

# AUTHORIZING USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL TO AWARD CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDALS

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Administration be discharged from further consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 106) authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony to award Congressional Gold Medals in honor of the men and women who perished as a result of the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 106

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),*

## SECTION 1. USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL FOR GOLD MEDAL CEREMONY IN HONOR OF FALLEN HEROES OF 9/11.

Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center is authorized to be used on September 10, 2014, for a ceremony to award Congressional Gold Medals in honor of the men and women who perished as a result of the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001. Physical preparations for the conduct of the ceremony shall be carried out in accordance with such conditions as may be prescribed by the Architect of the Capitol.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

# AUTHORIZING USE OF CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H. Con. Res. 103) authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the District of Columbia Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 103

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),*

## SECTION 1. AUTHORIZATION OF USE OF CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR D.C. SPECIAL OLYMPICS LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN.

On October 3, 2014, or on such other date as the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate may jointly designate, the 29th annual District of Columbia Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run (in

this resolution referred to as the "event") may be run through the Capitol Grounds to carry the Special Olympics torch to honor local Special Olympics athletes.

## SEC. 2. RESPONSIBILITY OF CAPITOL POLICE BOARD.

The Capitol Police Board shall take such actions as may be necessary to carry out the event.

## SEC. 3. CONDITIONS RELATING TO PHYSICAL PREPARATIONS.

The Architect of the Capitol may prescribe conditions for physical preparations for the event.

## SEC. 4. ENFORCEMENT OF RESTRICTIONS.

The Capitol Police Board shall provide for enforcement of the restrictions contained in section 5104(c) of title 40, United States Code, concerning sales, advertisements, displays, and solicitations on the Capitol Grounds, as well as other restrictions applicable to the Capitol Grounds, in connection with the event.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 3486

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 3486.

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

There was no objection.

## LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY) for the purpose of inquiring of the majority leader the schedule for the week to come.

Mr. MCCARTHY. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the House will meet at noon for morning hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business. Votes will be postponed until 6:30 p.m. On Tuesday and Wednesday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. for morning hour and noon for legislative business. On Thursday, the House will meet at 9 a.m. for legislative business. Last votes of the week are expected no later than 3 p.m. On Friday, no votes are expected.

Mr. Speaker, the House will consider a few suspensions next week, a complete list of which will be announced by close of business today.

In addition, the House will consider a package of bills to ensure transparency and accountability within the Endangered Species Act. Included in this package are H.R. 4315, the 21st Century Endangered Species Transparency Act, authored by Chairman DOC HASTINGS; H.R. 4316, the Endangered Species Recovery Transparency Act, authored by Representative CYNTHIA LUMMIS; H.R. 4317, the State, Tribal, and Local Species Transparency Act, authored by

Representative RANDY NEUGEBAUER; and H.R. 4318, the Endangered Species Litigation Reasonableness Act, authored by Representative BILL HUIZENGA.

The House will also consider House Resolution 676, which provides for authority to initiate litigation for actions by the President or other executive branch officials inconsistent with their duties under the Constitution of the United States.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, Members are advised that the House may also consider legislation to deal with the ongoing crisis on the border.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that information.

As the gentleman knows full well, we have 3½ days next week. We have, I guess, 9 full days and 3 half days scheduled in September and the first couple of weeks in October, assuming that we meet in that last week of September.

There have been some rumors. My Members have been asking me about whether or not there is serious consideration being given to not using the last week scheduled in September. Does that have any credence?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. MCCARTHY. I thank my gentleman for yielding.

Currently, there have been no changes to the schedule.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman.

In any event, as the gentleman knows, in the very short period of time that we have left before the election—and there is a lot of very substantive work that, in my view, still needs to be done and that we feel very strongly about on this side of the aisle—the gentleman posits that we have four endangered species bills on the floor. Frankly, they probably could all be done by suspension on Monday, but I understand it is going to be under a rule.

In addition to that, we have legislation which is designed to authorize a suit against the President of the United States for trying to do things when we can't get the Congress to act on them, so that there can be some movement forward on behalf of the American people.

Does the gentleman believe there is any possibility of bringing up comprehensive immigration reform—either a comprehensive immigration reform bill that the majority supports, individual bills which are passed out of committee, border security which is passed out on a bipartisan way out of your committee here on this side of the House—on this side of the Capitol, or legislation which we believe would have had a direct effect on the crisis to which the gentleman refers may be addressed next week?

