

This has been an interesting journey. It started a few years ago when I found out about the tragic death of Lance Corporal Joshua McDaniels who had served in the Marines, and we started a bill that would have named the post office after him. Then I heard from some of our Vietnam veterans—17 were killed from London High School in the Vietnam war—and they made the point very strongly and loudly that nothing had ever been named for any of them. While we can never go back and fix the inappropriate way that many of our Vietnam veterans were treated, I thought it was important to move forward in a way that honored their sacrifice as well as Joshua McDaniels' sacrifice and many other individuals from London and Madison County.

Throughout history, citizens from London and Madison County have fought bravely to defend our Nation and defend our freedoms. Unfortunately, many of them have made the ultimate sacrifice, and I would like to read a few of the names here today of the most recent casualties in the wars we are in in Afghanistan and Iraq, or have been in.

First, of course, Marine Lance Corporal Joshua McDaniels; second, Army Corporal Kevin Prince; Army Specialist Jason Lucas; Army Specialist Robert Swaney; and Army Chief Warrant Officer Matthew Ruffner. These are just the most recent members from that community to pay the ultimate sacrifice for our freedoms.

This bill was a small step to honor the memory of all those in Madison County who have made the ultimate sacrifice, our fallen heroes, including the 17 who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the Vietnam war.

Again, while none of us can go back and correct the way that our Vietnam veterans have been treated, I think it is, today, an opportunity for us to recognize those 17 as well as all past and future fallen heroes who have paid the ultimate sacrifice by renaming the London Post Office the Fallen Veterans Memorial Post Office.

I want to thank my constituent Mary Henry who came up with the idea for this name. I want to make sure that we always remember the sacrifices of our brave men and women. I think this post office in London, Ohio, can stand as a tribute to all of our past fallen veterans and the future veterans who will pay the ultimate sacrifice to preserve our freedoms.

Thank you again to the gentleman from North Carolina and the gentleman from Vermont. I want to thank Chairman Issa as well for allowing this bill to come to the floor and his support.

I would urge all of my colleagues to vote “yes” on H.R. 1391 to rename the London Post Office the London Fallen Veterans Memorial Post Office.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I, too, would urge all of my colleagues to vote in support of this postal renaming, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I just want to thank the gentleman from Ohio for his leadership on this particular issue, and specifically with regards to our Vietnam veterans. Indeed, it was a tough time in the service to our country. Many of them never got the welcome home that they deserved when they came back. On behalf of my esteemed colleagues here today and the gentleman from Ohio, I would like to officially tell them, “Welcome home.”

With that, I would urge the Members to support this bill and vote unanimously, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1391, as amended.

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

The title was amended so as to read: “A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 302 South Oak Street in London, Ohio, as the ‘London Fallen Veterans Memorial Post Office’.”

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

JAMES R. BURGESS JR. POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1707) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 302 East Green Street in Champaign, Illinois, as the “James R. Burgess Jr. Post Office Building”.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1707

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

SECTION 1. JAMES R. BURGESS JR. POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 302 East Green Street in Champaign, Illinois, shall be known and designated as the “James R. Burgess Jr. Post Office Building”.

(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 “James R. Burgess Jr. Post Office Building”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) and the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise today to urge support of H.R. 1707, introduced by Representative DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, which would designate the postal facility located at 302 East Green Street in Champaign, Illinois, as the James R. Burgess Jr. Post Office Building.

Mr. Burgess was born on December 19, 1915, in Algood, Tennessee, and served more than 20 years in the Army, playing a critical role as a leader of the 761st Tank Battalion and the first African-American armored unit to enter the battle in World War II.

At age 29, Mr. Burgess was a first lieutenant in command of one of the six companies who served under General George Patton in Europe.

□ 1430

Upon his retirement from the U.S. Army, he had reached the rank of major. He passed away in 1997.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Burgess was a trailblazer, a leader, and an American hero. Naming a postal facility in his honor is the least we can do to memorialize his service to our country.

I urge the support of H.R. 1707, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to hearing from Mr. DAVIS as he recounts the extraordinary life, service, and contributions of Mr. Burgess. We fully support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS), my distinguished colleague.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from North Carolina and also my colleague from Vermont for their support of this piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor James R. Burgess Jr. My bill, H.R. 1707, will designate the post office located at 302 East Green Street in Champaign, Illinois, as the James R. Burgess Jr. Post Office Building.

Mr. Burgess served more than 20 years in the Army, playing a critical role in a largely unknown part of American military history. He was a leader of the 761st Tank Battalion, which was the first African American armored unit to enter battle in World War II. At the age of 29, Mr. Burgess was a first lieutenant in command of one of the six companies who served under General George Patton in Europe, and upon his retirement from the U.S. Army, Mr. Burgess had reached the rank of major.

After leaving the service in 1962, Mr. Burgess moved his wife and two sons to Champaign, Illinois, so he could attend law school at the University of Illinois, where he graduated 3 years later as the only African American in his class. Mr. Burgess was elected Champaign County State's attorney in 1972 and is still the only African American to be elected to

a countywide office in Champaign County. Later, he was appointed as a U.S. attorney for a large section of downstate Illinois.

Since Mr. Burgess' passing in 1997, many of my constituents in the 13th District, and especially his son Steve have been looking for a way to commemorate the achievements of his life.

