

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

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. I now yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I am pleased to present H.R. 2004 for consideration. This legislation will designate the United States postal facility located as 4282 Beach Street in Akron, Michigan, as the Akron Veterans Memorial Post Office.

Introduced by my colleague, Representative DALE KILDEE of Michigan, on April 21, 2009, and favorably reported out of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee by unanimous consent on June 18, 2009, H.R. 2004 enjoys the support of the entire House Michigan delegation.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation before us pays tribute to the brave men and women from Akron Village, the State of Michigan, and across the United States who have served our Nation in the United States military, both at home and abroad. Over 23 million American military veterans are currently living in the United States, including approximately 742,000 living in the State of Michigan alone. They, as well as those that are no longer with us, have devoted their lives to the defense and security of our Nation, and always at a great personal risk and sacrifice. We are eternally in their debt and forever grateful for their noble and selfless dedication to our Nation and the preservation of its founding principles.

Mr. Speaker, let us pay tribute to the distinguished service of our veterans from the village of Akron, the State of Michigan, and across the country by designating the Akron post office in their honor.

I urge my colleagues to me in supporting H.R. 2004.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I too rise in support of the renaming of the Akron, Michigan post office. From its humble beginnings on July 23, 1857, this post office has been part of the community in small town Michigan. Rather noteworthy, Mr. KILDEE has chosen a rather unusual naming for a post office, and one that I wholeheartedly support. This post office is not named after one brave American or one now-departed politician. Instead, it's named after the countless thousands of men and women of Michigan who have served in the Armed Forces or are serving today and deserve our respect as veterans.

I would urge support of this, and I would urge all of my colleagues to take note that this post office represents a symbol of service more than the symbol of any one person.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I again urge my colleagues to join me in honoring America's military veterans through the passage of H.R. 2004.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill H.R. 2004, which would des-

ignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4282 Beach Street in Akron, Michigan, as the "Akron Veterans Memorial Post Office".

The Akron Post Office was first established at the house of its first postmaster, Samuel B. Covey. At the beginning of the Civil War, the post office was moved to the home of Lucius Waldo, about 7 miles south west of Unionville, Michigan, and relocated to Akron village in 1882.

As the only Federal office in the town of Akron, Michigan, this facility should have the honor of recognizing all of the brave men and women who have served our country in uniform.

It has long been a goal of mine to honor all veterans. As a father of two sons, both of whom served as captains in the United States Army, I am a firm believer that our Nation owes an immense debt of gratitude to its armed forces veterans.

That is why I will continue to advocate for America's most important obligation, caring for its defenders and honoring them for their service.

Designating this facility will provide citizens with the opportunity to be mindful of the sacrifices our armed forces' veterans have made, and continue to make today.

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

Ms. WATSON. I yield back the remainder of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2004.

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.

#### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HATCH ACT REFORM ACT OF 2009

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1345) to amend title 5, United States Code, to eliminate the discriminatory treatment of the District of Columbia under the provisions of law commonly referred to as the "Hatch Act".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1345

*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 "District of Columbia Hatch Act Reform Act of 2009".

#### SEC. 2. EMPLOYEES OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA TO BE SUBJECT TO THE SAME RESTRICTIONS ON POLITICAL ACTIVITY AS APPLY TO STATE AND LOCAL EMPLOYEES.

(a) APPLICABILITY OF PROVISIONS RELATING TO STATE AND LOCAL EMPLOYEES.—Section 1501(1) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking "a State or territory" and inserting "a State, the District of Columbia, or a territory".

(b) PROVISIONS RELATING TO FEDERAL EMPLOYEES MADE INAPPLICABLE.—Section 7322(1) of such title is amended—

(1) by inserting "or" at the end of subparagraph (A);

(2) by striking "or" at the end of subparagraph (B);

(3) by striking subparagraph (C); and

(4) by striking "services;" and inserting "services or an individual employed or holding office in the government of the District of Columbia;".

#### SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendments made by this Act—

(1) shall take effect on the effective date of a law, enacted by the government of the District of Columbia after the date of the enactment of this Act, which places restrictions on political activities of employees of the government of the District of Columbia; and

(2) shall apply with respect to actions occurring on or after the effective date referred to in paragraph (1).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) 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 in which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. I now yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise for the consideration of H.R. 1345, which is designed to ensure that employees of the District of Columbia are subject to the same rules of political activity under the Hatch Act that apply to all other State and local government employees, thereby ending the discriminatory treatment they have received since 1993.

In October of 1993, Congress passed the Hatch Act Reform Amendments, allowing Federal employees to take part in political campaigns on their off-duty, personal time. The legislation of 1993 did continue to prohibit Federal employees from seeking public office in partisan elections. However, it also retained a measure which subjected D.C. employees to Federal Hatch Act provisions. This ignored the District's authority to self-govern and enact its own local laws; not to mention that employees in all other State and local jurisdictions are subjected to laws written by their own State and local governments and are not subject to the Federal Hatch Act like D.C. government employees. H.R. 1345 ends this disparate treatment by placing D.C. employees under the same Federal Hatch Act restrictions that apply to all other States and localities.

This bill was offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) on March 5, 2009. Having been considered by the Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, Postal Service and the District of Columbia, chaired

by Representative STEPHEN LYNCH, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform under Chairman TOWNS ordered the bill reported to the full House by voice vote on June 4, 2009.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1345 is a common-sense measure, treating employees of the District of Columbia the same way that other State and local government employees are treated. The difference in treatment under the Hatch Act has persisted for far too long. I urge my colleagues to help end the disparate treatment by supporting this measure.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, this is a bipartisan bill authored by ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON that is, in fact, timely or perhaps beyond its time. This was passed by our committee on a voice vote and is supported by all members of the committee.

