

Mr. TOWNS. On that note, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. TOWNS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 22, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. 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.

ALLOWING UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE TO ACCEPT DONATIONS FOR PLAQUES

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3137) to amend title 39, United States Code, to provide clarification relating to the authority of the United States Postal Service to accept donations as an additional source of funding for commemorative plaques.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3137

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

SECTION 1. DONATIONS FOR COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 401(7) of title 39, United States Code, is amended by striking “business;” and inserting “business, including monetary donations made (in such manner as the Postal Service may prescribe) for the funding of plaques in connection with the commemorative designation of postal facilities;”.

(b) DESIGNATIONS.—The donor of a monetary donation described in the amendment made by subsection (a) may specify the postal facility with respect to which such donation is to be used.

(c) REQUIREMENT.—The United States Postal Service shall provide for a suitable plaque, in the case of any postal facility which has been designated by law to commemorate a particular individual, no later than 120 days after the date as of which—

(1) a law has been enacted providing for the designation of the postal facility involved; and

(2) sufficient amounts have been received, in the manner described in subsection (b), to provide for such plaque.

Any donations received by the Postal Service under subsection (b) in excess of the total amount needed in order to provide for a suitable plaque may, with the consent of the donors involved, be used for the funding of a plaque in the case of any other postal facility as to which a law (as described in paragraph (1)) has been enacted.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be considered—

(1) to affect the authority of the United States Postal Service with respect to any requirements concerning the design, placement, and limitation on costs relating to commemorative plaques (as described in the preceding provisions of this section), so long

as such requirements are applied in a uniform manner; or

(2) to limit, supersede, or render inapplicable any other authority or duty which (but for this Act) the United States Postal Service would otherwise have had with respect to the commemorative designation of a facility or the funding, commissioning, or installation of a plaque in connection with such a designation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. TOWNS) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TOWNS. 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 gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

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

As chairman of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I am pleased to present H.R. 3137 for consideration. This legislation will clarify the authority of the United States Postal Service over the receipt of monetary donations for post office commemorative plaques. I want to commend my ranking member, Congressman ISSA, who really, really brought this idea forth. I think that it goes into what we are doing. We are trying to reserve, we are trying to save money, and I think this legislation is a very creative way of being able to do that.

Congress routinely passes legislation to designate post offices throughout the country and honor deserving individuals, and I think that is a great idea.

Under current practice, the United States Postal Service subsequently purchases dedicatory plaques, at its own expense, out of the agency's operating budget. I think this is something that we will be able to eliminate and save money. I think that is one way to do that.

H.R. 3137 simply seeks to reduce and to eliminate the financial burden imposed on the United States Postal Service with regard to the purchase of commemorative plaques by clarifying current law in this area. Specifically, the legislation would amend the United States Code to make clear that the postal service may accept monetary donations offered for the funding of postal facility commemorative plaques.

□ 1315

In addition, H.R. 3137 provides that monetary donors may specify the postal facility at which their donations will be used. Moreover, when the amount of a donation exceeds the cost of a specified facility's commemorative plaque, H.R. 3137 would also allow, with a donor's consent, for the use of the excess donations towards the purchase of a

plaque needed for another postal facility.

I think that is a great idea. I think it's a very creative way to be able to sort of save money and, at the same time, not to have to cut back on doing what we know is right based on the fact that they do not have the funding.

On that note, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I thank the chairman for bringing this bill to the floor today. The genesis of this bill was in fact a recognition that the Postal Service funds all of its operations out of its own revenue. In no other area would the Federal Government essentially mandate a burden on a government agency over which it provides no funding, and yet here we do.

More importantly, most post offices are either named after fallen heroes in our own district, former Members of the House or Senate, or, in some cases, other notable people, and even, once in a while, a postmaster.

The fact is we make those decisions. We name those post offices. Those plaques cost money to procure and to maintain, and a recognition that in fact communities' involvement should be there, there should be a real upswelling of support.

Myself, I named a post office after the first Indo American Member of Congress, Dalip Singh Saund. I was proud to do it. And on the day that we put the plaque up, I had Members from all over California, and actually a few outside of the Indo American community, proud that the first Indo American—and the only one, except for Bobby Jindal—was being honored at a post office.

The fact is, that community would have been more than happy to not only pay for the plaque, but to help design it and to be more involved in it. That kind of support is something that we're missing because we didn't take this opportunity.

The legislation is relatively small. It perhaps would only save a few hundred thousand dollars a year to the post office, but I think it makes the kind of statement that the post offices and the names on them are important community activities and that in the future the procurement and perhaps the ongoing support will come from the community, with the enabling language here.

