

Nation in Iraq. My thoughts and prayers are with the family of this fallen hero, who have responded to this tragedy by championing efforts to improve mental health care for returning war veterans.

It is widely understood that suicide among veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a serious and pressing problem facing our veterans' community. Our Nation's men and women returning from service abroad deserve the highest quality care that this Nation can provide, including access to top quality mental health programs.

H.R. 327 directs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to take a comprehensive approach to combating the negative long-term effects of PTSD.

Specifically, this Act requires the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to develop a program that includes screening for suicide risk factors for veterans receiving medical care at all Department facilities, referral services for at-risk veterans for counseling and treatment, designation of a suicide prevention counselor at each Department facility, a 24-hour veterans' mental health care availability, peer support counseling, and mental health counseling program for veterans who have experienced sexual trauma while in military service.

I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this measure to improve suicide-prevention programs through the Department of Veterans Affairs. I commend the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee for their hard work on this bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 327.

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. FILNER. 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.

CHARLIE NORWOOD DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1808) to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia, as the "Charlie Norwood Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1808

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

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Charlie Norwood volunteered for service in the United States Army Dental Corps in a time of war, providing dental and medical

services in the Republic of Vietnam in 1968, earning the Combat Medical Badge and two awards of the Bronze Star.

(2) Captain Norwood, under combat conditions, helped develop the Dental Corps operating procedures, that are now standard, of delivering dentists to forward-fire bases, and providing dental treatment for military service dogs.

(3) Captain Norwood provided dental, emergency medical, and surgical care for United States personnel, Vietnamese civilians, and prisoners-of-war.

(4) Dr. Norwood provided military dental care at Fort Gordon, Georgia, following his service in Vietnam, then provided private-practice dental care for the next 25 years for patients in the greater Augusta, Georgia, area, including care for military personnel, retirees, and dependents under Department of Defense programs and for low-income patients under Georgia Medicaid.

(5) Congressman Norwood, upon being sworn into the United States House of Representatives in 1995, pursued the advancement of health and dental care for active duty and retired military personnel and dependents, and for veterans, through his public advocacy for strengthened Federal support for military and veterans' health care programs and facilities.

(6) Congressman Norwood co-authored and helped pass into law the Keep our Promises to America's Military Retirees Act, which restored lifetime healthcare benefits to veterans who are military retirees through the creation of the Department of Defense TRICARE for Life Program.

(7) Congressman Norwood supported and helped pass into law the Retired Pay Restoration Act providing relief from the concurrent receipt rule penalizing disabled veterans who were also military retirees.

(8) Throughout his congressional service from 1995 to 2007, Congressman Norwood repeatedly defeated attempts to reduce Federal support for the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia, and succeeded in maintaining and increasing Federal funding for the center.

(9) Congressman Norwood maintained a life membership in the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Military Order of the World Wars.

(10) Congressman Norwood's role in protecting and improving military and veteran's health care was recognized by the Association of the United States Army through the presentation of the Cocklin Award in 1998, and through his induction into the Association's Audie Murphy Society in 1999.

SEC. 2. DESIGNATION OF CHARLIE NORWOOD DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center located at 1 Freedom Way in Augusta, Georgia, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the "Charlie Norwood Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in any law, regulation, map, document, record, or other paper of the United States to the medical center referred to in subsection (a) shall be considered to be a reference to the Charlie Norwood Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

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

I'm going to allow the author of the legislation, Mr. KINGSTON, to go into the career of our good friend Charlie Norwood.

I just want to say that we all loved him as a Member. I didn't know he had this incredible career in the United States Army in the dental corps, and I will let you go through that, but it was a very incredible story of his devotion to our Nation.

We saw his heart and soul here. He always wanted to take care of veterans, and I'm pleased to support your motion to name the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia, as the Charlie Norwood Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my support of H.R. 1808, a bill to name the VA Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia, after our former colleague, Charlie Norwood.

Charlie Norwood served as a Captain in the United States Army from 1967 to 1969, beginning with an assignment to the U.S. Army Dental Corps at Sandia Army Base in Albuquerque, New Mexico. In 1968 he was transferred to the Medical Battalion of the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Vietnam and served a combat tour at Quin Yon, An Khe, and LZ English at Bon Son.

During his tour, he participated in experimental military dental practices that are now standard procedure for the armed forces. Captain Norwood was one of the first participants in the Army's outreach program that delivered dentists to forward fire bases in lieu of transferring patients to rear treatment areas. He provided some of the first field-based dental treatment of military guard dogs, and assisted in non-dental trauma care in Mobile Army Surgical Hospitals.

