

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. ESCHELSON 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. Eskelson 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. ESCHELSON 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. Eskelson 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. Eskelson 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. Eskelson.

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. Eskelson 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 Eskelson 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 Eskelson 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 Eskelson 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 Eskelson 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 Eskelson 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. Eskelson Post Office Building."

Corporal Eskelson 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 Eskelson, the squad leader of 12 men, suffered a direct hit while inspecting a truck in war-torn Fallujah, Iraq.

Corporal Eskelson's leadership qualities came to fruition long before he began to serve our country. An outstanding athlete at Vassar High School, Christopher Eskelson 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 Eskelson 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. Eskelson 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.

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

Mr. CLAY. 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.

CORPORAL STEPHEN R. BIXLER POST OFFICE

Mr. CLAY. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3325) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 235 Mountain Road in Suffield, Connecticut, as the "Corporal Stephen R. Bixler Post Office".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3325

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

SECTION 1. CORPORAL STEPHEN R. BIXLER POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 235 Mountain Road in Suffield, Connecticut, shall be known and designated as the "Corporal Stephen R. Bixler Post Office".

(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 Stephen R. Bixler Post Office".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 the consideration of H.R. 3325 which names a postal facility in Suffield, Connecticut, after CPL Stephen R. Bixler. H.R. 3325, which was introduced by Representative JOE COURTNEY on August 2, 2007, was reported from the Oversight Committee on September 20, 2007, by voice vote. This measure has the support of the entire Connecticut congressional delegation.

Madam Speaker, Marine CPL Stephen R. Bixler was killed on May 4, 2006, while conducting combat operations against enemy forces in al Anbar Province, Iraq. He was assigned to 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

LTC James M. Bright, the battalion's commander, said, "Corporal Bixler was a vibrant, active man. He died fearlessly leading and willingly sacrificing his own safety for those around him."

Corporal Bixler was a devoted soldier with strength of character and self-assurance. He served his country with honor and distinction.

Madam Speaker, I commend the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) for introducing this legislation and urge swift passage of the 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, CPL Stephen Bixler was a proud and loyal American who served his country while fighting the war on terror. He made the ultimate sacrifice defending freedom when he lost his life on May 4, 2006. Corporal Bixler was born in Hartford, Connecticut, on August 17, 1985. As a student at Suffield High School, he was known as a "shy, soft-spoken, very dedicated young man and very patriotic, in a quiet, determined way." During high school, he was involved in athletics and was a member of the indoor/outdoor track team as well as the cross country team. His love for the outdoors and helping others was exemplified during the time he was a Boy Scout and his hard work and dedication was shown when he became an Eagle Scout.

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In July 2003, Corporal Bixler's sense of dedication to his community and country led him to enlist in the United States Marine Corps. He was an ambitious man who was able to accomplish much in his short, but meaningful, life.

As a result of his exceptional military skills, drive, courage and strength, Corporal Bixler applied for and was selected as a member of the 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion. He volunteered willingly for his second tour in Iraq because he knew his fellow marines needed his help. Tragically, during his second tour, on May 4, 2006, he was killed by enemy fire in Fallujah.

His decorations include the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon, Humanitarian Service Medal, Armed Forces Terrorism Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Combat Action Ribbon, and Purple Heart Medal.

We can never show adequate appreciation in honoring the brave men and women who give their lives in service to our country. However, Corporal Bixler's name is etched on the Wall of Honor in the Rayburn House Office Building in Washington, DC.

In addition to the memorial wall, naming this post office in his honor is a fitting and meaningful tribute to a proud marine who served selflessly on behalf of his hometown and his Nation.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CLAY. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to my friend from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY).

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I thank Congressman CLAY. I also want to thank Congressman WESTMORELAND for his kind words in support of H.R. 3325, which I'm the sponsor of, to name the post office at 235 Mountain Road in Suffield, Connecticut, after Corporal Stephen R. Bixler, who at the age of 20, on a second deployment in Iraq, lost his life serving our Nation.

As the prior speakers have indicated, this young man was not with us long, but made an extraordinary mark on all who knew him and served with him, particularly in his home of Suffield, Connecticut, which is a small Connecticut town of 14,000 people. It was founded in 1749 before our Nation even was born, and his family on his mother's side goes back three generations. As you can imagine, in a tight-knit, small community, he was well-known despite being a quiet young man because of his work in the community as an Eagle Scout. He was a varsity track athlete and an outstanding student.

He had a twin sister, Sandra, who graduated with honors from the University of Connecticut; and, clearly, Stephen could have followed that same path. But he followed a road less traveled, and he enlisted for the Marines before he even graduated from Suffield High School and, as I indicated, was on his second tour of duty when he lost his life on May 4, 2006.

His funeral at Sacred Heart Church in Suffield, which was attended by Archbishop Mansell from the Hartford Archdiocese, was an extraordinary outpouring of support from his community. And all I can say is that event was not the end as far as the town was concerned. They have held many ceremonies in memory of Stephen. They named a stretch of road in Suffield in his memory.

And it is fitting that the post office, which is the only Federal building in Suffield, should be named in his honor. His father has been a letter carrier for 35 years in the United States Post Office; but to be sure, our office solicited requests from the community to make sure that there was actual support in town. We had an outpouring of support: 170 letters came in, again, people who knew him as a young child all the way up through his time in the Marines, and I will submit letters from the Governor on down in support of this measure at this point.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT,
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS,
July 20, 2007.

Congressman JOE COURTNEY,
Cannon House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN COURTNEY: I am writing to encourage you to pursue legislation in the United States Congress that will change the name of the U.S. post office on Mountain Road in West Suffield, Connecticut to honor Marine Corporal Stephen R. Bixler.

As you know, Corporal Bixler was killed in Fallujah, Iraq on May 3, 2006 while on foot patrol. Corporal Bixler was proud of his service to the nation, and believed that he was able to make a difference in the lives of the Iraqi citizens he encountered. In addition to