Mr. Speaker, home rule by the District of Columbia will not be complete until we harmonize as many rights and responsibilities as we can to the District. Our committee is dedicated to do that harmonization, to look for inequities, either by too much or too little, much of it well-intended in the past, some of it even needed in the past. But as the District of Columbia takes on its immediate responsibilities, we must also treat it appropriately and not have it governed by special rules. This narrowly constructed change will, in fact, cause the Hatch Act to be identical in the way it is implemented throughout the country, being implemented toward the District of Columbia. I think every American appreciates that if you lived in a city in Maryland or in a city in Virginia, you would have the same expectation of the rules of national governance as you should have here in the Nation's capital if you're involved in similar activity.

□ 1515

For that reason, on a bipartisan basis, we support this simple but technically necessary fix.

I reserve my time.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to have the distinguished Representative ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON from the great District of Columbia recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. First off, Mr. Speaker, may I thank the gentlewoman from California for her work on this bill and for managing this bill as well and explaining it to the House.

I'm very grateful to the ranking member of the full committee for his work on this bill and his cooperation in helping us to move this bill forward.

Mr. Speaker, this is nothing more or nothing less than a holdover from the old pre-Home Rule days in the District of Columbia. The Congress passed the Home Rule Act and intended that local laws would be a matter for the District of Columbia, and somehow, this got

left out of the mix. And the OPM, the Office of Personnel Management, and its council's office has been vexed—that's the only word for it—vexed by these complaints that these sometimes come and sometimes don't.

For example, advisory neighborhood commissioners, peculiar to the District of Columbia, are "elected officials." They're unpaid. If you look at the council of the District of Columbia, almost all of them were advisory neighborhood commissioners. But somehow, people bring complaints against them when they run for office because they're not regarded in Federal law as elected officials. They're elected officials; unpaid, but they're elected officials. They run for office. Those are not matters that you would expect a Federal regulatory agency to pay any attention to. And I don't want the OPM, in fact, spending the time of its special council on the arcane laws of the District of Columbia.

What this law says is you, D.C., will have to have your own Hatch Act. The Hatch Act was one of the great reforms in government. Perhaps there's no reform ever in government that's been more important than the Hatch Act. This bill can't go into effect until the District of Columbia has its own Hatch Act for its own local law, the way California and all the States of the Union have their own version of the Hatch Act. As I heard the ranking member say, When you're getting Federal money and you're involved in Federal matters—and often matters in the State are Federal matters—the Hatch Act applies as always.

When you're dealing in D.C. with D.C. management, you need your own Hatch Act, and you need OPM to deal with the often more serious matters that affect the Federal Government when millions of dollars may be involved in Hatch Act violations.

I want to thank my good friends from California, both of them, for their work on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, the District of Columbia Hatch Act Reform Act of 2009 eliminates anomalous treatment of the District of Columbia which, alone among U.S. jurisdictions, still falls under the Federal Hatch Act as an uncorrected left-over provision from before the Congress made the District an independent jurisdiction that today enacts its own local laws. Fortunately, the House recognized that the present Federal Hatch Act jurisdiction over the District was inappropriate and obsolete and removed this Federal responsibility several years ago, but the Senate failed to act. H.R. 1345 will eliminate the double indignity of placing a local burden on the Federal Government while depriving the District of a responsibility that only local jurisdictions familiar with local laws can be expected to handle appropriately. H.R. 1345 retains Federal Hatch Act authority concerning prohibited partisan and political activity that applies to every State and locality upon receipt of Federal funds or functions, and importantly, requires the District to enact its own local version of the Hatch Act barring similar local violations before H.R. 1345 can become effective. Local Hatch Act violations in the Dis-

trict are rare, but the District needs its own Hatch Act to fully account and be responsible for local violations, with which only a local, objective body would be familiar.

H.R. 1345 leaves in place the Federal Hatch Act restrictions that apply to other jurisdictions on the use of official authority, specifically as it relates to elections; the solicitation, acceptance, or receipt of political campaign contributions; the prohibitions on running for public office in partisan elections; and the use of on-duty time and resources to engage in partisan campaign activity when Federal funds or responsibilities are involved. My bill would remove only the Federal Hatch Act jurisdiction that applies to the District of Columbia and would require the District to enact its own local Hatch Act, similar to those in other jurisdictions, instead of requiring the Federal Office of Personnel Management, OPM, and its Special Counsel to devote staff time and other resources to investigation, fact-finding and judgment of unfamiliar local matters.

In fact, OPM has asked for the Federal guidance my bill offers. In recent cases, OPM was confused by protests after citing an ANC (Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner) for violations of the Hatch Act when he ran for higher office, even though ANCs are "elected officials" under D.C. law and therefore should be permitted to run for higher office. As a result of the failure to clear up the confusion, the application of the Hatch Act to ANCs has been selectively enforced by OPM. For example, although OPM has filed cases charging Hatch Act violations against an ANC running for the D.C. Council, it more often has not filed when several members of the current D.C. City Council ran for the D.C. Council from positions as ANCs. These examples show the difficulty created because Congress has failed to conform D.C.'s local jurisdiction created by the Home Rule Act of 1974 with the OPM's Federal jurisdiction over Federal Hatch Act matters today.

This is an uncomplicated and straightforward bill. It is not controversial, and it has been enacted by the House before. I ask that the House approve H.R. 1345.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I am in support of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to urge my colleagues to support this much-needed measure.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1345.

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.

#### JOHNNY GRANT HOLLYWOOD POST OFFICE BUILDING

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2760) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1615 North Wilcox Avenue in Los Angeles, California, as the "Johnny Grant Hollywood Post Office Building".