and photos tracing the history of Naval Special Warfare from its beginnings during World War II, through the Navy's SEALs current role in fighting the war on terror and in Iraq.

While we are here today to honor the Naval Special Warfare community, I would like to take a moment to remember Petty Officer First Class Robert Richard McRill and all of those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice while serving our Nation. Petty Officer McRill, from Lake Placid, Florida, was killed while serving in Iraq as part of SEALs Group Two when his team was hit by an IED.

By designating the Navy UDT—SEAL Museum as the official national museum of Navy SEALs and their predecessors, we are honoring Mr. McRill and all the warriors who have served in Naval Special Warfare. I ask all my colleagues to join me in recognizing the honor, courage, patriotism and sacrifices of the SEALs and their predecessors by supporting this legislation.

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

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Washington (Mr. REICHERT) for his support. I would also like to thank my colleague and friend from Florida (Mr. MAHONEY) for bringing this thoughtful bill to the floor of the House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2779.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms.

CASTOR) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2779.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMENDING THE 1ST BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM/34TH INFANTRY DIVISION OF THE MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 185) commending the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division of the Minnesota National Guard upon its completion of the longest continuous deployment of any United States military unit during Operation Iraqi Freedom, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 185

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division of the Minnesota National Guard, known as the Red Bull Division, is headquartered in Bloomington, Minnesota, and deployed approximately 2,700 hard-working and courageous Minnesotans and approximately 1,300 more soldiers from other Midwestern States;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team has a long history of service to the United States, beginning with the Civil War;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team was most recently mobilized in September 2005 and departed for Iraq in March 2006;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team recently completed the longest continuous deployment of any United States ground combat military unit during Operation Iraqi Freedom;

Whereas, during its deployment, the 1st Brigade Combat Team completed 5,200 combat logistics patrols, secured 2.4 million convoy miles, and discovered 462 improvised explosive devices (IEDs) prior to detonation;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team processed over 1.5 million vehicles and 400,000 Iraqis into entry control points without any insurgent penetrations;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team captured over 400 suspected insurgents;

Whereas more than 1,400 members of the 1st Brigade Combat Team reenlisted during deployment and 21 members became United States citizens during deployment;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team helped start two Iraqi newspapers that provide news to the local population and publish stories on reconstruction progress;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team completed 137 reconstruction projects;

Whereas the deployment of the 1st Brigade Combat Team in Iraq was extended by 125 days in January 2007;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team and its members are now returning to the United States to loving families and a grateful nation;

Whereas the families of the members of the 1st Brigade Combat Team have waited patiently for their loved ones to return and endured many hardships during this lengthy deployment;

Whereas the employers of members and family members of the 1st Brigade Combat

Team have displayed patriotism over profit, by keeping positions saved for the returning soldiers and supporting the families during the difficult days of this long deployment, and these employers are great corporate citizens through their support of members of the Armed Forces and their family members;

Whereas communities throughout the Midwest are now integral participants in the Minnesota National Guard's extensive Beyond the Yellow Ribbon reintegration program that will help members of the 1st Brigade Combat Team return to normal life; and

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division has performed admirably and courageously, putting service to country over personal interests and gaining the gratitude and respect of Minnesotans, Midwesterners, and all Americans: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) commends the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division of the Minnesota National Guard upon its completion of the longest continuous deployment of any United States ground combat military unit during Operation Iraqi Freedom;

(2) recognizes the achievements of the members of the 1st Brigade Combat Team and their exemplary service to the United States; and

(3) directs the Clerk of the House of Representatives to transmit a copy of this resolution to the Adjutant General of the Minnesota National Guard for appropriate display.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MAHONEY of Florida). Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 185, commanding the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division of the Minnesota National Guard upon its completion of the longest continuous deployment of any United States military unit during Operation Iraqi Freedom. I would like to thank my colleague from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) for bringing this measure before the House.

