

Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

SPECIAL AGENT SAMUEL HICKS FAMILIES OF FALLEN HEROES ACT

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2711) to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for the transportation of the dependents, remains, and effects of certain Federal employees who die while performing official duties or as a result of the performance of official duties, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2711

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Special Agent Samuel Hicks Families of Fallen Heroes Act".

SEC. 2. TRANSPORTATION OF DEPENDENTS, REMAINS, AND EFFECTS OF CERTAIN FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 5724c the following:

"§ 5724d. Transportation of dependents, remains, and effects of certain Federal employees

"(a) IN GENERAL.—Under regulations prescribed under section 5738 and when the head of the agency concerned (or a designee thereof) authorizes or approves, if a covered employee dies while performing official duties or as a result of the performance of, official duties, the agency may pay from Government funds—

"(1) the qualified expenses of the immediate family of the employee, if the place where the family will reside following the death of the employee is—

"(A) different from the place where the family resided at the time of the employee's death; and

"(B) within the United States; and

"(2) the expenses of preparing and transporting the remains of the deceased to—

"(A) the place where the immediate family will reside following the death of the employee; or

"(B) such other place, appropriate for interment, as is determined by the agency head (or designee).

"(b) QUALIFIED EXPENSES.—For purposes of this section, the term 'qualified expenses', as used with respect to a family changing its place of residence, means the moving expenses, transportation expenses, and relocation expenses of the family which are attributable to the change in place of residence.

"(c) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section—

"(1) the term 'covered employee' means—

"(A) a law enforcement officer, as defined by section 8331 or 8401; and

"(B) any employee in or under the Federal Bureau of Investigation who is not described in subparagraph (A);

"(2) the term 'moving expenses', as used with respect to a family, includes the expenses of transporting, packing, crating, temporarily storing, draying, and unpacking the household goods and personal effects of such family, not in excess of 18,000 pounds net weight; and

"(3) the term 'relocation expenses' has the meaning given such term under regulations prescribed under section 5738, including relocation expenses and relocation services described in sections 5724a and 5724c, respectively."

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 5724c the following:

"5724d. Transportation of dependents, remains, and effects of certain Federal employees."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. CAO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and add any extraneous materials.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the chairman of the full Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Chairman TOWNS, and its members, I am proud to present H.R. 2711, the Special Agent Samuel Hicks Families of Fallen Heroes Act, for consideration.

This bipartisan legislation was introduced on June 4, 2009, by Representative MIKE ROGERS of Michigan and several members of the Oversight Committee, including Chairman ED TOWNS and Representatives BILL FOSTER, ELIJAH CUMMINGS, and BRIAN BILBRAY. In addition, this legislation was favorably reported out of the Oversight Committee on September 10, 2009, by voice vote. H.R. 2711 is a worthy and important issue and I am pleased to be an original cosponsor of this bill.

As reported by the Oversight Committee, the legislation would authorize the FBI to pay the relocation and moving expenses for families of FBI agents who are killed in the line of duty. Under current law, the FBI is only authorized to pay these expenses if an FBI agent or an employee is killed overseas, but cannot pay for relocation if the death occurs in the U.S.

FBI employees and their families are moved routinely by the Bureau within the United States to take on assignments that further the mission of the agency and the security of the country. While we wish this legislation was not necessary, tragically there have been instances in the recent past where such authority was needed to support the families of agents or employees who gave their lives.

Of course, untimely deaths in the Federal law enforcement community are not limited to the FBI, and the Bureau is not the only Federal agency that relocates its employees to better protect the country. Recognizing this,

the bill we are considering on the floor today includes a straightforward but important amendment that recognizes the service and sacrifice of all Federal law enforcement officers. The amendment simply extends the authority in this legislation to the other agencies that employ Federal law enforcement officers.

This amendment has strong support from the Federal law enforcement community. I should also note that the costs associated with this bill remain small as the number of Federal law enforcement officers killed annually is approximately 12 to 15 officers. We can and should assist each and every one of these families by supporting this amendment and this bill. Moreover, the amendment also pays tribute to the memory and service of Special Agent Samuel Hicks by renaming the legislation in his honor. Special Agent Hicks was assigned to the Pittsburgh FBI office and was shot fatally on November 19, 2008 at the age of 33 while executing a Federal search warrant associated with a drug distribution ring. He is survived by his wife and their 2-year-old son.