In recognition of his service under combat conditions, he was awarded the Combat Medical Badge and two Bronze Stars. After Vietnam, Captain Norwood was assigned to the Dental Corps at Fort Gordon, Georgia, where he served until his discharge in 1969.

He remained a member of The American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Military Order of the World Wars until his death. H.R. 1808 would name the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia, as the "Charlie Norwood Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center".

Naming a VA facility after this hero and strong veterans advocate is a proper honor for an honorable soldier.

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

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1808, a bill to designate the VA Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia, as the "Charlie Norwood Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center," would honor one of our colleagues who was taken from us all too soon.

Charles "Charlie" Whitlow Norwood, Jr., was born on July 27, 1941. A Georgia native, Charlie Norwood attended Georgia Southern University in Statesboro, Georgia, and Georgetown University in Washington, and was a dentist prior to serving in the House of Representatives.

Charlie Norwood served as a captain in the United States Army from 1967 to

1969, beginning with an assignment in the U.S. Army Dental Corps at Sandia Army Base in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

In 1968, he was transferred to the medical battalion of the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Vietnam, and served a combat tour at Quin Yon, An Khe, and LZ English at Bon Son. During his tour, he participated in experimental military dental practices that are now standard procedure for the Armed Forces. In recognition of his service under combat conditions, Norwood was awarded the Combat Medical Badge and two Bronze Stars.

After his discharge in 1969, he remained a member of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Military Order of the World Wars until his death.

Mr. Speaker, Charlie Norwood served with us as a Member of Congress from January 4, 1995, until his untimely death on February 13, 2007. During his congressional career, Norwood worked to pass a patients' bill of rights aimed at giving people better access to health care and greater ability to sue insurers, and spent his life supporting the overall well-being of veterans.

He was quick to protect TRICARE benefits, and he cosponsored legislation to address military survivor benefit plan inequities and to improve military pay raises. He was a tireless advocate for our men and women in uniform and for our Nation's veterans.

This legislation has the support of the State veteran service organizations, as well as the entire Georgia delegation. In the Senate, a companion bill has been introduced, S. 1026, which has the cosponsorship of both of the Georgia U.S. Senators.

Mr. Speaker, I support honoring this distinguished American by naming the VA facility in Augusta, Georgia, the Charlie Norwood Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center. To honor our deceased friend and colleague in this manner is a tribute to his love of Nation and his contributions to our military and veteran community and as a Member of Congress.

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

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

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman from Arkansas. I thank the gentleman from California for your support of this legislation and your kind words about Charlie Norwood.

This bill, Charlie would really approve of it because it has three things that Charlie loved dearly. He loved veterans; he loved Augusta, Georgia; and he loved medicine and doctors giving medicine and taking care of patients. Probably the only things he loved more were his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ; his wife, Gloria, and their family; and, indeed, the United States of America.

Charlie was a happy warrior. We all know Charlie. And whether you agreed

with him or disagreed with him, he always smiled, and he always expected you to push back. He never would resent your opposition to any philosophical point whatsoever, and that was a double-edged sword. He was a Republican's Republican at times; but I can say this, if it meant doing something he believed in, he would oppose the Republican Party.

We all remember the Norwood-Dingell bill which Charlie championed that was part of the patients' bill of rights, and that was a bill which was largely not supported by the Republican Party. And yet Charlie just charged away and said we're going to do this because it's the right thing. And he earned the respect of both sides of the aisle by handling this.

I remember him relating a story to me when the President of the United States called him and said, Charlie, what can I do to get you to back off this bill a little bit and give us some flexibility? And I believe he said, Mr. President, not a thing. But if you know Charlie and you know the President, that conversation probably has been cleaned up a little bit. But the whole time you could see both of them kidding back and forth because that was the nature of Charlie Norwood.

I remember one time I used to represent Emanuel County, and because of reapportionment, Charlie became the Representative. I said, Charlie, now, you're from Augusta. These folks are rural. I need to go up and introduce you. They're not going to take to you easily. We were going to meet about 7:30 in the morning in a local restaurant, a little diner, the epitome of what you always see on TV. And I got there just a few minutes late, and I thought, oh, man, Charlie has been surrounded by these farmers for a while now and I've embarrassed him by coming late and they're looking at this Augusta city slicker whom they've never met before.

I walked in and it was like interrupting somebody else's family reunion. Charlie was sitting at a table surrounded by farmers, surrounded by rural folks, while Charlie spun one yarn after another about what was wrong in Washington, DC. They loved him, and I hardly even got a place at the table, sort of nodded my head and said, Charlie, you take it from here and said to my former constituents, "You guys are in very, very good hands."