The 1st Brigade Combat Team of the 34th Infantry Division was deployed for 22 months, nearly 2 years. That's how long they were continuously deployed. This is longer than any other ground combat unit in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Many Americans count down the hours until the end of the workday, until Friday night, until the end of the work week. Often our commitment to our jobs comes in bundles of 40 hours.

Yet the soldiers of the Red Bull Division had no such luxury. Counting

down the time until redeployment was computed in entire weeks, if not months. Just when they and their families thought they were to come home, their deployment was extended by an additional 125 days.

In 22 months some of our brave men and women in uniform missed their infants and their young children taking their first steps, saying their first words. Some of the roughly 5,000-member BCT missed their kids' high school graduations, and they didn't get a chance to move their sons and daughters into a dorm for college.

So much can change in 2 years. So many precious moments that we hold dear pass by during this time. Yet we go about our daily lives and forget that these precious moments that we enjoy are being protected by America's tremendous servicemembers.

Even more amazing is the fact that the members of the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division are members of the National Guard. These are everyday folks, our neighbors and friends who signed up to be citizen soldiers. Their single deployment lasted as long as some active duty servicemembers' entire time in our Armed Forces. This was an extraordinary commitment and sacrifice on the part of the Red Bull Division.

Mr. Speaker, I know Mr. WALZ and Mr. KLINE, our colleagues from Minnesota, will have much to say about these fine Minnesotans as representatives of that great State. But I would just like to say how proud I am as a Member of the United States House of Representatives and as an American, Mr. Speaker, of the 5,200 combat logistics patrols, the 2.4 million convoy miles, the 400 captured terrorists and the 22-month deployment that the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division accomplished.

We can never repay these servicemembers for their time and their tremendous sacrifice. But what we can do is enshrine our appreciation and thanks by passing this resolution into law.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support House Concurrent Resolution 185.

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

Mr. KLINE of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 185, which commends the men and women of the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division, Minnesota National Guard, for completing the longest continuous deployment of any United States combat team in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Mr. Speaker, these men and women did not want to set this record. They didn't seek this record. In fact, when they left these shores, they had no idea this record was going to be theirs: 16 months in a combat zone, 22 months of mobilization. But when the word came,

they didn't flinch. They set forward, they did their duty and they set a record, one which I certainly hope no other unit will ever be asked to surpass.

The men and women of the 1st Brigade Combat Team are some of this Nation's finest soldiers. Their first-rate service in Iraq carries on the tradition of excellence established by previous generations of the 1st Brigade, through service in the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, and both world wars.

The more than 2,200 Minnesotans and 1,300 more Midwestern soldiers who served in the 1st Brigade in Iraq performed remarkably during their unrivaled tour of duty. These soldiers completed more than 5,200 combat logistics patrols, secured 2.4 million convoy miles, captured over 400 suspected insurgents, and discovered 462 improvised explosive devices prior to detonation. They also helped to start two Iraqi newspapers and completed 137 reconstruction projects.

As a mark of their commitment to the unit and to this Nation, more than 1,400 members of the brigade reenlisted, reenlisted, while in Iraq, and 21 members became United States citizens.

Throughout their long tour of duty, their historic tour of duty, the soldiers of the 1st Brigade Combat Team had the steady support of families and employers. The soldiers are now home and beginning the process of reintegration through the Minnesota National Guard's extensive Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program.

Mr. Speaker, given their admirable and courageous service over so long a period of time, and in recognition of their willingness to put service to country over personal interest, it is only fitting that we take this opportunity to commend the men and women of the 1st Brigade Combat Team.

I want to thank my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) for bringing this measure forward and for his service with the National Guard.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in strong support of this concurrent resolution.

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

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I intend to recognize the sponsor of this thoughtful resolution, but I think it is important for our colleagues to recognize his service as well. Mr. WALZ from Minnesota spent 24 years himself in the Army National Guard, so he has had a full life of service to this country. I don't think he knew when he enlisted at the young age of 17 that he would end up so many years in the Army National Guard. He also became a teacher. But he achieved the rank of command sergeant major.

