

Corps Commendation Medal, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, two Combat Action Ribbons, and three Good Conduct Medals that he earned during his 9 years of exemplary service to his Nation.

His father, Russell, recalled that “He never cared about medals. He never showed them to us.” He said: “Once, I found one in his laundry.” But his father also said that although his son was indifferent to medals, he was intentionally and intensely proud of his EOD badge, designating his service as an explosive ordnance disposal technician.

To the EOD technicians, bombs are not something to be avoided but something to be sought out and disarmed. On one such day, Mote diffused two IEDs, crawled through a heavily seeded minefield to save the life of his team member who had been severely wounded by a third, and then directed the evacuation of his unit. On that day, Sergeant Mote had earned a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with a V for valor.

We come today to the Hall of the House of Representatives to try to honor a hero who didn’t care much about medals.

We do so not for him. Lincoln was right long ago that it is far beyond our poor powers to add or detract from the honor of his deeds and the example of his life.

I think we do so in part to acknowledge an irredeemable debt that our country owes to an eternally grieving family. We need to remember there are Gold Star families among us who spend their Memorial Days not at barbecues and beach parties but in solemn ceremonies and quiet vigils around honored graves. We honor their loved ones in hopes that in some small way we can fortify them against the loss that they bear every day of their lives.

But, mainly, I think we do it for ourselves, that we might draw inspiration from his courage and instruction from his willingness to sacrifice all to protect the vision of liberty enshrined in the founding of our Nation.

In consultation with his family, we have identified a mountain in the John Muir Wilderness of the Sierra National Forest overlooking where Sky Mote and his family often camped and hiked. This bill proposes that it forever more be known as Sky Point as a token of our Nation’s respect of his heroism, its appreciation of his sacrifice, its sympathy for his family, and of its solemn pledge that succeeding generations of his countrymen will never forget him.

This legislation first passed the House by voice vote in the 114th Congress, and I urge the passage of this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, wow, just listening to my good friend from California explain and give us a description of what happened in the life of this American hero,

Sergeant Sky Mote, I am truly touched by the many other stories that I have heard from families of our men and women in uniform, our veterans in service of our country.

And as we have just heard, this bill designates a mountain peak in the John Muir Wilderness of the Sierra National Forest in California as “Sky Point” in recognition of a fallen Marine Corps Staff Sergeant Sky Mote.

Sky served our country honorably as a U.S. marine for 9 years. He had a tour of duty in Iraq and two in Afghanistan.

By designating that mountain as “Sky Point,” it will honor his memory and ensure his selfless sacrifice for his country and fellow marines is not forgotten.

We passed this legislation last Congress by voice vote, and I urge that we do the same again today.

I thank my good friend, the distinguished gentleman from California, for introducing this bill today.

As I have no further speakers, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his kind and good words and 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 California (Mr. McCLINTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 381.

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.

NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS ECONOMIC EXPANSION ACT

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 339) to amend Public Law 94-241 with respect to the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 339

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Northern Mariana Islands Economic Expansion Act”.

SEC. 2. COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS: TRANSITIONAL WORKERS.

Section 6 of Public Law 94-241 (48 U.S.C. 1806) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(6), by striking “\$150” and inserting “\$200”; and

(2) in subsection (d)(2)—

(A) by striking the period at the end of the first sentence and inserting “, except a permit for construction occupations (as that term is defined by the Department of Labor as Standard Occupational Classification Group 47-0000 or any successor provision) shall only be issued to extend a permit first issued before October 1, 2015.”; and

(B) by striking the period at the end of the third sentence and inserting “, except that

for fiscal year 2017 the number of permits issued shall not exceed 15,000.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. McCLINTOCK) and the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days 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 California?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, the House has before it H.R. 339, sponsored by Congressman SABLON of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The House passed an identical bill this past December just before the conclusion of the 114th Congress. However, that bill was unable to pass the Senate and make it to the President’s desk for signature before the end of that Congress, and so I am here today to once again urge the bill’s passage through the House and on to the Senate.

The Northern Mariana Islands are benefiting by new investment and growth of consumer spending, particularly in tourism. Their economic growth rate is almost twice that of the rest of our country.