I remember one commercial that Charlie had, and I had been elected the term before Charlie. So I had a little bit to say here and there and Charlie had actually never been in elected office. Many of us had served in the Georgia General Assembly together, and Charlie ran an ad that said, I'm going to do what I can for you. I'm going to try to do my best, but I'll tell you this, if you're from the 10th District of Georgia, I don't care who you are, I'm going to do anything I can to help you.

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I said in my sage way, Charlie, now, look, if somebody has broken the law, you don't want to make that statement out there that you are going to help anybody for anything. He said, No, I will, and that's the way I feel.

People understood that about Charlie Norwood, that he was a fighter for them, he was a fighter for the cause, and he literally did mean it. If I can help you, I am going to do what I can for you.

I see we are about out of time on my half of the program here, but I want to state some facts for the RECORD about Charlie. Mr. BOOZMAN has outlined a lot of the specifics of his military career, but it is substantial. He was a fighter over and over again for the veterans. Again, he would be with the Republican Party or with the Democrat Party if it was in the best interests of the veterans. That's why it's so good to have such strong bipartisan support for this legislation today.

We want to say, Charlie, we love you. Gloria, and all the family, we certainly love you as well and support you. It's going to be a proud day when we get this building renamed.

As a soldier, Charlie earned both the Combat Medical badge and two Bronze stars while he served in Vietnam. He helped develop the Dental Corps standard operating procedures of delivering dentists to forward-fire bases. He dutifully served and provided dental, emergency medical and surgical care for both U.S. personnel as well as Vietnamese civilians and prisoners-of-war. As a Congressman, he co-authored and helped pass into law the Keep our Promises to America's Military Retirees Act and was also a key Member in passing the Retired Pay Restoration Act. Year after year, he defeated attempts to reduce Federal support for the Augusta VA Center and helped maintain and increase funding for the center. He received the Cocklin Award from the Association of the U.S. Army in 1998.

Over the past few months, we have received letters from several veterans organizations in support of this legislation. Here is a sample of what some of them had to say:

"We support this bill as Congressman Norwood spent his life supporting the overall well being of veterans"—Georgia Department of Veterans

"He was a member of the Augusta MOAA chapter and he would attend meetings unannounced to make sure he stayed in touch with Georgia veterans. He was always quick to protect TRICARE benefits, and he co-sponsored legislation to fix the military Survivor Benefit plan inequities, and improving military pay raises"—Georgia Military Officers Association of America

"Designating the Augusta VA after Charlie Norwood is the most appropriate act for a great Congressman and a grateful community"—The American Legion, Department of Georgia (Note: He was a life member of the Georgia chapter)

"Renaming the Department of VA in memory of Congressman Norwood would be very fitting and greatly appreciated"—Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Georgia

"Speaking with the veterans in Augusta, you can tell that most of them do not want to forget the great things that he has done for all

veterans. As a native of Augusta, Congressman Norwood would always be remembered by renaming the VAMC located there.”—AmVets, Department of Georgia

Former Congressman Charles Taylor: “I know the many Veterans who received care through Charlie’s many efforts would like to say thank you. He often reminded us, ‘we are in fact defending our nation’s future’ by showing young people the ‘level of importance we place on military service’”.

Former Congressman Bob Beauprez: “Charlie epitomized the phrase ‘servant leader’. He went about his work daily without thought of himself, building a legacy, or attracting notoriety. Headlines he did not seek, and even in his battle with the disease that finally took him from us, sympathy was never his objective. He could make a decision and he could argue passionately for a cause, but he also was one of the most caring, forgiving, decent, humble Christian men I ever met.”

President Bush: “Charlie was a good friend and a strong, spirited legislator who always stuck to his principles, remembering that his duty was to represent the best interests of the citizens of his district.”

From the New York Times obituaries: “A feisty conservative who railed against government bureaucracy, Mr. Norwood was part of the Republican wave that took control of Congress in 1994. Mr. Norwood prided himself on serving his northeast Georgia district, promoting his success in cutting through federal regulations a decade ago to allow a constituent to bring home a stuffed polar bear the man had killed on a hunting trip in Canada.”

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

Mr. BOOZMAN, if you need more time, we will be happy to yield to you.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman Georgia (Mr. GINGREY).

Mr. GINGREY. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I thank Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER, and certainly my colleague, the author of the bill, Congressman KINGSTON from Savannah.

I want to tell the Congressman that there are no city slickers in Augusta, Georgia. I am an Augusta native. There are probably not any in Savannah either. Maybe they are all in the Atlanta area.