I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to Command Sergeant Major WALZ, my friend and colleague from Minnesota, the sponsor of this thoughtful resolution.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. I thank the gentlewoman from Florida for her kind words, and I thank the gentleman from Minnesota for his many years of leadership and his service also and to the whole Armed Services Committee for this important legislation.

I am urging my colleagues, and I am sure it will not take a lot of urging. This House of Representatives understands. This resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 185, has recognized the incredible contributions, courage, and sacrifice of the 1st Brigade Combat Team of the National Guard that they have given to our Nation.

In July of 2005, members of the 1/34th Brigade Combat Team of the famed Red Bull Division were notified of their deployment. Twenty-two months later, in July of 2007, they began returning home, after a 22-month deployment. As my colleague from Minnesota said, they had no intention or no knowledge that they would be setting a record. They simply said yes when they were called upon.

As you have heard from each of my colleagues, the statistics are amazing on what this unit did: 5,200 combat logistic patrols covering 2.4 million convoy miles. You heard Mr. KLINE talk about the number of IEDs that were found. A full 37 percent of the total IED incidents during their time there were attributed to the diligent work of this unit.

They helped start the Iraqi newspapers that you heard about, and they also helped produce documentaries on the positive work that our units are doing in Iraq. They completed 137 reconstruction projects; and during this deployment, as you heard, they re-enlisted 1,400 of these brave citizen soldiers. And I think a really special thing is 21 of them became citizens during their time in service to this country.

Although they were originally slated to come home, they endured a 125-day extension, and their families and employers endured that with them. This record of the longest continuous deployment of any U.S. military operation in Iraqi Freedom is something to be incredibly proud of. Being there is one thing. Contributing positively the way they did is quite another.

The soldiers sacrificed 2 years of their lives in service to their country. I know how much they have given, as I was a former member of this Red Bull Division myself; and I know many of these men and women personally.

They have added to the long and impressive list of the Red Bull. Their lineage goes back to the 1st Minnesota Volunteers, the first unit to volunteer for the Civil War. The Red Bulls had 517 days of actual combat in World War II, that is more than any other U.S. division during the war, and captured more enemy hills and territory than any other division in World War II.

I, along with the rest of the Minnesota delegation in both the House and the Senate, introduced this resolution to honor their service and to rec-

ognize not just the soldiers, but their families and employers who patiently supported, loved and cared for them and waited for them until they returned to the Midwest.

I want to thank my colleagues from Minnesota for their work in support of this resolution, especially my colleague Mr. KLINE from Minnesota. My colleague from Minnesota himself is a lieutenant colonel, a lifelong and career Marine Corps officer and one that served with distinction. He understands and he too knows the sacrifice that they have given.

I want to thank the 30 other Members of Congress who cosponsored this resolution to show their support of the 1st Brigade Combat Team. But most of all, I want to thank the 2,447 soldiers of the 1st Brigade Combat Team from Minnesota. The other soldiers that augmented this unit came from Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Wisconsin, New Jersey, Kentucky, Idaho, and Washington.

The Red Bulls have truly lived up to their long and heroic tradition and have contributed bravely to the war in Iraq and this Nation's security. Regardless of what any American feels about the war in Iraq, it is clear that America's servicemembers, like those from the 1st Brigade Combat Team, have performed brilliantly and magnificently; and they deserve our full support.

Now Congress must do its part to recognize their service and provide them the benefits and the health care that they need. The Minnesota National Guard has a world-class reintegration program, the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program, which helps soldiers readjust to civilian life.

I want to thank my friend and colleague and fellow Minnesotan, Congressman KLINE, for working to expand this program nationwide for all soldiers. His leadership in this is appreciated by soldiers and families across this Nation.

