

Boating offers people the chance to catch up with family and friends while watching the world float by, to introduce their children to the natural environment, and to slow down and enjoy a relaxing weekend on a vacation away from home.

Perhaps not surprisingly, a survey conducted by the National Marine Manufacturers Association found that boating was among the top three stress-relieving activities among survey respondents.

Recreational boating is also far more accessible than many may assume. More than 90 percent of Americans live less than an hour's drive from a body of water on which recreational boating can be undertaken.

Because of boating's importance to our Nation, the United States already observes many days to honor different aspects of the boating industry. For example, on August 11, the United States will observe National Marina Day. During the week prior to Memorial Day, we observe National Safe Boating Week, intended to remind boaters of the need to practice safe boating habits and to use personal flotation devices while on the water.

The message of National Safe Boating Week bears repeating. In 2005, nearly 5,000 boating accidents resulted in just under 3,500 injuries and nearly 700 deaths, the vast majority of which were caused by accidental drowning that could have been prevented if those who fell in the water had been wearing life jackets.

H. Res. 505 now calls on the President to set aside a day specifically to honor recreational boating and the boating industry. I believe such recognition is due to the pastime of boating, and I commend the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KLEIN) for introducing this resolution and supporting a wonderful activity in our country.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 505 recognizes and commends the recreational boating community and the boating industry for their contributions to the economy of the United States, the well-being of the United States citizens, and responsible environmental stewardship of the marine resources of the United States.

There are more than 73 million individuals that make up the recreational boating community in the United States. This important industry generates more than \$39 billion annually in the United States economy, and provides jobs for 380,000 citizens of the United States.

While the industry and the community are important parts of our national economy, these individuals also play an important role in conserving our natural resources for future generations' enjoyment. Recreational boaters act as stewards of the marine environment of the United States and

take lead and hands-on roles in educating future generations of the value of these resources.

The legislation also encourages the President to mark the importance of the recreational boating community and industries by establishing July 1 as National Boating Day. It is fitting that we consider this resolution so closely to the Fourth of July, when tens of thousands will be enjoying our Nation's inland and coastal waters aboard recreational vessels.

I commend the resolution's sponsor, Mr. KLEIN of Florida, and all the measure's cosponsors for introducing the legislation, and I join them in urging all Members to support the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, I urge passage of the resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield to the gentlelady from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) such time as she may consume.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 505, to highlight the important contribution of the recreational boating community and the boating industry to our way of life, and to call upon the President to issue a proclamation asking the American people to observe National Boating Day.

As a Representative of Florida's 20th Congressional District, I can attest to the important contribution recreational boating and the boating industry has had upon South Florida's economy and quality of life. The marine industry is responsible for more than \$18 billion of revenues and 220,000 jobs in Florida.

Recreational boating is integral to the way of life in Florida. From fishing to snorkeling to scuba diving in our beautiful coral reefs, or simply taking a scenic cruise through Florida's intra-coastal waterways, recreational boating and South Florida go hand in hand.

In fact, recreational boating is such an important part of Ft. Lauderdale that the city has earned the well-deserved nickname, the "Venice of America."

But the contributions of the recreational boating community go far beyond my home State. The boating population exceeds 73 million individuals utilizing and enjoying an estimated 18 million recreational watercraft. In addition, the recreational boating industry provides more than \$39 billion in sales and services to the U.S. economy, and provides nearly 380,000 manufacturing jobs.

Boating helps to bring us closer to the wonders of nature, and it helps us to appreciate the need to be good stewards of our natural resources.

It's no surprise that boaters often are some of our most ardent conservationists, because they see firsthand the importance of protecting our fragile ecosystem for generations to come.

It's for these reasons that I rise in support of H. Res. 505, recognizing the

contributions of the recreational boating community and the boating industry to the continuing prosperity and affluence of the United States. This resolution calls upon the President to issue a proclamation to observe National Boating Day, with an appropriate day being July 1.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 505 and vote for its final passage.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 505, which urges the President to proclaim July 1, 2007, as "National Boating Day".