Special Agent Hicks was a former police officer with the Baltimore police department. He and his family relocated to Pittsburgh when he became an FBI agent. Unfortunately, after the loss of Special Agent Hicks, the Bureau was unable to assist the Hicks family in moving back to Baltimore because of statutory limitations.

□ 1330

This legislation would correct this problem and prevent future families from suffering additional unnecessary grief and hardship. I encourage all the Members to support Mr. ROGERS and his legislation.

I reserve the balance of our time.

Mr. CAO. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to my friend and colleague from the State of Michigan (Mr. ROGERS).

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, Mr. LYNCH and Mr. TOWNS, thank you very, very much for your work in a bipartisan way on this very important piece of legislation.

Sometimes, with all of the big issues that we deal with, we do pause and pay attention to issues that impact lives like some circumstances like no other. And if you imagine the Federal law enforcement community—and I used to serve proudly as an FBI agent and was proud to count myself as one of them—that every single day somebody suits up quietly, with a search warrant or an arrest warrant to serve it somewhere in America. And we forget because they are exceptionally good at doing what they do without getting hurt or harmed, but it is incredibly dangerous work. They get drug dealers and they get child pornographers and they get bank executives committing bank fraud. They get Mafia dons, and they get terrorists of the hardest sort, and they bring them to justice as a part of

defending the Constitution and the communities of the United States of America.

And what this particular case exemplified is that there was a glitch in the law, because we ask these Federal law enforcement officers to move and uproot from their communities. They swear an oath to their country and their Constitution and to uphold the law of the United States. And then we ask them to leave their hometowns of, say, Baltimore or New York or small towns anywhere in America and take their families with them to these new places to fight crime wherever they find it. And this pointed out one very, very significant glitch is that if an officer, a Federal law enforcement officer was killed in the line of duty in the United States, their families had no means, the Federal Government could not assist them in moving back home, the very place that they stood up and said they would serve proudly with their loved one wherever that mission would take them.

Many, the FBI, specifically, makes it very well known that you have no right to serve where you want. You will serve at the needs of the FBI. And other agencies serve in the same capacity, and their families suffer the same sacrifice when we ask them to move.

This is a small token, just a small token of what we can do for those families who have sacrificed so much and lost their loved one while killed in the line of duty. And it's named after a very, very brave FBI agent who risked his life for his country serving a narcotics warrant in Pittsburgh. I mean, this is someone who had a strong history of public service. He was a teacher. He was a Baltimore police officer.

His FBI agent colleagues described him as brave and courageous and the anchor. When they were going through their training at the FBI academy, they said this is the guy that you wanted to go in the door with. He's the guy that would anchor and teach them how to safely get in and safely get out of homes in very dangerous situations. And the agents and all that were interviewed were certainly, by press reports, tearing up and reliving the memories of what was a great American who was absolutely committed to the ideals of the FBI: fidelity and bravery and integrity. And in that pursuit, in his pursuit to live up to the standards of the FBI, he risked and ultimately gave his life for his community and his country.

So what this bill does, with the help of Mr. LYNCH and Mr. TOWNS and so many others, Mr. CAO—thank you—is it says that we will respect what you have given your country, and we will help those families move back to where they call home in that final, final rest and trip in remembrance of someone who did something so great for their country.

His peers also described him, Mr. Speaker, as a humble and giving man, an outstanding FBI agent, somebody whose dream job was to wear and carry the badge of a special agent of the FBI.

He is survived by his wife, Brooke, and his 3-year-old son, Noah.

And for all that he has done, I think it's so fitting that the committee sought to name this bill after one agent. And in the Bureau, it's never anyone's particular case. He didn't own that case. He didn't own that incident, but he was part of a bigger team. And so, when you name this bill after an agent like this, it really sends great condolences to the family and respect to every officer that falls in the line of duty. His name may be on the bill, but it is a gift to every family who risks their lives every day in the service of this great Nation in the law enforcement community.

And I would, again, urge all of us to support this with vigor.

And I also want to thank the FBI Agents Association for their work and diligence on this. The Department of Justice has been very, very good to work with, and the FBI itself has given their time and commitment, once again proving their commitment to the family of the FBI and the work that they do.

Again, I thank you all for the work that you have done. I think his family would be humbled. I think the FBI agents are humbled, and I think our Federal law enforcement community is humbled that we would pause in all of the debate and remember their service and sacrifice to the United States.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan for his kind words and articulate words.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS), who is also a driving force behind this bill, for 5 minutes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2711, the Special Agent Samuel Hicks Families of Fallen Heroes Act.