□ 1515

Their needs will go far beyond reintegration. Long after the initial fanfare fades, Congress and the Department of Veterans Affairs must stand ready to assist these brave warriors throughout the rest of their lives. They have more than earned our support, and we must be certain they always have it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to show their support for the Red Bulls by adopting this resolution.

Mr. KLINE of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself a moment to say that I urge all of my colleagues to support this important resolution. The service that these men and women performed is truly historic and commendable. Again, I thank Mr. WALZ for bringing this measure forward.

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

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleagues from Minnesota, Mr. KLINE and Mr. WALZ, the

sponsor of this thoughtful concurrent resolution, and urge my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 185.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in proud support of this legislation which commends Minnesota's First Brigade Combat Team of the 34th Infantry Division for their completion of the longest continuous deployment of any United States military unit during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

This extraordinary group of men and women, also known as the Red Bulls, is comprised of about 3,700 dedicated Minnesotans and some 1,300 more soldiers from other Midwestern States. Recently, more than 1,000 of our courageous Red Bulls returned home from a 22-month deployment to Iraq.

During their time in the Middle East, the First Brigade Combat Team protected lives and helped to preserve the blessings of liberty here at home. They discovered 462 improvised explosive devices, IEDs, before they were able to wreak havoc on the innocent. By finding these IEDs prior to detonation, the First Brigade Combat Team surely saved the lives of countless fellow soldiers and Iraqi citizens. They also captured over 400 suspected insurgents and completed 137 reconstruction projects. In addition, the First Brigade Combat Team successfully processed over 1.5 million vehicles and 400,000 Iraqis into entry control points without any insurgent penetrations.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to honor the First Brigade Combat Team, whose bravery and commitment to serving our country is as apparent today as it has been in wars long past. These soldiers have returned with an outstanding record of achievement and have earned hundreds of awards including: one Silver Star, 151 Bronze Stars, 32 Purple Hearts, 771 Army Commendation Medals, 136 Combat Infantry Badges, 302 Combat Action Badges and 14 Combat Medical Badges.

The important measure before us today recognizes the service of our Red Bull soldiers, and reminds us of the price of our freedom, and those who have freely chosen to honor it.

To our Red Bulls, and all of the men and women that defend this Nation, my colleagues and I continue to stand in awe of you.

Thank you, and may God bless you and your families.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of the men and women of the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division of the Minnesota National Guard and in strong support of H. Con. Res. 185.

I want to thank my colleague and friend TIM WALZ for bringing this important resolution before the floor.

The dedicated men and women of 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division of the Minnesota Guard have just finished serving the longest continuous deployment of any United States military unit during Operation Iraqi Freedom. This Minnesota National Guard unit served 22 months, 16 of which were in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I believe our Nation owes a debt of gratitude to the members of the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division along with all the men and women who have honorably served in Iraq.

H. Con. Res. 185 represents a small token of appreciation for our grateful Nation. The resolution formally recognizes the achievements of these citizen soldiers and officially thanks them for their service.

This resolution thanks the 1st Brigade Combat Team for their work and the time they have sacrificed from their families, neighbors and communities in their valiant service to our country.

I urge my fellow colleagues in Congress to support this important resolution.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 185, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. CASTOR. 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.

CORPORAL CHRISTOPHER E. ESCKELSON POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. CLAY. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2276) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 203 North Main Street in Vassar, Michigan, as the "Corporal Christopher E. Esckelson Post Office Building".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2276

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

SECTION 1. CORPORAL CHRISTOPHER E. ESCKELSON POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 203 North Main Street in Vassar, Michigan, shall be known and designated as the "Corporal Christopher E. Esckelson 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 "Corporal Christopher E. Esckelson Post Office Building".

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. CASTOR). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CLAY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CLAY. Madam Speaker, as a member of the House Committee on

Oversight and Government Reform, I am pleased to join my colleague in supporting H.R. 2276, which names a postal facility in Vassar, Michigan, after Corporal Christopher E. Esckelson.