It also is a small but meaningful step toward the kind of reform of the post office that they want to do and that we want to help them do, and, that is, if they're going to have to live on their own revenue, Congress should not be adding to their cost of doing business.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TOWNS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as we all know, the financial condition of the United States Postal Service is dismal, at best, and the agency is faced with a continually

declining mail volume. Accordingly, we should all welcome cost-saving efforts such as those provided in H.R. 3137, that is not a detriment to hardworking postal employees, but rather will only serve to alleviate the financial burden of the Postal Service.

We all name post offices from time to time. I know I named one after Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, the first black woman to serve in the United States Congress. I thought it was a great thing. But, let's face it, it cost the Postal Service money in order to be able to get the plaque, to get it designed, and to be able to put together an event because, after all, that was an important event for the first black woman who served in the United States Congress.

So these are things that cost money that the Postal Service has to put up the money for. And I want to congratulate Mr. ISSA for introducing this legislation because I really think that you might look at it as not a giant step or big or tremendous saving, but I see it today that every little bit helps. And this, I feel, is really helping.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. I have no further speakers at this time, I would urge all Members to vote for the bill, and yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers, but I would like to just close by encouraging and urging all of the Members of this House to support this legislation. I think this is legislation that truly makes a lot of sense, and it sort of does the things that we need to do to sort of tighten our belts and work together to be able to bring about solutions to solve problems.

I think this legislation is legislation that points us in the right direction, and maybe as result of this we can find other ways to be able to bring about savings for the Postal Service.

I yield back the balance of my time and encourage my colleagues to support this legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. TOWNS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3137.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. TOWNS. 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.

IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN VETERANS MEMORIAL POST OFFICE

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3386) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1165 2nd Avenue in Des

Moines, Iowa, as the "Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans Memorial Post Office".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3386

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

SECTION 1. IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN VETERANS MEMORIAL POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1165 2nd Avenue in Des Moines, Iowa, shall be known and designated as the "Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans Memorial Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans Memorial Post Office".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. TOWNS) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TOWNS. 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 gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. TOWNS. 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. 3386 for consideration. This legislation will designate the United States postal facility located at 1165 2nd Avenue in Des Moines, Iowa, as the "Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans Memorial Post Office."

At this time I would like to reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this bill designating the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1165 2nd Avenue in Des Moines, Iowa, as the "Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans Memorial Post Office."

Mr. Speaker, this is a particularly appropriate naming. Often we name post offices in honor of one individual whose service may have been in the Postal Service, here in Congress, or perhaps an individual who gave their last full measure to the country.

In this case, we're recognizing a conflict—a conflict that has been difficult and has cost the lives of a great many American men and women—and this broad recognition that we should pay honor to them is particularly noteworthy when you realize that more than 11,000 Iowa National Guard members have been called to Active Duty in the past 8 years and that in fact more than 70 have died in combat.

So I join with Mr. BOSWELL in support for this bill. It's well thought out. It's unusual for a Member to forgo per-

haps the gratification of naming something after a former colleague or after somebody by name in their district and to look beyond that—to look to the brave men and women who have served nobly in this crisis and recognize them in a broader way and one that I think will be enduring in Iowa for generations to come.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. BOSWELL) who has worked very hard to make certain that we are here today.

(Mr. BOSWELL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOSWELL. I would first like to thank the chairman and ranking member for moving this bill along. I might add, Mr. ISSA, that we did have an individual request for this, and we thought about it long and hard. Then we thought about the multitude, the many that have served, and felt like it was appropriate to do this.

So I do rise today and honor those who have nobly served the Nation in Iraq and Afghanistan, and ask colleagues to support H.R. 3386, which, as has been said, will designate a post office in Des Moines, Iowa, as the "Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans Memorial Post Office."

Having spent some 20 years myself in the Army, and a couple tours in Vietnam, I understand the sacrifices, and so do you, Mr. ISSA, and so do many others, made by our servicemen.

Our Armed Forces have many assets—whether it's our aircraft carriers, fighter planes, missiles. However, oftentimes one of the greatest military assets is overlooked, and that's our military personnel.

Our servicemen and -women stand ready to defend the freedoms we hold dear. Our all-volunteer force is made up of brave individuals who know all too well the sacrifices that we have asked them to make. Yet time and again, with this knowledge, they continue to put our freedoms above what they give up. These brave young men and women who have fought in these wars, many having lost their lives, deserve recognition for their service and their sacrifice.

Renaming the post office in downtown Des Moines, Iowa, will create a memorial for all Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, and each day Iowans will be reminded of our neighbors who courageously fought on our behalf. By renaming this post office, we honor those who have served, but also those who have given the ultimate sacrifice—their lives. To date, more than 50 Iowans have made that sacrifice.

Those who have or are serving in our Armed Forces are committed to serving our Nation with courage and honor. We must make that same commitment to them.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 3386. We must never forget.