This legislation, as has been said, honors Pittsburgh FBI Special Agent Samuel Hicks, who was shot and killed while executing a Federal search warrant on November 19, 2008. Before joining the FBI, Special Agent Hicks was a teacher and a city police officer in my hometown and the Congressional district I represent in Baltimore, Maryland. When arrangements were made for Special Agent Hicks to return to his final resting place in Baltimore, moving expenses for his family to relocate were not covered.

This legislation would provide funds for the moving, transportation, and relocation expenses attributed to a change of residence within the United States of the immediate family of an FBI employee who dies in the performance of official duties. It also covers the expenses of preparing and transporting the remains of the deceased to the place where the family will reside following the employee's death.

I must commend Mr. ROGERS for this legislation. I think it's very much due. As I was reading over the legislation, I could not help but think to myself, I

hope we don't have to use the provisions of this legislation too often, because I think all of us mourn whenever one of our law enforcement officers is harmed or killed. It's a sad day. I've often said, and we've often heard the words, they are, indeed, our thin blue line. If you don't think they're the thin blue line, you let something happen to you and they don't show up.

One of Special Agent Hicks' colleagues said of him, He was very skilled in everything, encouraging, always had a positive attitude, and the first to step forward and volunteer for anything. His colleague went on to say, He was just the kind of guy who was a role model for other people in the academy who maybe didn't have experience or come from different backgrounds.

Mr. Speaker, this is just one of many examples of how dangerous a job like being an FBI agent can be, but it is one that so many take on every single day, not wondering whether they will return home to their families, return to their neighborhoods. His sacrifice is always going to be remembered through his family, colleagues, and hopefully through the passage of this legislation.

On May 2, 2009, Special Agent Hicks' name was added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial here in Washington, but that is simply not enough. We must honor those who have made the ultimate sacrifice by taking care of their loved ones who have also made a tremendous sacrifice.

Again, I commend Congressman ROGERS of Michigan and the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, Mr. LYNCH, especially those original cosponsors, of which I'm one, for the leadership with regard to this legislation. With the passage of H.R. 2711, we can honor Special Agent Hicks and prevent future families from additional heartache and hardship at a very, very difficult moment in their lives.

I encourage all the Members to support this legislation.

Mr. CAO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

When we passed this bill out of the Oversight Committee on September 9, this bill only applied to FBI officers who died in the performance of official duties. After working with our Democratic colleagues, this bill, as amended, would authorize the employing agency of any Federal law enforcement officer who dies in the performance of his or her duties as defined under title 5, section 5541, to pay the moving, transportation, and relocation expenses due to a change of residence within the United States of the immediate family of the officer. It would also authorize the employing agency to cover the expenses of preparing and transporting the remains of the deceased to the place where the family will reside following the employee's death.

Federal law enforcement officers are often asked to relocate to new areas all across the country and the world, and, frequently, these officers bring their

families with them to these new areas. In the case of Federal law enforcement officers who die in the performance of official duties, the family is often left stranded, with no means to return to an area they call home. Caring for the families of these heroes who have died while serving this Nation is a priority for Congress, and the costs of H.R. 2711 are relatively insignificant.

Mr. Speaker, I support this measure and I urge all Members to support the passage of H.R. 2711.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to thank Mr. CAO and Mr. ROGERS, the gentleman from Michigan, as well as the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS), and one other driving force behind this, our own chairman, ED TOWNS, for supporting this measure, H.R. 2711, as it really provides Federal law enforcement agencies with the necessary authority to support these families in their greatest time of need.

I yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2711, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1345

RECOGNIZING 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GRAND CONCOURSE

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 907) recognizing the Grand Concourse on its 100th anniversary as the preeminent thoroughfare in the borough of the Bronx and an important nexus of commerce and culture for the City of New York.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 907

Whereas the Grand Concourse was designed by engineer Louis Aloys Risse beginning in 1894;

Whereas the Grand Concourse opened in 1909;

Whereas the 4-mile thoroughfare stretches from 138th Street to Van Cortland Park in the Bronx;

Whereas Edgar Allan Poe wrote the poem "Annabel Lee" in his Bronx cottage which now stands on the Grand Concourse;

Whereas Babe Ruth, Stanley Kubrick, Milton Berle, Penny and Garry Marshall, and E.L. Doctorow all at one time made their homes on the Grand Concourse;