H.R. 2276, which was introduced by Representative KILDEE of Michigan on May 10, 2007, was reported from the Oversight Committee on September 20, 2007, by a voice vote. This measure has the support of the entire Michigan congressional delegation.

Madam Speaker, Marine Corporal Christopher E. Esckelson was killed on December 28, 2006, while conducting combat operations in al Anbar Province, Iraq. He was assigned to 1st Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment, 4th Marine Division, Lansing, Michigan.

In October of 2002, Corporal Esckelson joined the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve and attended Delta College. His desire was to become a doctor, but he was called to active duty in April 2006. Corporal Esckelson was extremely proud to be a marine and committed to serve his country with distinction and courage.

Madam Speaker, I commend Representative KILDEE for introducing this legislation and urge swift passage of this bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, H.R. 2276 honors the life of a young man who fought bravely for his country and made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. Corporal Christopher Esckelson was killed during combat action in Fallujah, Iraq on December 28, 2006. He was less than 1 week shy of reaching his 23rd birthday.

Christopher Esckelson felt personal anger after September 11, 2001, when his country was brutally attacked, and he knew immediately he wanted to serve in the U.S. Marine Corps. In addition to defending his country, it was a way to earn money for college. His plans included attending medical school. His dream of becoming a doctor, however, was cut short on a 5-day mission fighting insurgents in a war-torn Fallujah.

Corporal Esckelson was a squad leader of 12 men and suffered a direct hit during a mission. His leadership skills were proven day in and day out while in Iraq. He knew the risks involved and experienced the horrors of war. But his determination to fight and win was evident. He was fearless on the battlefield.

Christopher never had the chance to return home safely from the war or attend medical school as he planned, but he will surely be remembered in his community by the naming of this post office in his hometown of Vassar, Michigan. I am pleased to support H.R. 2276 in naming of the post office for this valiant soldier.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CLAY. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to Representative KILDEE from Michigan.

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to be the sponsor of H.R. 2276. H.R. 2276 will designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 203 North Main Street in Vassar, Michigan, as the "Corporal Christopher E. Esckelson Post Office Building."

Corporal Esckelson of Vassar, Michigan, heroically gave his life fighting for our country in Fallujah, Iraq, on December 28, 2006, 2 days shy of his 23rd birthday. Corporal Esckelson, the squad leader of 12 men, suffered a direct hit while inspecting a truck in war-torn Fallujah, Iraq.

Corporal Esckelson's leadership qualities came to fruition long before he began to serve our country. An outstanding athlete at Vassar High School, Christopher Esckelson played the game of football like he did life, with great passion. That same passion is what drove the aspiring doctor to join the Marines shortly after the September 11 attacks.

He once told his mother, Michelle Hill, that whatever life might bring, he still would have been a marine.

His early time in the Marine Corps Reserve allowed him to earn money to pay for classes at Delta College, where he studied premedicine. Other activities Corporal Esckelson enjoyed were hunting with his father, David, and brother, Craig, as well as spending time with his girlfriend, Samantha Reasner, who last saw him when she drove him to the airport when he left for basic training.

His last contact with his family came 2 days before Christmas 2006 when he left on a 5-day mission which would ultimately be his last.

For his heroism, Corporal Christopher E. Esckelson deserves our recognition and thanks. Designating this postal facility in Vassar, Michigan, where his mother works will allow all who enter the post office the unique opportunity to be mindful of the sacrifices brave young soldiers like Christopher have made and continue to make today.

I would like to thank the entire Michigan delegation for their support on this legislation, and urge all of my colleagues to join me in passing this legislation.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CLAY. Madam Speaker, I commend my colleague, Representative KILDEE, for introducing this legislation, and urge its swift passage by the House.

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 Missouri (Mr. CLAY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2276.

The question was taken.