

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding, and I thank the chairman for bringing this resolution to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, as I was sitting here listening to Congressman JOHNSON, I got so inspired that I just want to go out and jump in a soapbox or jump on a soapbox to give my talk.

I have been at this for a very long period of time. The soapbox derby has been going on for 76 years; 36 of those years, I had the great privilege of serving in this body. I rise each year to sponsor the resolution allowing the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby Association to hold its annual race on the Capitol Grounds. It is appropriate, I think, that it is here at the Capitol. The inspiration of the dome, the inspiration and excitement of which Congressman JOHNSON just spoke, I think, captures the sense of what "soapbox derby" means.

This year marks, as I said, the 76th year of the derby. Mr. Speaker, at which young people from around the region, from age 8 all the way to age 17, compete in three divisions. Those divisions are stock, super stock, and masters. So you are talking about these sophisticated soapboxes. They are not your father's soapbox, that is for sure.

It is not only a fun and exciting event, it is also educational and brings children together, young people together, young adults together with their parents, grandparents, siblings, and neighbors to plan and build their soapbox racers.

You know, one of the things we need in America is more engineers. I am a lawyer. I don't know that we need more lawyers. And we need doctors, of course, but people tell me, if we are going to make things in America, we need more engineers, people who work with their hands, people who create, people who design, and that is what this soapbox derby is about.

Doing so, participating in this contest helps connect these young people with hands-on engineering and manufacturing lessons which promote greater interest in the STEM fields which we all talk about: science, technology, engineering, and math. This has been the case, Mr. Speaker, since the first soapbox derby in 1938, and this long tradition now continues in the 21st century.

The winner in each division will then qualify to race against the regional champions from across the Nation later this year, at Derby Downs, at the All-American Soap Box Derby in Akron, Ohio.

This year, the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby will be held on June 17, Mr. Speaker. The derby has been called "the greatest amateur racing event in the world." I don't know whether it is the greatest, but it is cer-

tainly one of the great contests in the world and teaches participating youth about fortitude, about leadership, about engineering, sportsmanship, and pride of achievement.

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In addition to bringing families together, the Soap Box Derby brings communities closer together, Mr. Speaker. Many of the races are sponsored and cheered by their local civic groups, police, fire departments, and service organizations.

I have been proud, as I said, Mr. Speaker, to sponsor this resolution for 26 years, and I believe strongly in the importance of this tradition and am convinced of the very positive impact the Derby has on young people from my district who participate, around this region, and around the country.

Maryland's Fifth District, my district, has been home to a number of Greater Washington Soap Box Derby winners, including the winners from 2007, 2008, 2009, 2012, 2013, and 2014.

The Washington region is millions of people. My young people and their advisers, otherwise may be called parents, are doing pretty well in this, and we are proud of that. Our racers even won the national championship in 2007 and 2008.

I hope my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, will join me in supporting this resolution and thanking the organizers of the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby. I hope they will also join me in congratulating, in advance, all of the young people from the region who will be participating on June 17.

I also want to thank my cosponsors: GERRY CONNOLLY, DON BEYER, JOHN DELANEY, JAMIE RASKIN, ANTHONY BROWN, ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, and BARBARA COMSTOCK. This is a bipartisan resolution. I am sure everybody will support it, and I am sure that the excitement of which Congressman JOHNSON spoke will be experienced by those young people as they race towards victory. Whether they win the number one spot, they will be winners for having participated in this creative contest that makes them better people.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. FERGUSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 36.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

R. JESS BROWN UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE

Mr. FERGUSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill

(H.R. 455) to designate the United States courthouse located at 501 East Court Street in Jackson, Mississippi, as the "R. Jess Brown United States Courthouse".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 455

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

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION.

The United States courthouse located at 501 East Court Street in Jackson, Mississippi, shall be known and designated as the "R. Jess Brown United States Courthouse".

SEC. 2. REFERENCES.

Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the United States courthouse referred to in section 1 shall be deemed to be a reference to the "R. Jess Brown United States Courthouse".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. FERGUSON) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. FERGUSON).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FERGUSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 455.

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

There was no objection.

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

H.R. 455 would designate the United States courthouse located at 501 East Court Street in Jackson, Mississippi, as the R. Jess Brown United States Courthouse.

Mr. Brown, a native of Oklahoma, attended Illinois State University, Indiana University, and the Texas Southern University law school.

In the 1960s, R. Jess Brown was one of only four African-American lawyers licensed to practice in Mississippi. In 1962, Mr. Brown took on his most famous case, where he worked on behalf of James Meredith, an African-American student who sought enrollment at the University of Mississippi. Mr. Brown's successful lawsuit broke the color barrier at the University of Mississippi and helped set the tone for future litigation in the civil rights movement.

Although the Meredith case may be his most famous trial, Mr. Brown already had established a history of litigating for civil rights stretching back to 1948, when he sued on behalf of Black teachers in Jackson, Mississippi, who sought salaries on par with their White colleagues.