It is not scheduled. I understand that the majority leader's party is divided on the issue of what ought to be done to meet this crisis, but there is no doubt, Mr. Leader, that there are going to be additional resources necessary to meet the challenge that we are confronting now.

The administration has requested, as the gentleman knows, some \$3.7 billion. The Senate, as I understand it, is suggesting \$2.7 billion. Part of that, of course, is to meet the needs of fighting wildfires. In the Senate bill, there is also money for Iron Dome—to beef up Iron Dome in Israel, but we don't have any language, if language is contemplated.

So I am hopeful that language will not be included in any effort that is made next week on meeting this. You referred to it as a crisis. Whether you refer to it as crisis, challenge, whatever, we know that resources are needed. Everybody seems to agree on that.

Unfortunately, we have not had that bill on the floor now, so we can get it over to the Senate and get it to the President before we leave. We are at risk, in my view, Mr. Leader, of leaving here without addressing this issue.

Furthermore, last week, as the gentleman knows, I suggested that if we included legislative language on that bill, it would be almost impossible to get to the administration the resources it needs to comply with the law and to meet the challenge that has been presented.

□ 1315

Does the gentleman have any expectation that we will consider a comprehensive immigration bill that has resources and will be Senate-passed? We have a bill here, as the gentleman knows, that we introduced many, many months ago, which is a bipartisan bill. All the provisions have been supported in a bipartisan fashion—some in the Senate, some here in the House committee—unanimously.

Does the gentleman have any belief that we will consider next week a clean funding bill at such level as is necessary, at least until the end of the fiscal year, and/or some comprehensive immigration bills which will meet the issue and establish a process, the lack of which clearly is causing people to take actions which we do not approve of and not agree with, but are manifesting the frustration of a broken system remaining broken?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

As I mentioned in the schedule announcement for next week, Members should be prepared for possible consideration of legislation to address the ongoing border crisis. Once the timing is finalized, the Rules Committee will announce a hearing on the measure to determine the process by which the bill will be brought before the House.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for his response.

Does the gentleman contemplate that that bill will include substantive changes in law or will it simply be restricted to additional resources necessary to meet the crisis that confronts this country?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

As I said earlier, you should be prepared for a possible consideration. Once the timing is finalized, the Rules Committee will announce a hearing to announce the process.

Mr. HOYER. I understand the process will come from the Rules Committee. There is no text, Mr. Leader. We have seen no text to apparently amend legislation which was adopted overwhelmingly by this House and signed by President Bush.

We need resources today—and we will certainly need them next week—and we are going to go on a 5-week recess work period, at which point in time we will come back here and meet for a very brief period of time, and we don't have any text in this very substantive, very consequential area of the law, which obviously was adopted overwhelmingly, and we have no text.

I understand the process in the Rules Committee. There have been no hearings, no debate in committee, no subcommittee, no full committee hearings on any legislation.

As I suggested to you last week, Mr. Majority Leader, if you put legislation out there, you and I both know that inevitably that legislation will not be able to pass within the timeframe necessary to meet the crisis.

So the responsible thing, I suggest to my friend, the majority leader, Mr. Speaker, is to provide the resources necessary to meet the challenge right now. And then, if hearings show substantive changes in the law are needed or further show what substantive changes ought to be made and can be considered in a thoughtful, effective fashion, we can then move forward at some point in time, perhaps as soon as September, on that legislation. But to do otherwise will put at great risk the ability of the administration and this country to respond consistent with the law that we passed and that was signed by President Bush.

I yield to my friend if he wants to comment further.

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank the gentleman for his passion on the crisis, just as we have on this side.

Since we have taken the majority, we made a pledge to America that we post bills with a 3-day process. So, as I mentioned in the schedule announcement for next week, Members should be prepared for possible consideration of legislation to address the ongoing border crisis. Once the timing is finalized, the Rules Committee will announce a hearing on the measure to determine the process by which the bill will be brought before the House.

Mr. HOYER. I thank, Mr. Speaker, the majority leader for that information, and I am glad that he brought up the processes that are going to be followed.

I want to quote to him something Speaker BOEHNER said on January 5, 2011, when he took the gavel:

But you will always have the right to robust debate in an open process that allows

you to represent your constituents, to make your case, offer alternatives and be heard.

