

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.

MELVOID J. BENSON POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3601) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 7715 Post Road, North Kingstown, Rhode Island, as the "Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3601

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

SECTION 1. MELVOID J. BENSON POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 7715 Post Road, North Kingstown, Rhode Island, shall be known and designated as the "Melvoid J. Benson 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 "Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 3601, introduced by my colleague from Rhode Island, Congressman JAMES LANGEVIN. The bill designates the post office located at 7715 Post Road, North Kingstown, Rhode Island, as the Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building.

Madam Speaker, Ms. Benson was born on February 13, 1930, in Jackson, Tennessee, and moved to North Kingstown, Rhode Island, in the 1960s. Once there, Ms. Benson dedicated her life to public service and to the people of the State of Rhode Island.

In 1965, she began what would become a 25-year teaching career in the North Kingstown School Department. Ms. Benson then served in the Rhode Island State House of Representatives for 14

years and spent the subsequent 8 years serving on the North Kingstown School Committee.

She served on the School Committee until 2014, when, at the age of 84, Ms. Benson made the decision not to seek reelection. Madam Speaker, all told, Ms. Benson spent nearly 50 years in public service.

In February 2015, Ms. Benson was honored with a lifetime achievement award from the North Kingstown Democratic Town Committee.

In continued appreciation to Ms. Benson, Representative LANGEVIN introduced H.R. 3601, which names a post office in her honor.

The Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building would be an important fixture showing the gratitude of many for Ms. Benson's years of dedication to her community and her service to the State of Rhode Island.

I urge Members to support the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN), my friend.

Mr. LANGEVIN. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I am truly honored and pleased to rise today in support of H.R. 3601, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 7715 Post Road, North Kingstown, Rhode Island, as the Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building.

As my colleague stated, for more than 50 years Mel Benson has been a consummate public servant, dedicating her time to educating our youth, fighting for social justice, building up our communities, and giving back to her friends and neighbors.

Born Melvoid Estes on February 13, 1930, in Jackson, Tennessee, Mel grew up in the segregated South, but that did not stop her from pursuing an education and becoming active in politics.

Her father worked for the railroad, and her mother was a teacher. According to Mel, they both instilled in her the importance of education. "Every generation," they said, "must do better than the last."

Mel took their advice to heart and made education a priority. She graduated from high school in 1947 and went on to receive her bachelor's degree from Lane College in social science with a minor in education. Two years later she married her high school sweetheart, Arnathia "Ben" Benson, who joined the Navy after college.

Mel taught her first class at an all-Black school in Madison County. However, as a Navy wife, she wouldn't stay in Tennessee for long. She and her husband were eventually stationed at Quonset Naval Base in North Kingstown, Rhode Island, which would become Mel's new home and a community she would forever change for the better.

After moving to Rhode Island in the 1960s, Mel taught in the North

Kingstown school system for 25 years. She educated students at Hamilton Elementary, the former Quonset Elementary; Davisville Middle School; and Wickford Middle School.

Every student she taught was touched by her wisdom and guidance. According to Matthew Leonard, chairman of the North Kingstown Democratic Town Committee, who had Mel as a teacher in the eighth grade, she possessed a wonderful gift.

Her whole focus was education and children," Matthew recounted. "She believed the future is in children, and our greatest goal is to continue on to the next generation."

She carried that belief all the way to the State house of representatives, where she became the first Black woman elected to the Rhode Island Legislature from the Second Congressional District and the second Black woman elected to the legislature from the entire State.

According to Mel, she never thought of herself as a Black woman in the statehouse. She was there to do the work of the people. That is exactly what she did, proudly representing the town of North Kingstown for 14 years.

I was fortunate enough to serve with Mel in the statehouse and she made a wonderful teammate and friend. She always spoke her mind and knew how to get things done.

As State Senator James Sheehan put it, "Mel could be tough as bricks. When she was after something, she'd let you know it."

It was that passion that led to some of her proudest accomplishments as a member of the Rhode Island General Assembly, including her early involvement with the planning and development of Quonset Business Park and particularly the rehabilitation of the old Kiefer Park into modern housing.

After a distinguished career in the statehouse, Mel was elected to the North Kingstown School Committee, where she served for 8 years, until 2014. At the age of 84, Mel decided not to seek reelection. But 2 years later, she still hasn't lost her spark.

Well known for her perseverance, wit, and unmistakable candor, Mel has touched the lives of countless Rhode Islanders—my own included—and people still love to regale in stories of the great Mama Mel.

State Representative Robert Craven, who has known Mel since 1974, described her as someone who just relished the opportunity to be involved in people's lives and make a difference in every capacity, as a wife, a mother, a schoolteacher, a State representative, and a School Committee member.