To meet this growth, the Commonwealth has to maintain a workforce to match it. Currently, the Northern Marianas is phasing out the use of foreign workers by slowly reducing the total number of CW-1 permits issued by the Department of Homeland Security. Economic growth is dynamic, but bureaucracy is not. If the CW-1 permits are phased out too quickly, the islands may suffer a growth-stopping shortage of labor. This bill would provide flexibility to the Commonwealth in order to protect its newfound economic prosperity in three critical ways:

First, it would fund ongoing vocational education curricula and program development to assure a skilled domestic workforce funded from an increase in CW-1 fees from \$150 to \$200.

Second, it would limit the CW-1 permits for construction occupation to those issued prior to October 1 of 2015.

And third, it would temporarily increase the number of CW-1 permits during this transition period.

Mr. Speaker, these changes will continue to accommodate the economic growth in the Northern Marianas, while assuring a trained domestic workforce for the future.

I would urge adoption of the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman ROB BISHOP for allowing my bill to come to the floor again.

We passed the same bill in the House on December 6, but the Senate adjourned 3 days later without acting, and the problem has not gone away.

The economy of the Northern Mariana Islands grew 3.5 percent last year, the fourth straight year of growth for my district.

This strong economic expansion is good news for the people I represent. We desperately want this growth to continue because our economy is still smaller than it was in 2000.

The Northern Mariana Islands Economic Expansion Act addresses that problem and is broadly supported back home.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of support from Governor Ralph Deleon Guerrero Torres of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; from the Commonwealth's Strategic Economic Development Council; the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation; the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands; and from the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.

CNMI STRATEGIC ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL,
December 1, 2016.

Hon. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN SABLAN: The CNMI Strategic Economic Development Committee is in strong support of H.R. 6401, critical legislation that will provide short-term relief from the labor shortage threatening the growth of the Northern Marianas economy.

The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis indicates the Commonwealth economy grew for the fourth consecutive year, a recent high of 3.5 percent. This is attributable to increased private investment and tourism now threatened by the lack of available qualified workers on the island.

The modest one-year increase in Commonwealth-Only Transitional Workers (CW) proposed under H.R. 6401, will provide the business community with the necessary human resources to continue to operate and propel an expanding economy.

It is imperative that we do not stymie our plan for fixture economic growth, now beginning to come to fruition, with a labor shortage in critical areas.

The bill also provides additional funds for the job training/education programs proven effective at expanding the pool of qualified and skilled U.S. workers in the CNMI.

The CNMI Strategic Economic Development Council fully supports H.R. 6401 and appreciates all of your efforts in addressing the labor crisis in the Northern Marianas.

Very truly yours,

ALEXANDER A. SABLAN,
Sub Committee Chair-
man, Labor & CW
Task Force, CNMI
Strategic Economic
Development Com-
mittee.

SAIPAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
December 2, 2016.

Hon. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN SABLAN: The Saipan Chamber of Commerce is in strong support of H.R. 6401, critical legislation that will pro-

vide short-term relief from the labor shortage threatening the growth of the Northern Marianas economy.

The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis indicates the Commonwealth economy grew for the fourth consecutive year, a recent high of 3.5 percent. This is attributable to increased private investment and tourism now threatened by the lack of available qualified workers on the island.

The modest one-year increase in Commonwealth-Only Transitional Workers (CW) proposed under H.R. 6401, will provide the business community with the necessary human resources to continue to operate and propel an expanding economy. It will also provide additional critical funds for job training and education programs that are steadily expanding the pool of qualified and skilled U.S. workers on Saipan.

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce fully supports H.R. 6401 and appreciates all of your efforts in addressing the labor crisis in the Northern Marianas.

Very truly yours,

VELMA M. PALACIOS,
President of the
Board, Saipan
Chamber of Com-
merce.

HOTEL ASSOCIATION OF THE
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS,
December 2, 2016.

Hon. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN SABLAN: The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands is in strong support of H.R. 6401, critical legislation that will provide short-term relief from the labor shortage threatening the growing hospitality industry in the Northern Marianas.

Due in large part to increased private investment and tourism the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis recently announced that the Commonwealth economy grew for the fourth consecutive year.

However, our hotel and resort properties are in critical need of labor, particularly those with skills and experience in the hospitality industry, culinary arts and property maintenance. The inability of employers to renew or hire new Commonwealth-Only Transitional Workers (CW) threatens their continued operations and chills future investment in our islands.