Mr. Speaker, I do rise today in strong support of H.R. 1808 to designate Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia, my hometown, as the Charlie Norwood Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

I am proud to stand here today as an original cosponsor of the bill, not just because Charlie Norwood was a great American who loved his country and found any way he could to serve, but also because I had the honor and privilege to serve with him, to personally know Charlie and to count him as one of my close friends.

Charlie, as has already been said, I am just proud to repeat a lot of this, but Charlie was a native son of Georgia, growing up in Valdosta. He graduated from Georgia Southern Univer-

sity in Statesboro. After earning his doctorate in dentistry from Georgetown University, Charlie went on to serve as a captain in the United States Army from 1967 to 1969. During this time he served in Vietnam.

He practiced experimental military dental practice that’s now standard operating military procedure for the Armed Forces. He was one of the first dentists to operate in the active combat zone in Vietnam.

In recognition for his service in Vietnam, Charlie was awarded the Combat Medical Badge and two Bronze Stars. After Vietnam, Charlie was assigned to the dental corps at Fort Gordon, the Army base just outside of Augusta, and from then on, Charlie, Gloria and his family made their home in Augusta, Georgia.

In 1994, Charlie became the first Republican to represent Georgia’s 10th Congressional District since reconstruction. This landmark election gave us a leader who tirelessly fought for immigration reform, including the Clear Act to eliminate sanctuary cities, and the patients’ bill of rights. I will never forget that. I was practicing medicine in Marietta, Georgia, when Charlie brought forth that bill about 10 years ago and did such a great job with reining in managed care. He is always for smaller, fiscally conservative government.

During this time, Charlie never forgot his fellow veterans. He remained an active member of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the Military Order of the World Wars. And throughout the BRAC process, Charlie’s constituents in Augusta could rest easy knowing that Charlie was there fighting for Fort Gordon and the Augusta area Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

Charlie Norwood was a strong American who spent his life fighting for his country, both at home and abroad. For this reason I can think of no one more fitting after which to name the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Augusta.

I urge all my colleagues to remember the selfless sacrifice of Charlie Norwood to America, his deep love for our Nation, by voting in favor of H.R. 1808.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON).

(Mr. BARTON of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1808. I am proud to be the first non-Georgian sponsor of the bill after the entire Georgia delegation.

I knew Congressman Norwood very well. He was one of my very best friends in the House. I can think of no better tribute than to name the Veterans Affairs Center at One Freedom Way in Augusta the Charlie Norwood Medical Center.

Congressman Norwood was a strong advocate for veterans. He was a vet-

eran himself. He was very active in health care issues and veterans health care issues on the House floor. This is a fitting tribute to his service in the Congress and his service to the country when he was in the military and served so nobly and ably in Vietnam.

I rise in strong support and hope we get unanimous support for this bill at the appropriate time.

I have had the pleasure of working with many great men and women in my 22 years in the House, and I can say with all honesty that Charlie Norwood was one of the best. I knew Charlie well, both as an outspoken member of the Energy and Commerce Committee and a good friend. His devotion to people of the Tenth District of Georgia was undeniable, as was his passion for improving this country’s healthcare and the lives of its veterans.

Charlie Norwood’s service to his country began long before his election to the House of Representatives. Charlie volunteered to serve in the United States Dental Corp during the Vietnam War. Captain Norwood provided dental, emergency medical, and surgical care for United States personnel, Vietnamese civilians, and prisoners-of-war. The Dental Corp operating procedures that he helped develop while in combat conditions have now become standard.

Upon returning stateside, Charlie settled in the Augusta area and set up a private dental practice serving local residents as well as providing care for military personnel, retirees, and dependents under Department of Defense programs and for low-income patients under Georgia Medicaid. His work on behalf of veterans and military personnel continued throughout his twelve years in the House of Representatives.

Throughout his congressional service from 1995 to 2007, Congressman Norwood repeatedly defeated attempts to reduce Federal support for the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia. I think it only appropriate that we gather here today to honor the memory of this great man by placing his name on the institution that he fought so hard for. I cannot think of a more fitting tribute to Congressman Charlie Norwood.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, how much time do we have?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CAPUANO). The gentleman from Arkansas has 8½ minutes, and the gentleman from California has 19 minutes.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE).

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I thank my colleague for yielding. I am so pleased to join my colleagues in support of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, Charlie Norwood, Congressman Norwood, was a dear friend to me, and he was a friend to this body. It’s wonderful that we have this opportunity to recognize and honor him here today and forever with the commemoration and renaming of this veterans facility.

Congressman Norwood spent his entire life helping others. After serving

valiantly in defense of our Nation in Vietnam, he returned home to serve his community in Augusta, Georgia, as a dentist. For 12 years he was a faithful servant to the people of Georgia as a Member of Congress, and all of this service, with his wife, Gloria, close by his side, indispensably.