Beth Cullen, who considers Mel like a mother, characterized Mel's impact upon our community perfectly:

"She really taught North Kingstown a lesson that it doesn't matter what you look like. It's what you do; and she lived it every day."

Madam Speaker, I couldn't agree more. Mel has truly dedicated her life

to public service. Whether it was at the statehouse, in the School Committee chambers, or in the classroom, she has always put the best interests of Rhode Island and its young people first.

I would like to thank Chairman CHAFFETZ and Ranking Member CUMMINGS of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee for their work in bringing this legislation to the floor.

I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring Mel Benson for a lifetime of distinguished service and achievement by supporting H.R. 3601, designating the North Kingstown Post Office as the Melvoid J. Benson Post Office Building.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I urge passage of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I also urge adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3601.

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.

SECOND LT. ELLEN AINSWORTH MEMORIAL POST OFFICE

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4046) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 220 East Oak Street, Glenwood City, Wisconsin, as the Second Lt. Ellen Ainsworth Memorial Post Office.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4046

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

SECTION 1. SECOND LT. ELLEN AINSWORTH MEMORIAL POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 220 East Oak Street, Glenwood City, Wisconsin, shall be known and designated as the “Second Lt. Ellen Ainsworth 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 “Second Lt. Ellen Ainsworth Memorial Post Office”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY), my friend and colleague.

Mr. DUFFY. I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma for yielding.

Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize Second Lieutenant Ellen Ainsworth of the Seventh District of Wisconsin for her bravery, sacrifice, and service to her country during World War II.

Second Lieutenant Ainsworth grew up in the Wisconsin farming community of Glenwood City, where she is still recognized for her service and her sacrifice.

Ellen was well known around town as a caring young woman who loved to sing. She had a beautiful voice. Folks in town saw her as a leader and a go-getter. When duty called, she selflessly answered that call of duty.

In 1942, she entered the United States Army Nurse Corps after graduating from nursing school at the Minneapolis Eitel Hospital. She was first deployed to Tunisia and then, shortly after, to Italy, where she was assigned to the 56th Evacuation Hospital. Although the risk was high, it did not stop Lieutenant Ainsworth from honorably serving her country.

On February 10, 1944, Lieutenant Ainsworth's hospital tent came under heavy artillery attack in an area many described as hell's half acre. Under heavy enemy fire, Lieutenant Ainsworth disregarded her own well-being, evacuating 42 patients to safety, only stopping when she was hit by shrapnel from an exploding ordnance.

Lieutenant Ainsworth succumbed to her wounds 6 days later. At just 24 years old, she was the only Wisconsin servicewoman to make the ultimate sacrifice during World War II. Ainsworth was buried in the Sicily-Rome American Cemetery and Memorial in Italy.

Lieutenant Ainsworth was posthumously awarded a Silver Star, a Purple Heart, and a Red Cross Bronze Medal. A portrait of her currently hangs in the Pentagon as a testament to her bravery in the face of chaos and destruction.

The courageous actions of Lieutenant Ainsworth are witnessed today by the children of the soldiers who she saved, who would not be here if not for her heroism. She personified the honor and dignity through sacrifice that so many of her fellow Wisconsinites displayed during World War II.

Her death was a tragedy for the small town of Glenwood City. Over 72 years later, Lieutenant Ainsworth still has a large presence in that community. A health clinic, a veterans home as well as the American Legion post in her hometown have all been named in her honor.

Madam Speaker, it is my honor to sponsor H.R. 4046, a bill that names the Glenwood City Post Office after Lieutenant Ellen Ainsworth. It will stand as a reminder of the bravery of one American from Wisconsin's Seventh Congressional District.

Please join me to recognize this most deserving hero and Wisconsinite as we

name the post office at 220 East Oak Street, Glenwood City, Wisconsin, the Second Lt. Ellen Ainsworth Memorial Post Office.

□ 1400

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I also support this important piece of legislation introduced by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY), my colleague and friend. Rare is the individual, such as Second Lieutenant Ellen Ainsworth, who served in the Army Nurse Corps.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, but I will be brief.

One of the nice things about doing this is getting to hear the stories of ordinary Americans who make tremendous sacrifices. And clearly, Second Lieutenant Ainsworth was an extraordinary American who made such a sacrifice.

I am proud to support this resolution, and I urge its adoption.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, I urge the adoption of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4046.

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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 136, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 3735, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The remaining electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

CAMP PENDLETON MEDAL OF HONOR POST OFFICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 136) to designate the facility