Recreational boating is enjoyed by millions of Americans and is a major force in the U.S. economy, providing jobs for almost 400,000 citizens and generating more than \$39 million in revenue.

Recreational boating provides enjoyment, rest and relaxation for families of all ages. In addition, recreational boaters often serve as educators and stewards of our natural resources.

Recreational boat-builders—from the large corporation to the individual—build vessels for the enjoyment of millions of people, using both natural and manmade materials from across our great Nation.

I thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KLEIN) for introducing this resolution and urge my colleagues to join me in supporting House Resolution 505, which urges the President to proclaim July 1 as "National Boating Day".

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 505.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GEORGE HOWARD, JR. FEDERAL BUILDING AND UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2011) to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 100 East 8th Avenue in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, as the "George Howard, Jr. Federal Building and United States Courthouse".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2011

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

SECTION 1. GEORGE HOWARD, JR. FEDERAL BUILDING AND UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The Federal building and United States courthouse located at 100 East 8th Avenue in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, shall be known and designated as the "George Howard, Jr. Federal Building and United States Courthouse".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other

record of the United States to the Federal building and United States courthouse referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the “George Howard, Jr. Federal Building and United States Courthouse”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2011.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2011 is a bill to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse at 100 East 8th Avenue in Pine Bluff, Arkansas as the George Howard, Jr. Federal Building and United States Courthouse.

Judge Howard, who recently died at age 82, was an icon of the judicial community in Arkansas. He had a lifetime filled with accomplishments, first African American Federal judge in Arkansas, distinguished legal career, Navy veteran, and dedicated family man. He served with distinction on the Arkansas Supreme Court, the Arkansas Court of Appeals, and the Arkansas State Claims Commission.

After graduating from the University of Arkansas Law School, George Howard, Jr. began a long illustrious, trail-blazing legal career in his home State of Arkansas. After initially working as an attorney in private practice, Judge Howard received his first appointment in 1967 to the Arkansas State Claims Commission. He was then appointed to the Arkansas State Supreme Court as an Arkansas State Supreme Court Justice, and was later appointed by then Governor Bill Clinton as State Court of Appeals judge in 1979. Judge Howard later began his Federal service in 1980, when President Jimmy Carter appointed him a Federal District Judge in Arkansas.

The bill has bipartisan support from the Arkansas delegation. It is both fitting and appropriate that we honor Judge Howard’s legacy with this designation. I support H.R. 2011 and urge its passage.

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

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

H.R. 2011 designates the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 100 East 8th Avenue in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, as the George Howard, Jr. Federal Building and United States Courthouse. The bill honors Judge Howard, who was the first African

American appointed to the Federal bench in Arkansas.

Judge Howard served in the United States Navy during World War II. And after receiving his law degree from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, he engaged in the private practice of law in Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

His career in public service included serving on the Arkansas State Claims Commission, the Arkansas Supreme Court, and the Arkansas Court of Appeals, and culminated in his appointment to the Federal bench.

In 1980, President Carter appointed Judge Howard to the United States District Court for the Eastern and Western Districts of Arkansas. Judge Howard’s tenure on the bench ended with his passing at the age of 82 on April 21, 2007.

Mr. Speaker, I support this legislation and encourage my colleagues to do the same.

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the sponsor of the bill, Mr. ROSS of Arkansas.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2011, a bill to dedicate the Federal building and United States courthouse in Pine Bluff, Arkansas as the George Howard, Jr. Federal Building and United States Courthouse.

□ 1430

First I would like to thank Chairman OBERSTAR and Chairwoman NORTON, Congressman BOUSTANY, and others for their support and assistance in moving this bill from the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee in a bipartisan manner to the floor of the United States House of Representatives. I am also pleased that the entire Arkansas congressional delegation, Congressmen MARION BERRY, VIC SNYDER, and JOHN BOOZMAN, are supporting and cosponsoring this very important bill with me in a bipartisan way.