R. Jess Brown helped to break down barriers and set historical precedent that has shaped our Nation for the better. It is only appropriate that we honor the work of Mr. Brown by naming this courthouse after him.

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 455. I want to commend my friend on the other side of the aisle for his eloquence and for his support of H.R. 455.

I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON).

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 455, a bill to designate the United States courthouse in Jackson, Mississippi, as the R. Jess Brown United States Courthouse.

Mr. Speaker, Richard Jess Brown was born on September 12, 1912, in Coffeyville, Kansas. His parents, Ernestine and Joe Brown, were jazz musicians and performed in and managed a local theater.

Jess received a bachelor of science in industrial arts from Illinois State Normal University and a master of science in industrial education from Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana.

After teaching at Alcorn State University, Jess moved to Jackson, Mississippi, where he taught industrial arts at Lanier High School, the only Black high school in the city at that time. While teaching at Lanier, Jess became an intervening plaintiff in a lawsuit that sought equal pay for Black teachers in Jackson.

After teaching in Jackson, Jess attended Texas Southern University Law School. Jess left the law school before receiving his juris doctorate, but was able to return to Mississippi and pass the Mississippi bar in 1953.

Beginning his law career in Vicksburg, Mississippi, Jess confined his practice to cases involving divorces, deeds, land titles, and other practices that did not agitate White members of the bar. However, after the Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka ruling in 1954, Jess felt compelled to defend the civil rights of African Americans.

In the fall of 1955, the conditions and hardships endured by Black lawyers in the courts led Mr. Brown and seven other Black attorneys to establish the Magnolia Bar Association.

Mr. Speaker, R. Jess Brown is credited with filing the first civil suit on behalf of an African American in Mississippi, that lawsuit on behalf of a Jefferson County minister who challenged laws that prevented Blacks from voting.

Mr. Speaker, Jess Brown has an extensive record as a civil rights lawyer. His list of clients include:

Clyde Kennard, who was charged with and convicted of a fictitious crime while attempting to desegregate the University of Southern Mississippi;

James H. Meredith, whose litigation ultimately led to the integration of the University of Mississippi;

Dr. Gilbert Mason, who led the effort to end racial segregation on the beaches of Biloxi, Mississippi; and

Civil rights icons Medgar Wiley Evers and Dr. Aaron Henry.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Brown was admitted to practice law before all Mississippi court systems; the United States District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi; the United States District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi; the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit; and the United States Supreme Court. Mr. Brown also served on the Executive Board of the National Bar Association for approximately 15 years.

Mr. Speaker, on December 31, 1989, R. Jess Brown died in Jackson, Mississippi, at the age of 77.

Mr. Speaker, R. Jess Brown is well-deserving of this honor, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 455.

Mr. FERGUSON. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, R. Jess Brown is the type of individual who is an American success story. Just listening to the comments of my colleague, Congressman THOMPSON, about R. Jess Brown made me very proud of his accomplishments. He seemed to have been a Renaissance man with a southern twist. He seemed to be a gentleman and a scholar, yet someone who worked with his hands, also, and showed others how to do so.

That is why I rise in support of H.R. 455, a bill to designate the Federal courthouse in Jackson, Mississippi, as the R. Jess Brown United States Courthouse. I can't think of any better name for a courthouse in that locale other than the R. Jess Brown United States Courthouse. Attorney R. Jess Brown was a towering champion during critical moments in the civil rights movement in the South, and especially in Mississippi.

Jess Brown received his law degree from the Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University, which is my law school alma mater, and he practiced law in Mississippi throughout the sixties and seventies as one of the few attorneys willing to practice civil rights law. He made the metamorphosis from being a divorce lawyer into being a civil rights lawyer.

He was associate counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, and he filed the first civil rights suit in Mississippi in the 1950s in Jefferson Davis County, seeking the enforcement of the right of Black citizens to become registered voters.

In 1961, R. Jess Brown represented James H. Meredith in his suit to be allowed to enter the University of Mississippi. His victory in this case opened the doors of that university to all Mississippi citizens.

While with the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, he played a

major role in fighting racial discrimination in the areas of transportation and other public accommodations.

During his lifetime, R. Jess Brown received numerous awards and honors, including the NAACP's Lawyer of the Year Award, the National Bar Association's C. Francis Stradford Award, and the Mississippi Teachers Association Award for extraordinary service to education in Mississippi. Other accomplishments are too numerous to mention but, unfortunately, are not as well known as they should be, and this is the least that we can do to honor the legacy of this important American.

I support this legislation honoring the life's work of R. Jess Brown, and I urge my colleagues to join me and pass H.R. 455.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. FERGUSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 455.

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.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION COORDINATION AND PLANNING AREA REFORM REPEAL ACT

Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 496) to repeal the rule issued by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration entitled "Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 496

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

SECTION 1. REPEAL.

The rule issued by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration entitled "Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform" (81 Fed. Reg. 93448 (December 20, 2016)) shall have no force or effect, and any regulation revised by that rule shall be applied as if that rule had not been issued.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. LEWIS) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on S. 496.