In Congress, Charlie Norwood was a passionate supporter of our military and our veterans, and he never forgot for whom he was to work in Washington, his constituents. His leadership on veterans issues and a broader conservative vision for America are deeply missed. Anyone who knew Charlie knew that he was as tough as they come, and he always stood on principle.

His legacy in the House of Representatives will be one of integrity, vigor and loyalty. It's fitting that we memorialize his life with this tribute today.

Thank you, Charlie.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BROUN).

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, Congressman Charlie Norwood was a man of integrity and conviction who made immeasurable contributions to this Nation.

I knew Charlie when he was first elected to Congress in 1994. He was a tireless advocate for veterans, for this district, and for the entire State of Georgia. Charlie and I shared the love of hunting and fishing. When I was an active member of the safari club, I used to come to Washington to lobby for hunters' rights and gun owners' rights. Charlie was always very supportive and very helpful.

I have enormous respect for his unwavering commitment to his principles. Throughout Charlie's illness, I prayed that God would heal him. His passing was a great loss to us all. I hope that dedicating this facility will be a comfort to the Norwood family and for all that they have been through.

I have tremendous appreciation for Charlie's wife, Gloria, for the unwavering support that she gave to Charlie. Without her help he could not have accomplished so many wonderful things and touched so many people's lives.

Charlie gave a lifetime of public service to the people of this Nation. After giving so much to his country, it is only fitting that we honor Charlie today by naming this medical center after him.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my fellow colleagues in strong support of H.R. 1808, To designate the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia, as the "Charlie Norwood Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center."

Congressman Charlie Norwood was a man of integrity and conviction, who made immeasurable contributions to this nation, and I can't think of anything more appropriate than to name the Augusta VA Medical Center after Charlie.

Before serving in the House of Representatives, Charlie volunteered for the Army, serv-

ing in the Army Dental Corps. In Vietnam, he served bravely as an Army captain under combat conditions, providing dental and emergency care to American soldiers, civilians, and prisoners of war. For his distinguished service, he was awarded the Combat Medical Badge and two Bronze Stars. After returning from Vietnam, Charlie continued to serve in the Army Dental Corps at Fort Gordon in Augusta, GA. When he was discharged in 1969, he began his dental practice in Augusta.

I have enormous respect for Charlie Norwood. I knew Charlie when he was first elected to Congress in 1994. Throughout his 12 years in Congress, he was a tireless advocate for veterans, for the district, and for the entire State of Georgia. He championed the Patients' Bill of Rights, worked to reform health care for veterans, and fought to secure our borders.

Charlie and I shared the love of outdoors, of hunting, and fishing. When I was an active member of the Safari club, I used to come to Washington to lobby for hunters' rights and gun owners' rights, and Charlie was always very supportive and helpful. I've always admired his unwavering commitment to his principles. Throughout Charlie's illness, I prayed that God would heal him. However, it seems that God had a different plan. His passing was a great loss to us all.

I hope that dedicating this facility will be a comfort to the Norwood family for all that they have been through. I have tremendous appreciation for Charlie's wife, Gloria, for the unwavering support that she gave to Charlie. Without her help, he could not have accomplished so many wonderful things and touched so many people's lives.

Charlie truly cared about people. He gave a lifetime of public service to the people of this nation. After giving so much to his country, it is only fitting that we honor Charlie today by naming the VA Medical Center in Augusta after him.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DEAL).

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. You have already heard the accolades about Charlie's service as a decorated dentist in the Vietnam era and in Vietnam, in country.

I didn't know Charlie until he came to Congress, but he and I became very close friends. We worked together on the Energy and Commerce Committee. He was always dedicated to the things that he thought was for the best, especially for our veterans, for those who serve their country and who had sacrificed for our country.

He was always somebody that you knew exactly where he stood, and he wasn't always partisan in where he stood. He simply took positions based on what he thought was right. In the words of Charlie Norwood, I would thank the gentleman who introduced this resolution, and, as Charlie would say, "you done good."

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER).

Mr. LINDER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I was a friend of Charlie's for over 30 years. We met in the

early 1970s when he was the president of the Georgia Dental Association and I was a practicing dentist and a young State legislator.

Charlie never ever was in neutral, and he rarely ever backed up. It was full go ahead. The great story about him in the Army was he changed the way they were doing business, moving dentists to forward-fire bases. His commander called him and said, I want a daily report of what you are doing there that is out of the ordinary. Charlie said to him, Well, I have got a chair here. You come down here and set your own butt on it and write your own report. I just don't have time. The colonel did come down, and they changed the entire way the Army did business because of Charlie's ideas.