The modest one-year increase in CWs, proposed under H.R. 6401, will allow the hospitality industry to continue to provide first-class service to our tourists.

The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands fully supports H.R. 6401 and appreciates all of your efforts in addressing the labor crisis in the Northern Marianas.

Very truly yours,

GLORIA CAVANAGH,
Chairman, Hotel Association of the
Northern Mariana Islands.

COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE COR-
PORATION, COMMONWEALTH OF THE
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS,
December 2, 2016.

Hon. GREGORIO "KILILI" CAMACHO SABLAN,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN SABLAN: Common-
wealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC) is in
strong support of H.R. 6401.

This critical legislation would provide an increase in the FY 2017 limit on Commonwealth-Only Transitional Workers (CW) and allow the CHCC to petition for renewal of 39 essential healthcare workers impacted when the CW cap was reached just two weeks into the Fiscal Year.

Our Commonwealth Health Center (CHC) is the only hospital in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, providing inpatient and outpatient acute, chronic, and emergency health care services to the people of the CNMI. We also maintain community health centers on the populated islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Our ability to continue to provide these essential on-island health care services, and maintain quality patient care and safety as well as maintain overall public health, depends on being able to maintain current staffing levels and specialized expertise.

Without an increase to the CW cap this year, CHC stands to lose the services and experience of 34 staff nurses, two infection control nurses, a clinical laboratory scientist and specialists in mammography and ultrasonography.

For the foregoing reasons, we are in full support H.R. 6401 and are grateful for your work in addressing this critical health care issue.

Sincerely,

ESTHER L. MUNA,
Chief Executive Officer.

COMMONWEALTH OF THE
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS,
December 4, 2016.

Hon. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN SABLAN: I write to support H.R. 6401, critical legislation that will provide short-term relief from the labor shortage facing the Commonwealth that threatens our growing economy and public health.

The latest report from Bureau of Economic Analysis indicates the Commonwealth economy grew for the fourth consecutive year. A growing economy needs a qualified workforce. And while there are now more U.S. workers than foreign workers in the Northern Marianas for the first time in decades, there are still not enough to meet the labor demand. The temporary increase in the number of Commonwealth-Only Transitional (CW) workers provided in your bill will particularly help small businesses retain the workers needed to maintain operations.

Most importantly, the Commonwealth's only hospital, stand to lose critical staff including 34 staff nurses, two infection control nurses, a clinical laboratory scientist and specialists in mammography, ultrasonography without the relief provided in H.R. 6401.

Building a qualified U.S. workforce in the Northern Marianas is a priority for my administration. The CW worker fee increase in the legislation will provide additional funding for efforts to recruit, educate, and train these workers and establish a permanent pool of workers to fill local jobs.

H.R. 6401 is critical to continued economic growth in the Northern Marianas. The bill has my full support.

Sincerely,

RALPH DLG TORRES,
Governor.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank again Chairman ROB BISHOP of the Natural Resources Committee for his understanding and support. I also thank Chairman DON YOUNG who held a hearing on this issue last September and agreed that action was needed.

I appreciate the support of Ranking Member RAÚL GRIJALVA and our new Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs Subcommittee Ranking Member NORMA TORRES.

Mr. Speaker, I am indebted to the minority whip, Mr. HOYER, and to the

majority leader, Mr. MCCARTHY, and to my friend Mr. MCCLINTOCK of California who agreed to bring H.R. 339 to the floor today.

I ask for support of H.R. 339.

Having no further speakers, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I would urge the House to finish the work that it began in December by passing 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 California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 339.

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.

FORT ONTARIO STUDY ACT

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 46) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of Fort Ontario in the State of New York.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 46

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Fort Ontario Study Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) From 1755 until 1814, Fort Ontario and three previous fortifications built on the site of the Fort in Oswego, New York, on the shore of Lake Ontario were used as military installations during the French and Indian War, the Revolutionary War, and the War of 1812.

(2) The original fort, erected by the British in 1755, was destroyed by French forces in 1756. The fort was rebuilt and subsequently destroyed during both the American Revolution and the War of 1812. The star-shaped fort was constructed on the site of the original fortifications in the 1840s, with improvements made from 1863 through 1872.