Whereas the Grand Concourse hosts such New York landmarks as Yankee Stadium, Loews Paradise Theater, and the Concourse Plaza Hotel;

Whereas the Grand Concourse has the largest collection of Art Deco and Art Moderne buildings in the United States;

Whereas the Grand Concourse is registered as a National Historic Place;

Whereas the Grand Concourse has been designated as a special preservation district by the City of New York;

Whereas the Grand Concourse is known as the Champs Elysées of the Bronx;

Whereas the Grand Concourse is the central north-south artery of the Bronx;

Whereas the Concourse serves the 4, 5, B, and D subway lines as well as several bus routes and is a major transportation route in New York City;

Whereas the \$18,000,000 that was provided for the Grand Concourse in January 2006 led to improving the streetscape and creating better access for pedestrians;

Whereas the Bronx Museum of the Arts is celebrating the roadway in its exhibition, "Intersections: The Grand Concourse at 100";

Whereas the Grand Concourse has seen the arrival of countless new immigrants as well as people arriving from other parts of the country, including Puerto Rico, and has been their launching point for the valuable contributions that they have made;

Whereas the people of the Bronx enjoy spending time on the beautiful parks adjoining the Grand Concourse, making it a center for socializing and recreating;

Whereas the Grand Concourse has fulfilled and exceeded its planners' intentions over a series of generations, occupying a central place in the hearts and minds of Bronxites past and present; and

Whereas the Grand Concourse since its inception has been an integral part of the cultural life and economic development of the Bronx: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the Grand Concourse on its 100th anniversary as the preeminent thoroughfare in the borough of the Bronx and an important nexus of commerce and culture for the City of New York; and

(2) directs the Clerk of the House of Representatives to transmit a copy of this resolution to The Bronx County Historical Society located at 3309 Bainbridge Avenue, The Bronx, NY 10467, for appropriate display.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. LARSEN) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on House Resolution 907.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 907, a resolution recognizing the Grand Concourse on its 100th anniversary as the preeminent thoroughfare in the borough of the Bronx and as an important nexus of commerce and culture for the city of New York. I commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. SERRANO) for his work on this resolution to honor a historic roadway in advance of this milestone.

First conceived of in 1890 as a means of connecting the borough of Manhattan to the northern Bronx, the Grand Concourse was designed by Louis Aloys Risse and opened to the public in 1909. The project was originally completed for a total cost of \$14 million, the equivalent of \$340 million today.

Over the past 100 years, the Grand Concourse has served as the backdrop to many historic New York City landmarks, while the apartment buildings along the roadway have been home to the likes of Babe Ruth, Stanley Kubrick, Milton Berle, and other famous New Yorkers.

Among the many landmarks along the Grand Concourse is the Loew's Paradise Theater, which was constructed in 1929 and was at one time the largest movie theater in New York City. The old Yankee Stadium opened near the Grand Concourse at 161st Street in 1923 and has served as an important centerpiece for the Bronx and the city of New York ever since.

In the course of over 100 years, the Grand Concourse has played a long-standing role in defining the Bronx community, serving as the central north-south artery of the borough. Covering over 4 miles in length, it is lined with parks, fountains, and other pedestrian-friendly community assets that add aesthetic, cultural, and transportation value to the borough.

Recently, \$18 million was invested in the infrastructure of the Grand Concourse to make it more pedestrian friendly and restore the roadway's beauty that has made it vital to the cultural and economic development of the Bronx for 100 years.

So, Mr. Speaker, in honor of this historic landmark and its contributions to both the city of New York and the borough of the Bronx over the past century, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting House Resolution 907.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, as the ranking minority member on the Highways and Transit Subcommittee, I have been asked to speak on this resolution, and I rise in support of House Resolution 907, a resolution—as the gentleman from Washington State just described—a resolution recognizing the Grand Concourse on its 100th anniversary as the preeminent thoroughfare in the borough of the Bronx and an important nexus of commerce and culture in the city of New York.

The Grand Concourse is a rare blend of history, culture, and infrastructure that has accommodated the likes of Babe Ruth, Stanley Kubrick, and Edgar Allan Poe. The Grand Concourse also plays host to the iconic Yankee Stadium, Loew's Paradise Theater, and the Concourse Plaza Hotel. Few roads in our Nation's history have reflected the personality of the local culture better than the Grand Concourse has done for the Bronx.