Judge George Howard, Jr., was a great American who served his country in the State of Arkansas with great dignity. He was born in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, where he practiced law and actively served in the community for over 40 years. He attended Lincoln University in Missouri and the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, where he received his law degree in 1954, among the first African Americans to graduate from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville Law School.

During World War II, he chose to serve his country by enlisting in the Navy. Judge Howard was known to be a pioneer throughout his career as he became the first African American in the State of Arkansas to serve on the State Claims Commission, State Supreme Court, the court of appeals, and eventually rising to become the first African American Federal judge for the U.S. District Court in Arkansas.

Judge Howard was the first African American member of the State Su-

preme Court, appointed by then Governor David Pryor in 1977 before being appointed to the State court of appeals by then Governor Bill Clinton in 1979.

As a judge, George Howard, Jr. was admired for his fairness and deep belief in the fundamental idea of justice for all. Judge Howard will forever be remembered as a dedicated public servant who cared deeply about his faith, his family, his work, his State, his country, and the judicial process.

In respect to Judge Howard’s life, career and public service, I felt that it was appropriate to introduce legislation in Congress to dedicate the Federal building and courthouse in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, as the “George Howard, Jr. Federal Building and United States Courthouse.”

Mr. Speaker, I can think of no better way to recognize his legacy and his steadfast commitment to justice and equality than by officially renaming this Federal building and courthouse in the city he loved and called home, Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

His life and service have paved the way for so many others who pursue careers in public service and law. His life and service opened many doors for African Americans throughout Pine Bluff in southeast Arkansas.

Judge Howard passed away on April 21, 2007. He will forever be remembered and his contributions to the State of Arkansas and our Nation live on. It is my hope that each person who walks through the doors of the George Howard, Jr. Federal Building and Courthouse in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, will have an even greater appreciation for the countless contributions Judge Howard made in the lives of people across the State of Arkansas. May this courthouse that hopefully will soon bear his name serve as a reminder to all of us that while he is no longer with us, the example, the shining example, of community service, public service, and of being fair to all people can live on.

This recognition will serve as a reminder to young people in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and to future generations that committing one’s self to education, hard work, and pursuing a career in public service can be good and noble.

I am proud to sponsor this bill in Congress, and I urge my fellow colleagues to vote in favor of it today.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. Ross) for bringing this legislation to the floor, and I commend the Arkansas delegation for its consideration of Judge Howard’s tenure and time on the bench.

I support this legislation and urge its adoption.

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague from Arkansas for recognizing a true civil rights and judicial pioneer when that was not easy at a time when there were few like him.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2011, a bill to designate the Federal building and United States Courthouse in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, as the "George Howard, Jr. Federal Building and United States Courthouse".

Judge George Howard, Jr. was born in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, on May 13, 1924. He began his service to our Nation at the age of 18 when he was drafted into military service during World War II. Judge Howard served with distinction in the United States Navy with the Construction Battalion—or the "Seabees"—in the South Pacific.

After completing his military service, Judge George Howard, Jr. returned to Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and re-enrolled in high school to complete his high school education. Upon graduating from high school, Judge Howard attended the pre-law program at Lincoln University in Missouri and graduated with honors. Judge Howard subsequently attended the University of Arkansas School of Law. He was the first African-American student to live on campus in the newly desegregated campus dormitories. He earned his law degree in 1954.

After graduating from law school, Judge Howard began a long, illustrious, and trailblazing legal career in his home State of Arkansas. In the 1950s, Judge Howard started a private law practice and devoted his energies to representing those whose voices would not otherwise be heard. He subsequently served on the Arkansas State Claims Commission, the Arkansas Court of Appeals, and the Arkansas Supreme Court. In 1980, President Carter appointed Judge Howard to the U.S. District Court, Eastern and Western Districts of Arkansas. Judge Howard was Arkansas' first African-American Federal judge.