(3) The United States Armed Forces began expanding Fort Ontario in the early 20th century and by 1941, approximately 125 buildings stood at the fort.

(4) On June 9, 1944, President Franklin D. Roosevelt announced that Fort Ontario would serve as the Nation's only Emergency Refugee Camp during World War II. From August of 1944 until February 1946, nearly 1,000 refugees were sheltered at Fort Ontario.

(5) Fort Ontario was conveyed from the Federal Government to the State of New York in 1946; it was used to house World War II veterans and their families and then converted to a State historic site in 1953.

(6) A post cemetery containing the graves of 77 officers, soldiers, women, and children who served at Fort Ontario in war and peace is situated on the grounds of the fort.

(7) In 1970, Fort Ontario was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

SEC. 3. FORT ONTARIO SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY.

(a) STUDY.—The Secretary of the Interior (referred to in this section as the "Sec-

retary") shall conduct a special resource study of Fort Ontario in Oswego, New York.

(b) CONTENTS.—In conducting the study under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) evaluate the national significance of the site;

(2) determine the suitability and feasibility of designating the site as a unit of the National Park System;

(3) consider other alternatives for preservation, protection, and interpretation of the lands by Federal, State, or local governmental entities, or private and nonprofit organizations;

(4) consult with interested Federal, State, or local governmental entities, private and nonprofit organizations or any other interested individuals;

(5) determine the effect of the designation of the site as a unit of the National Park System on existing commercial and recreational uses and the effect on State and local governments to manage those activities;

(6) identify any authorities, including condemnation, that may compel or allow the Secretary to influence or participate in local land use decisions (such as zoning) or place restrictions on non-Federal land if the site is designated a unit of the National Park System; and

(7) identify cost estimates for any Federal acquisition, development, interpretation, operation, and maintenance associated with the alternatives.

(c) APPLICABLE LAW.—The study authorized under subsection (a) shall be conducted in accordance with section 100507 of title 54, United States Code.

(d) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are first made available for the study under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report that describes—

(1) the findings of the study; and
(2) any conclusions and recommendations of the Secretary.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) and the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days 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 California?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, Congressman JOHN KATKO of New York brings us H.R. 46, which authorizes the National Park Service to conduct a special resource study of Fort Ontario in Oswego, New York, to evaluate the site's national significance and determine the suitability of its designation as a unit of the National Park system.

□ 1645

Fort Ontario was first established in 1755 to defend Americans during the

French and Indian Wars. You might say it was the first time our Nation has dealt with organized terrorism. It played a role in the American Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 and served our country as a hospital, training facility, and a refugee center in the First and Second World Wars.

In 1946, after nearly 200 years of active military use, Fort Ontario was transferred to the State of New York, which has operated and maintained it ever since. The House passed a nearly identical version of this legislation in the 114th Congress.

I urge adoption of the measure.

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

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

This bill authorizes the National Park Service to conduct a special resource study of Fort Ontario in Oswego, New York. Fort Ontario was a military installation used during the French and Indian Wars, which was later used to house refugees fleeing the Nazi Holocaust during World War II.

Many Americans remember our Nation's role in World War II through events like the Invasion of Normandy or the Battle of Iwo Jima, closer to my district, which have been re-imagined in film and memorialized in stone, but the story of Fort Ontario is an equally important component of our historical legacy. Providing physical refuge from persecution says as much about our national character as the bravery and sacrifice of the millions of Americans who were deployed overseas.

The site has been managed as a New York State historic site since 1949 and has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1970. The study authorized by this bill will look into the best available options for the continued preservation and management of Fort Ontario, including the possibility of turning it into a unit of the National Park System.

Fort Ontario has had many uses throughout our Nation's history, and it has had a particularly relevant place in the story of Jewish Americans. As we work to ensure that our public lands tell the story of all Americans, Fort Ontario and its unique story could be a fitting addition.

This bill passed the House last September but was, unfortunately, not acted upon by the Senate.

I would like to thank Representative KATKO, the sponsor of this bill, for his continued efforts to ensure the Nation knows about the story of Fort Ontario.

This is a good bill, and I urge my colleagues to support its passage.

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

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO), the author of this measure.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank both gentlemen for their kind words about this truly unique historical fort in my district.