The gentleman has told me now three times that the Rules Committee hearing is going to be open and they will decide the process under which a bill is going to be considered. Apparently, I am presuming the gentleman does not know what the substance of that process will be. I don't know the substance. I don't know any language that is being proposed. No Member on our side of the aisle knows what language is being proposed. Maybe Members on your side of the aisle know.

So what you are apparently telling me is that we will have the Rules Committee solely for the purpose of learning what substantive changes are suggested in the law. And I suggest to the majority leader, Mr. Speaker, that if that is the case, we will not be able to thoughtfully debate it, we will not be able to have a process that is open, and we will not have a process which allows us to make our case, offer alternatives, or be heard.

I would predict, as has happened 67 times to date, this is going to be a closed rule. One of my staffers, by the way, suggested that perhaps open rules ought to be included in the endangered species bills that we are considering. We are doing so many closed rules, open rules seem to be an endangered species.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the leader to please report if we are going to consider, as I think we should, a supplemental next week that gives our country the resources to meet the crisis to which you referred?

It is our responsibility to consider it. It is our responsibility to give the resources. We passed the law, which is being implemented by the administration. We passed it overwhelmingly. It was sponsored by a gentleman who just spoke on this floor a short time ago to try to prevent and ameliorate human trafficking.

A number of bills we passed this week on human trafficking were passed unanimously. That bill that passed overwhelmingly was also about human trafficking. And I tell my friend, we need the resources. It is the responsibility of the majority party and the minority party to join together to give the administration the necessary resources to respond to carrying out the law that we passed.

If we want to change that law, that is also our responsibility. But I tell my friend it cannot be done in the timeframe that is available to us. We have delayed this so long, there is no time. And the gentleman keeps responding to me that the Rules Committee will decide the process.

The Rules Committee normally does not decide the substance of legislation. It decides the process under which we will consider the substance. Authorizing committees, as my friend so well knows, decide the substance of that legislation.

But we will have no opportunity to see that, apparently, until perhaps this

weekend, at the earliest, or next week. That does not give us time to debate it and it certainly, as everybody knows, does not give it time to go to the Senate and be debated. I think they will disagree, perhaps, on the language that is suggested. I don't know what it is, but there is a high probability of disagreement. Conference will have to occur, and then it will have to get to the President. And both the Senate and the House are leaving next week for their district work period.

I would urge the majority leader to make every effort with his party to bring what I think ought to be our obligation: a bill which provides the resources necessary—and we may differ on that number—to carry out our responsibilities to implement the law that we passed.

If the gentleman wants to respond further, I yield. If not, I will go on.

Mr. Speaker, we have five appropriations bills which have not been brought to the floor. The Ag bill was on the floor. It was pulled. It has not been brought back. The Labor, Health and Human Services bill, the Interior bill, the Homeland bill, and the Foreign Ops bill have not been brought to the floor, nor has the gentleman indicated any of those are going to be brought to the floor next week.

Can the gentleman tell me whether or not there is any plan to bring those bills to the floor in the 3 weeks that we will be back in September?

I yield to the majority leader.

Mr. McCARTHY of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I know we originated this for the schedule for next week. As the gentleman knows, the House has passed seven of the 12 appropriations bills in an open process.

To the fact that even one of your Members, Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE, has had 50 percent more amendments offered on this floor than the entire Republican Conference in the Senate for the last year, we are very proud of the open process we have brought back to the floor.

While the House is not scheduled to consider a regular appropriations bill next week, as the gentleman knows and as I stated already, the House may consider a supplemental appropriation request next week.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman, Mr. Speaker, but that does not give me any clarity in terms of the five appropriations bills. The supplemental appropriation bill, of course, is not a part of those bills, although, obviously, Health and Human Services is being put under a great deal of pressure by carrying out the terms of the law that we passed in 2008 signed by President Bush. They need resources. The supplemental is to give them the resources.

This is a scheduling conference. It is not just now, in my view, limited to next week, because we are not going to be here for 5 weeks thereafter, and Members want to know what they should anticipate as substantively

going to be on the agenda in the 3 short weeks that we will have left, essentially, before the election.

So I can't tell from the gentleman's answer, Mr. Speaker, whether or not any of those five appropriations bills—I know seven have passed—are intended to be brought to the floor.

I yield to the majority leader.