Through his pursuit of legal and racial equality, and his exemplary career in public service, Judge Howard helped to pave the way for other African-Americans to pursue careers in law and public service. From his time as a private attorney, to his service as President of the State Council of Branches of the National Association of Colored People, NAACP, Judge Brown's judicial ideals were grounded in the fundamental belief of justice for all.

Judge Howard passed away on April 21, 2007, in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, at the age of 82. In honor of Judge George Howard, Jr.'s outstanding contributions to the State of Arkansas, the Federal judiciary, and his distinguished legal career, it is both fitting and proper to designate the courthouse located at in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, the "George Howard, Jr. Federal Building and United States Courthouse".

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 2011.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2011.

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.

DISCHARGE AND REREFERRAL OF H.R. 123, SAN GABRIEL BASIN RESTORATION FUND AUTHORIZATION ACT

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 123) to authorize appropriations for the San Gabriel Basin Restoration Fund and that the bill be rereferred to the Committee on Natural Resources.

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

There was no objection.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 505.

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

There was no objection.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE REGARDING THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF PRIME MINISTER TONY BLAIR

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 416) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the public service of Tony Blair, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 416

Whereas Tony Blair has served as the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom for more than a decade, winning three general elections as leader of the Labour Party;

Whereas Mr. Blair played an instrumental role in achieving peace in Northern Ireland and negotiating the Good Friday Agreement which brought all communities into the political and governmental process and ended centuries of division, conflict, and strife;

Whereas Mr. Blair committed himself to bringing devolved government to Northern Ireland which was achieved with the recent decision of the Democratic Unionist Party and Sinn Féin agreeing to form a power-sharing government;

Whereas the United Kingdom and the United States have had a long-standing alliance which was further strengthened during Tony Blair's tenure as he and the United Kingdom stood side-by-side with the United States during conflicts in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq;

Whereas Mr. Blair showed British solidarity with the United States after the 9/11 terrorist attacks by being the first foreign leader to visit Ground Zero and attending President Bush's speech before a joint session of Congress on September 20, 2001;

Whereas Mr. Blair displayed exemplary leadership as Prime Minister when the United Kingdom suffered its own terrorist attacks on July 7, 2005, when suicide bombers killed 52 people traveling on London's public transportation system;

Whereas the United Kingdom has been a steadfast ally to the United States in the Global War on Terror as it is the second largest contributor of coalition forces in Iraq and Afghanistan; and

Whereas on July 17, 2003, Mr. Blair was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal that declared "Congress finds that Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom has clearly demonstrated, during a very trying and historic time for our two countries, that he is a staunch and steadfast ally of the United States of America." Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the remarkable public service of Tony Blair during his tenure as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom; and

(2) expresses appreciation to Mr. Blair for his steadfast support for the United States and Britain's invaluable alliance to our Nation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in strong support of this resolution. As one of the co-Chairs of the bipartisan United Kingdom Caucus, I am honored to have the opportunity to speak in support of H. Res. 416, a resolution saluting the public service of Tony Blair, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

I would first like to commend our distinguished colleague, Mr. PETER KING of New York, for introducing this timely resolution that pays tribute to the remarkable political career of one of America's strongest allies.

Two days from now, Prime Minister Tony Blair will leave 10 Downing Street for the last time. He will be leaving behind a legacy of domestic reform and international activism. His successor, Gordon Brown, praised his accomplishments and told him that "Whatever we achieve in the future will be because we are standing on your shoulders."

Mr. Blair was first elected to Parliament in 1983 and served as Prime Minister for over a decade, securing a place in the record books as the only Labor leader to have won three successive elections.

Mr. Blair has been a strong and steadfast ally of the United States throughout his time in office. No American will ever forget the solidarity he expressed on behalf of our British cousins in the days following the devastating terrorist attacks of