When he got involved shortly thereafter in the Georgia Dental Association, he did the same thing. He just took charge and became president. He traveled all over the State of Georgia fighting for important things for patients' welfare. His campaign in 1994 was a joy to watch, just a joy to watch, yard signs everywhere and him moving as fast as he could from one house to the next, from one hand to the next. He was just a remarkably good campaigner.

Then he came here and he introduced a very important bill. I didn't agree with him on the bill, but he didn't slow down at all.

The fact that the House and the Senate did not sign the patients' bill of rights did not mean it wasn't important. The changes it brought in the relationships between HMOs and patients are there today because of the pressure of that legislation and will be there forever. Charlie was a remarkable human being and one whom I have loved for a very long time and will miss.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND).

Mr. WESTMORELAND. I want to thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor that I stand up and ask for the support on the renaming of this veterans center in Augusta for Congressman Charlie Norwood.

I told Charlie one time, I said, Charlie, you are my foxhole buddy. And he said, What do you mean by that? I said, Well, I know that you are going to keep my back covered and that you are going to be with me if you tell me that you are with me until I get out of the foxhole or until they drag our dead bodies out.

That's the kind of guy he was. If he told you that he was with you, then he was with you. That's the type of thing that he exerted towards the veterans of this country is that he was with the veterans. I don't think there could be any greater honor on that veterans building in Augusta than Charlie Norwood's name, to let the veterans know and understand that he has always been with them, that he went through

many adversities with his health, a long time of trying to get over an illness.

They may be up for some of the things, but Charlie Norwood was always there for them. I just think it's a great honor that this body has voted, and I hope will continue to vote, to make that the Charlie Norwood Veterans Administration Medical Center.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, in closing, again, we have all heard what a great asset Charlie Norwood was to this body, not only in helping us as Members, but in the many, many ways that he served his country.

He and his wife, Gloria, also served us in the way of helping junior Members' wives as they came on board, my wife, in particular. Again, we are very, very grateful to his service. I can't think of a more fitting honor than the honor of naming this building.

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1808.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I just heard from Charlie, and he said, in his typical way, I wish all those guys saying such nice things about me would have voted for my patients' bill of rights.

But naming a VA facility after this hero and a strong veterans advocate is certainly a proper honor for an honorable soldier and for a Congressman we all loved.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1808, legislation to VA Medical Center in Augusta, GA as the "Charlie Norwood Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center."

Simply put, there is no more fitting vehicle to pay tribute and honor our friend and former colleague, Representative Charlie Norwood.

As many of my colleagues have so eloquently noted, Dr. Norwood was first and foremost a friend of the American veteran. Having served in wartime conditions in the Republic of Vietnam in 1968, Captain Norwood helped develop the Army Dental Corps operating procedures that is now the standard for delivering dentists to forward-fire bases.

In so doing, Captain Norwood provided quality dental care to his fellow combat servicemen, and established standard practice that continued to benefit servicemen long after he left the Army.

That is an appropriate metaphor for Charlie's career in the U.S. House. As a Member who served his constituents passionately during more than 12 years of service, he dedicated his government service to ensuring access to quality healthcare for every American, and for guaranteeing veterans the benefits and respect that they deserve.

We all miss Charlie. But even though he is no longer with us, the good doctor's passion and dedication to American veterans is not

forgotten. This legislation is a true memorial to his service, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1808, a bill to designate the VA Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia as the "Charlie Norwood Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center" which would honor one of our colleagues and one of my close friends who passed away this Congress.

Charlie Norwood was born on July 27, 1941 and attended both Georgia Southern University in Statesboro, Georgia and Georgetown University in Washington, DC. I have a close affinity to Charlie who was a dentist, like many in my family, prior to serving in the House of Representatives.

Charlie Norwood served as a Captain in the United States Army from 1967 to 1969. He began his Army career with an assignment to the U.S. Army Dental Corps at Sandia Army Base in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and in 1968, was transferred to the Medical Battalion of the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Vietnam. He served a combat tour at Quin Yon, An Khe, and LZ English at Bon Son. During his tour of duty, he participated in experimental military dental practices that are now standard procedure for the Armed Forces. In recognition of his service under combat conditions, Norwood was awarded the Combat Medical Badge and two Bronze Stars. After his discharge in 1969, he remained a member of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Military Order of the World Wars until his death.