Mr. McCARTHY of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

The gentleman initiated this with inquiring about the schedule for next week. As I stated earlier, in the schedule for next week we do not have anything considered in the regular appropriations process, but we could possibly have a supplemental appropriation next week.

Mr. HOYER. Maybe I can just print that out and I will just read it, Mr. Speaker.

We have an Export-Import Bank that is going to expire very shortly. It is of great concern to many people on both sides of the aisle. Forty-one Republican Members, Mr. Speaker, have signed a letter urging that this be brought to the floor. It is a very timely, critical issue for the competitiveness of our country. It has been twisting in the wind for this entire year. I worked, Mr. Speaker, with the leader's predecessor to see whether or not we could get this bill to the floor.

I know what the schedule is for next week, so he doesn't need to repeat that for me—and I thank him very much—but does the majority leader have any idea whether we are going to consider the Export-Import Bank before the election?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. McCARTHY of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

As my friend, the gentleman knows, this is in regard to the schedule for next week. And it is not scheduled for next week. If there will be any consideration, we will notify you.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I am not going to ask the majority leader any more questions because I am not going to get any answers.

The American people have a right to those answers. The American people need to have transparency, which was going to be brought to this body, frankly, by the young guns, and they need a right to debate, right to anticipate, right to participate, but the answer I get is, It's not scheduled for next week.

Mr. Speaker, I know it is not scheduled for next week. Critical legislation was not scheduled last week, the week before that, the week before that, the week before that, the week before that, and every week before that—critical legislation supported by the overwhelming majority of the American people.

□ 1330

I am simply inquiring of the majority leader: Is there any contemplation of bringing that legislation to the floor before this Congress leaves for the elec-

tion so the American people who are going to either reelect this Congress or seek new leadership have an opportunity on which to make an informed decision, which, of course, is what the Speaker said we would have?

Certainly, we ought to have equal consideration for the American people as well so they have the right to robust debate and an open process and so it allows them to understand what we are doing.

I regret that the majority leader in critical issues, like the Export-Import Bank, which relate to the competitiveness of this country, and like Make It In America legislation that we defeated last week on suspension, which we agreed upon—the majority leader voted for it and I voted for it. I presume—I will ask him anyway. I said I wasn't going to ask him: Is there any contemplation of bringing that bill, which got 260 votes on this floor, back to the floor, under a rule which provides again for America's determining whether or not we can find additional rare earth, which is so necessary to be competitive in international markets?

I know it is not on the schedule, so he doesn't have to repeat that litany to me, because I get it. I have heard it now four or five or six times. I get it that it is not on the schedule for next week.

So the question I ask is: Is there any contemplation of bringing that bill, which has 260 people who voted for it, back to the floor, under a rule, so we can provide for a better opportunity to make it in America and to be competitive internationally?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. McCARTHY of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

As the gentleman knows, this colloquy is always based upon the schedule for next week, and I would very proudly like to lay out the schedule for next week.

As the gentleman raised the question, he very well knows we did agree on that bill just as we agreed on quite a few bills. As of today, there are 333 bills that have passed this House that have gotten stuck in the Senate. Of those 333 bills, 40 of them are jobs bills. We know we linger in a very tough economy, and the gentleman voted for a few of those 40 bills. So let me repeat: the 40 jobs bills are still stuck in the Senate. We want to encourage economic growth and innovation. We can ensure a robust American manufacturing sector and put Americans back to work.

As the gentleman knows, as we sat down to lunch, we want to work together on that, but as of right now, it is not scheduled for next week. It was on this week. Unfortunately, it did not pass, but I look forward to continuing working with the gentleman, and, hopefully, we could work together to make the Senate move on those 40 jobs bills and those 333 bills that the American public would like to see move forward.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, the majority leader and I have worked together, and we have sat down for lunch. We agree on the bill that I mentioned, Mr. SWALWELL's bill, to try to make America more competitive by producing more rare earth here in this country—so essential in the electronics industry and in other places.

I can't control the Senate, Mr. Speaker. The majority leader cannot control the Senate. What the majority leader and I can do is control what we do here in this House to which we were elected. We can control either urging or, in the majority leader's case—and as the former majority leader of this House, I can tell you I could put a bill on the floor if I thought it was important for the American people and in the best interests of our country. I think the Export-Import Bank falls in that category. I think minimum wage falls in that category. I think comprehensive immigration falls in that category. I think jobs bills fall in that category. I think make it in America—the Swalwell bill—fell in that category.