Two years ago, Steve approached me seeking my help to honor the life and legacy of his father. It has taken a lot of time and a lot of work. While I am proud that we are finally to this point, Mr. Speaker, I also have a heavy heart.

Last November, Steve Burgess passed away suddenly. Steve worked tirelessly over the years to get this project to the finish line, and it is truly heartbreaking that he won't be able to see it completed.

Naming this building after Mr. James R. Burgess is but a small token of our gratitude for his service and an honor for his son, my friend, Steve Burgess.

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

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, the emotion and heart of my colleague, Mr. DAVIS, is evident today on this House floor. Far too often things are done here in a nonpersonal way. But I can tell you for Mr. DAVIS this is personal, and it is a great honor that I support him in H.R. 1707. I also encourage all the Members to support the passage of this bill.

I thank the gentleman for his leadership, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1707.

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.

SERGEANT BRETT E. GORNEWICZ MEMORIAL POST OFFICE

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3472) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 13127 Broadway Street in Alden, New York, as the "Sergeant Brett E. Gornewicz Memorial Post Office".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3472

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

SECTION 1. SERGEANT BRETT E. GORNEWICZ MEMORIAL POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 13127 Broadway Street in Alden, New York, shall be known and designated as the "Sergeant Brett E. Gornewicz Memorial Post Office".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility re-

ferred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Sergeant Brett E. Gornewicz Memorial Post Office".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) and the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 3472, introduced by Representative COLLINS of New York, which would designate the postal facility located at 13127 Broadway Street in Alden, New York, as the Sergeant Brett E. Gornewicz Memorial Post Office.

Army Sergeant Brett Gornewicz was killed on November 3, 2012, in Paktia province, Afghanistan, when an improvised explosive device detonated nearby. He was killed in the same incident as Specialist Ryan Jayne—whom we are also honoring here today—and Staff Sergeant Dain Taylor Venne, another upstate New Yorker for whom the Oversight and Government Reform Committee has reported a postal-naming bill.

A native of Alden, New York, Sergeant Gornewicz was born in Buffalo on January 6, 1985. After graduating from Alden High School, he earned a degree in mechanical engineering from Buffalo State College.

Sergeant Gornewicz was a man of great humility. So great, in fact, that prior to his death, his family did not know that he had been awarded the Bronze Star with Valor for saving a life during a firefight earlier that year. He was a brave man, serving a tour in Iraq in addition to his deployment to Afghanistan, and performing the highly dangerous job of clearing roadsides of IEDs. Mr. Speaker, his example of courage and strength of character is one that we should strive to follow.

Sergeant Brett Gornewicz is rightly remembered as a hero. At only 27 years old, he made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 3472, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I am pleased to join my colleagues in the consideration of H.R. 3472, which would designate the United States postal facility located in Alden, New York, as the Sergeant Brett E. Gornewicz Memorial Post Office.

Once again, we are hearing a story of an extraordinary American, and all of

us are proud to be associated with memorializing that.

I reserve the balance of my time and look forward to hearing from the sponsor, Mr. COLLINS.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. COLLINS), my distinguished colleague.

Mr. COLLINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3472, a bill to rename the U.S. post office in Alden, New York, as the Sergeant Brett E. Gornewicz Memorial Post Office.

It is an honor to sponsor legislation naming a post office in my district after a hometown hero who gave his life serving our country.

I also want to take a moment and thank Senator GILLIBRAND and her staff for their work introducing S. 2056, corresponding Senate legislation to rename the post office.

Naming a postal facility honoring Sergeant Gornewicz is just a small token of our country's appreciation for a soldier who made the ultimate sacrifice to defend our freedom.

In 2006, after being deeply affected by the attacks of 9/11, Sergeant Gornewicz enlisted in the Army Reserves following graduation from Alden High School. From 2007 to 2008, he deployed to Iraq on his first tour and courageously served our country.

Upon his return home to the United States, Sergeant Gornewicz enrolled at Buffalo State College and obtained his degree in mechanical engineering. He was working as a computer-aided designer and mechanical designer for a Tonawanda, New York, company when he again answered the call of duty, returning to Afghanistan for his second tour.

Sergeant Gornewicz is described by many friends and family as a humble leader who always put the needs of others before his own. During his deployment, he displayed this selflessness when he risked his own life to save a fellow soldier during a firefight. He was awarded a Bronze Star with Valor for his actions.

Tragically, during Sergeant Gornewicz's second tour in 2012, his unit was hit by an IED in Afghanistan. The lives of Specialist Ryan Jayne of Corning, New York; Staff Sergeant Dain T. Venne of Port Henry, New York; and Sergeant Gornewicz were lost. At the time of the attack, Sergeant Gornewicz was assigned to the 444th Engineer Company. The company's primary mission was to clear roads of improvised explosive devices.

Sergeant Gornewicz was proud of the small town he came from: Alden, New York. It is my hope that this post office will allow the people of Alden, and those throughout the 27th District, to continue to honor the memory of Sergeant Gornewicz and ensure that his legacy of service and sacrifice lives on.

Renaming a post office is but a small step in recognizing this soldier's bravery and ultimate sacrifice for our Nation. Passage of this bill will exemplify