Mr. Speaker, Charlie Norwood served with us as a Member of Congress from January 4, 1995 until his untimely death on February 13, 2007. During his Congressional career, as a Member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, Charlie Norwood worked to pass a patients' bill of rights, aimed at giving people better access to health care, and spent his life supporting the overall well-being of veterans. Serving as a Member of the National Guard and Reserve Caucus, which I co-chair, he was a tireless guardian of our military and worked hard to protect TRICARE benefits, co-sponsored legislation to address military Survivor Benefit Plan inequities, and worked to get pay raises for our military members.

Mr. Speaker, honoring his hard work, and dedication to the military and our nation's veterans, as well as his love of nation by naming the VA Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia the "Charlie Norwood Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center" is a fitting tribute to our late colleague and friend.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the full support of my colleagues on this legislation.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have had the pleasure of working with many great men and women in my 22 years in the House, and I can say with all honesty that Charlie Norwood was one of the best. I knew Charlie well, both as an outspoken member of the Energy and Commerce Committee and a good friend. His devotion to people of the Tenth District of Georgia was undeniable, as was his passion for improving this country's healthcare and the lives of its veterans.

Charlie Norwood's service to his country began long before his election to the House of Representatives. Charlie volunteered to serve in the United States Dental Corps during the Vietnam War. Captain Norwood provided dental, emergency medical, and surgical care for

United States personnel, Vietnamese civilians, and prisoners-of-war. The Dental Corps operating procedures that he helped develop while in combat conditions have now become standard.

Upon returning stateside, Charlie settled in the Augusta area and set up a private dental practice serving local residents as well as providing care for military personnel, retirees, and dependents under Department of Defense programs and for low-income patients under Georgia Medicaid. His work on behalf of veterans and military personnel continued throughout his twelve years in the House of Representatives.

Throughout his congressional service from 1995 to 2007, Congressman Norwood repeatedly defeated attempts to reduce Federal support for the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia. I think it only appropriate that we gather here today to honor the memory of this great man by placing his name on the institution that he fought so hard for. I cannot think of a more fitting tribute to Congressman Charlie Norwood.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I wish to take this opportunity to remember a friend and colleague; Charlie Norwood, and to support H.R. 1808, a bill to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia, as the "Charlie Norwood Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center".

Charlie dedicated his life to medicine and public service—as a captain in the Army assigned to the Army Dental Corps during Vietnam, a dentist in private practice, and as a Member of Congress. During his 12 years in the House of Representatives, Charlie fought hard for conservative values, the military and our veterans, and remained dedicated to seeing a patients' bill of rights passed into law. Although this dream of his has not yet become a reality, it is all too fitting that we name the VA Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia, after one of that state's favorite sons.

Our military veterans had no stronger advocate in Congress than Charlie, and with the passage of this bill, we will be honoring that legacy. Additionally, I want to thank his wife Gloria for her loving support and her service as First Lady of Georgia's Tenth Congressional District.

As an original co-sponsor of H.R. 1808, a fellow veteran, a friend, and an admirer of Charlie Norwood, I want to thank Representative JACK KINGSTON for introducing this legislation, and I look forward to its passage.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 1808, to name the VA Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia after my good friend and colleague, Charlie Norwood. I served with Representative Norwood for 12 years here in Congress, and was honored to work alongside him. This principled man did not hesitate to stand up for his conservative principles, even if it meant criticizing his party.

Charlie was an intelligent and respected man, both in this House and in his hometown that he ably served. He was an amiable man full of a love for life and with a wisdom that he had earned through experience. I was never surprised when in Committee he would comment on an issue with particular insight and concern for the complexities involved.

It is fitting that a VA Medical Center be named after this courageous man, especially since he himself had served our country with

distinction in the Armed Forces. Representative Norwood served as a Captain in the United States Army from 1967 to 1969, beginning with an assignment to the U.S. Army Dental Corps at Sandia Army Base in Albuquerque, New Mexico. In 1968, he was transferred to the Medical Battalion of the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Vietnam, and served a combat tour at Quin Yon, An Khe, and LZ English at Bon Son. During his tour, he participated in experimental military dental practices that are now standard procedure for the armed forces. Charlie Norwood was one of the first participants in the Army's outreach program that delivered dentists to forward firebases, instead of the previous practice of transferring patients to rear treatment areas. Interestingly, he also provided some of the first field-based dental treatment of military guard dogs, and assisted in non-dental trauma care in Mobile Army Surgical Hospitals.

In recognition of his service under combat conditions, Representative Norwood was awarded the Combat Medical Badge and two Bronze Stars. After Vietnam, Charlie was assigned to the Dental Corps at Fort Gordon, Georgia, where he served until his discharge in 1969. He remained a member of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Military Order of the World Wars until his recent tragic death.