We cannot control what the Senate does, but we can control what we do. We can move in a responsible fashion, which the American people, Mr. Speaker, expect us to do and not blame some outside group, whether it is the administration or the United States Senate, for our lack of addressing important issues.

TRIA is an important bill, Mr. Speaker. It is not on the schedule. I presume, if I asked the majority leader about TRIA, he would tell me it is not on the schedule next week. That would not come as a news flash to me, Mr. Speaker, because he has told me that now seven times.

I believe, if the House is going to act in a collegial manner and in a constructive manner and in a manner that the American people want us to act, that we will exchange information not just on what is on next week—there is not much on next week, Mr. Speaker. I know that. There is, in my opinion, a political bill to sue the President of the United States. The American people don't think that is a very good idea. That is on the calendar. So we are using the few short minutes that we have available to do the people's business on four bills, to send a message, that we could pass in, frankly, a very short period of time on Monday night on endangered species. We are filling time. We are treading water, Mr. Speaker.

I will conclude with this. You have put the possibility that we are going to have a bill on the floor next week dealing with the crisis—your word—at the border. When will we see text of that legislation that might possibly be on the floor?

I yield to the majority leader.

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and

I appreciate the gentleman's concern on the crisis. It is not just my word. It is the American word.

If it were not a crisis, we would not have three Presidents from Central American countries here today to talk about the crisis. We would not have three Presidents who are asking to reunite their children with their families in their countries. If it were not a crisis, you would not have a task force that was introduced by this Speaker on this side to address it. If it were not a crisis, you wouldn't even have Members on your side of the aisle partnering with their Senators from another party, sitting in the Senate, to address the crisis.

Now, many Members of this House have gone there to see the crisis. Some in the administration have not. This House is committed to addressing it as soon as it is available.

We take great pride in changing this House. As the majority leader knows, he cares about the institution; but when the majority changed over here, one of the number one things we said we would do is a 3-day process, as you would know in importance, so people can read the bill, because too many times I have been to this floor when thousands of pages have come out at 2 a.m. and have been voted on that day. We made a commitment to the American people, and we have kept our commitment just as we will keep our commitment that we will end this crisis no matter what it takes. This House will act.

Mr. HOYER. When it is available. That was the answer to my question. We don't know when it is going to be available. We don't know what it will be. We don't know, really, whether it will be considered, because the majority leader tells me, Mr. Speaker, that it may be on the floor. We know that it hasn't gone to committee. We know that there is no subcommittee hearing that has been held. We know that there is no committee hearing that has been held.

The gentleman talks about thousands of pages. We can get into that debate at some other time. I know which he refers to, a bill that had literally more consideration than any other bill I have seen considered by the Congress of the United States—the Affordable Care Act, which is having, in my view, a very positive effect. We don't need to debate that today.

I would tell the majority leader, if the crisis were going to be addressed, the first step is having the resources necessary to carry out the law, then, if the law needs to be changed, deciding how it should be changed, having debate on that, bringing it to this floor out of committee, and considering that legislation. There are differences of opinion on that. I recognize that. The gentleman has pointed that out. That would be the way to do it. That is the regular order of which you spoke and you promised.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that that could be followed. There are many of us who

believe it is not being followed, and that is to the denigration of not only this body but to the American people's ability to see what we are doing, how we are doing it, when we are doing it.

Unless the gentleman has something further to say, I yield back the balance of my time.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, JULY 28, 2014

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet on Monday, July 28, 2014, when it shall convene at noon for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CRAMER). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 3230, PAY OUR GUARD AND RESERVE ACT

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Rahall moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 3230 (an Act to improve the access of veterans to medical services from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes) be instructed to—

(1) recede from disagreement with section 203 of the Senate amendment (relating to the use of unobligated amounts to hire additional health care providers for the Veterans Health Administration); and

(2) recede from the House amendment and concur in the Senate amendment in all other instances.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 7(b) of rule XXII, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FLORES) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia.

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

The House has just finished its roll-call votes for this week. With the conference committee at an impasse on H.R. 3230, the Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act, hope is fading that any legislation will be enacted this summer to address the urgent needs at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

This is truly shameful, and as an American, I think this is shameful. It is beyond me to understand why our legislative branch of government cannot get this done.

It is true that this body has taken some modest steps toward improvements, like allowing veterans to seek care at non-VA providers when they cannot get medical appointments. I