I was honored to serve with this effective Representative from the 10th district of Georgia, was strengthened to draw from this intelligent individual's wealth of knowledge and insight, and have been blessed to know this vibrant and caring man, Charlie Norwood, as a friend. I support honoring his memory by this designation, and urge my colleagues to join me in support of this bill.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I have no future 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 gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1808.

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. FILNER. 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.

□ 1315

MILO C. HUEMPFNER, DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OUTPATIENT CLINIC

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2408) to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic in Green Bay, Wisconsin, as the "Milo C. Huempfer Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2408

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

SECTION 1. NAME OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OUTPATIENT CLINIC, GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN.

The Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic in Green Bay, Wisconsin, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the "Milo C. Huempfer Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic". Any reference to such 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 Milo C. Huempfer Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to my distinguished colleague from Wisconsin (Mr. KAGEN) to speak about the bill which he has authored to name the outpatient clinic in Green Bay, Wisconsin, after this great hero.

Mr. KAGEN. Mr. Speaker, thank you for this opportunity to speak in support of H.R. 2408, a bill to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Green Bay for Milo C. Huempfer, Brown County, Wisconsin's most highly decorated veteran of World War II, recipient of the Distinguished Service Cross, second only to the Medal of Honor, the Bronze Star, and numerous other commendations.

Having cared for thousands of veterans as their physician, and now as their elected Representative, I would also like to thank the members of the leadership and the members of the Veterans' Affairs Committee who worked hard to bring this legislation to the floor today, especially Chairman FILNER. Thank you. And thank you as well to Ambassador Mark Green for beginning this good work.

We need to remember Milo C. Huempfer. He was a hero. His bravery, his dedication to others and his selflessness to serve is a beacon to guide all of us today.

Milo served in one of the best trained units in the U.S. Army, the elite 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion. It was a unit where courage was common. Yet even in this company, Milo distinguished himself.

Milo Huempfer was literally a one-man army. For 2 days in December of 1944, Milo Huempfer was literally a one-man army. He singlehandedly waged war against a German tank column in Belgium during the Battle of the Bulge.

In that chaotic battle, Milo and a colleague were separated from their convoy with a truckload of ammunition. They were near the Belgian town of Leignon when their truck slid off the road into a ditch. Milo was left behind to guard the truck until a tow truck could return. He had instructions to destroy it if the Germans arrived. He turned down opportunities to leave. When he heard an armed column of Panzer tanks approaching, he burned

the truck and retreated into the local city. Over the course of the next 2 days and 2 nights, Milo waged a one-man battle, a one-man guerrilla war against the town's Nazi occupiers. He destroyed tanks; he destroyed trucks. He stormed the machine gun positions and engaged in hand-to-hand fighting with enemy troops.

When he was not protecting townspeople of Leignon, Milo would sneak out of town to warn approaching troops, allied troops, that the enemy was nearby. He saved many American soldiers' lives.

One evening, a freezing evening, the townspeople came to him and asked if he would go to church and protect them. The people wanted to go to church and he could not understand why. Well, it happened to be Christmas Eve, they reminded him. And he stood outside armed only with a pistol to protect them on Christmas Eve. As the people of Leignon celebrated, he stood guard as he stands guard now. On Christmas morning, Milo received his present when allied forces began their counterattack and surrounded the town. Milo didn't stop. He sprang into action against a German artillery hidden in a barn, and 18 Nazis surrendered to him. When Milo finally met the allied troops, they almost mistook him for a German spy. They couldn't believe that a single soldier could hold them off from this town and couldn't understand how a single American soldier could bring so many enemy troops into being captives.

For these deeds, Private Huempfer was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. The after-action report on Private Huempfer's deeds ends with these words, and I quote: "His gallantry, intrepidity and extraordinary heroism while operating within the very limits of the German units, without being ordered to do so, and when withdrawal could have been accomplished with honor and safety, reflect the highest standards and ideal of the military service and favorably demonstrated to the citizens of Leignon the courage and daring of the American soldier."

After the war, Milo Huempfer preferred not to talk about his experiences. This was common for many soldiers in World War II. His own children did not know any of what I just spoke about until his funeral, when Milo's comrades stepped forward to speak of their cherished comrade.

Despite his silence, Milo remained a committed patriot and dedicated to the men he served. Over the years between the war and his passing in 1985, Milo attended the funerals of over 900 veterans in Brown County, Wisconsin. He used his dress uniform so frequently that he wore it out. As a mark of respect and thanks, local veterans organizations paid to have it restored.

By naming this temporary community outpatient clinic building in Green Bay after Milo Huempfer, we are paying respect to one of Wisconsin's great heroes.