

This historic moment was the beginning of the end for the Cold War, and today we are still celebrating this iconic moment in world history as an international symbol of freedom.

I join our German friends in celebrating this milestone and would like to remind all of us that freedom is always worth fighting for.

#### CONGRATULATING RAQUEL SALTER

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Raquel Salter for being selected for promotion from lieutenant commander to commander in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserves.

Commander Salter is a 29-year veteran of the U.S. Coast Guard and served about one-third of her time in Georgia's First Congressional District.

Throughout her service, she has always gone above and beyond to selflessly defend our Nation and advocate for the Coast Guard, especially service-women.

Over her 29 years of service, Commander Salter has been activated to Key West for the Cuban Raft Crisis, to Savannah to assist with the Olympic sailing security, to Charleston for Operation Iraqi Freedom, and to Savannah again for 9/11 and to help assist with the G8 summit security.

This year, Commander Salter was chosen as part of a select group to help with COVID-19 response in Miami. I can't thank her enough for her steadfast commitment to serving our country and countless Americans, and I wish her the best in her new position.

#### THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE A RIGHT TO KNOW

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, many in the media or in opposition are calling for President Trump to concede, but just as many are supporting his pursuit of legitimate legal challenges.

A lack of transparency in the monitoring and vote counting process has raised flags for many Americans, and if left unchecked, will undermine the faith in our electoral process, an important integrity to all Americans.

The President's team has hundreds of sworn affidavits from election workers, postal employees, and election observers everywhere about questionable activities in key States.

These workers do not have built-in safety guarantees like members of the Washington swamp. They are regular Americans putting their livelihoods on the line to speak up and protect our elections.

After 4 years of scare tactics, of fake impeachment, fraudulent dossiers, and

Russia witch hunts, the American people have a right to know that every legal vote has been counted and all illegal votes removed. Americans must have all questions surrounding the outcome of this election answered before we can move forward so we do have election integrity that we can count on.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 4 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 14 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1600

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. KENNEDY) at 4 p.m.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

#### LUMBEE TRIBE OF NORTH CAROLINA RECOGNITION ACT

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1964) to provide for the recognition of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1964

*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 "Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina Recognition Act".

##### SEC. 2. FEDERAL RECOGNITION.

The Act of June 7, 1956 (70 Stat. 254, chapter 375), is amended—

- (1) by striking section 2;
- (2) in the first sentence of the first section, by striking "That the Indians" and inserting the following:

##### "SEC. 3. DESIGNATION OF LUMBEE INDIANS.

"The Indians";

- (3) in the preamble—

(A) by inserting before the first undesignated clause the following:

##### "SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

"Congress finds that—";

- (B) by designating the undesignated clauses as paragraphs (1) through (4), respectively, and indenting appropriately;
- (C) by striking "Whereas" each place it appears;

- (D) by striking "and" after the semicolon at the end of each of paragraphs (1) and (2) (as so designated); and

(E) in paragraph (4) (as so designated), by striking "Now, therefore," and inserting a period;

(4) by moving the enacting clause so as to appear before section 1 (as so designated);

(5) by striking the last sentence of section 3 (as designated by paragraph (2));

(6) by inserting before section 3 (as designated by paragraph (2)) the following:

##### "SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

"In this Act:

"(1) SECRETARY.—The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of the Interior.

"(2) TRIBE.—The term 'Tribe' means the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina or the Lumbee Indians of North Carolina."; and

(7) by adding at the end the following:

##### "SEC. 4. FEDERAL RECOGNITION.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—Federal recognition is extended to the Tribe (as designated as petitioner number 65 by the Office of Federal Acknowledgment).

"(b) APPLICABILITY OF LAWS.—All laws and regulations of the United States of general application to Indians and Indian tribes shall apply to the Tribe and its members.

"(c) PETITION FOR ACKNOWLEDGMENT.—Notwithstanding section 3, any group of Indians in Robeson and adjoining counties, North Carolina, whose members are not enrolled in the Tribe (as determined under section 5(d)) may petition under part 83 of title 25 of the Code of Federal Regulations for acknowledgment of tribal existence.

##### "SEC. 5. ELIGIBILITY FOR FEDERAL SERVICES.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Tribe and its members shall be eligible for all services and benefits provided by the Federal Government to federally recognized Indian tribes.

"(b) SERVICE AREA.—For the purpose of the delivery of Federal services and benefits described in subsection (a), those members of the Tribe residing in Robeson, Cumberland, Hoke, and Scotland counties in North Carolina shall be deemed to be residing on or near an Indian reservation.

"(c) DETERMINATION OF NEEDS.—On verification by the Secretary of a tribal roll under subsection (d), the Secretary and the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall—

"(1) develop, in consultation with the Tribe, a determination of needs to provide the services for which members of the Tribe are eligible; and

"(2) after the tribal roll is verified, each submit to Congress a written statement of those needs.

"(d) TRIBAL ROLL.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—For purpose of the delivery of Federal services and benefits described in subsection (a), the tribal roll in effect on the date of enactment of this section shall, subject to verification by the Secretary, define the service population of the Tribe.

"(2) VERIFICATION LIMITATION AND DEADLINE.—The verification by the Secretary under paragraph (1) shall—

"(A) be limited to confirming documentary proof of compliance with the membership criteria set out in the constitution of the Tribe adopted on November 16, 2001; and

"(B) be completed not later than 2 years after the submission of a digitized roll with supporting documentary proof by the Tribe to the Secretary.

##### "SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION TO TAKE LAND INTO TRUST.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary is hereby authorized to take land into trust for the benefit of the Tribe.

"(b) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN LAND.—An application to take into trust land located within Robeson County, North Carolina, under this section shall be treated by the Secretary as an 'on reservation' trust acquisition under part 151 of title 25, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation).

**"SEC. 7. JURISDICTION OF STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA.**

"(a) IN GENERAL.—With respect to land located within the State of North Carolina that is owned by, or held in trust by the United States for the benefit of, the Tribe, or any dependent Indian community of the Tribe, the State of North Carolina shall exercise jurisdiction over—

"(1) all criminal offenses that are committed; and

"(2) all civil actions that arise.

"(b) TRANSFER OF JURISDICTION.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary may accept on behalf of the United States, after consulting with the Attorney General of the United States, any transfer by the State of North Carolina to the United States of any portion of the jurisdiction of the State of North Carolina described in subsection (a) over Indian country occupied by the Tribe pursuant to an agreement between the Tribe and the State of North Carolina.

"(2) RESTRICTION.—A transfer of jurisdiction described in paragraph (1) may not take effect until 2 years after the effective date of the agreement described in that paragraph.

"(c) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section affects the application of section 109 of the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 1919).

**"SEC. 8. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

"There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out this Act.

**"SEC. 9. SHORT TITLE.**

"This Act may be cited as the 'Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina Recognition Act.'."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN) and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

**GENERAL LEAVE**

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. 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 measure under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

H.R. 1964, the Lumbee Recognition Act, introduced by our colleague from North Carolina, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, will finally extend recognition to the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina.

The Lumbee Tribe resides primarily in Robeson, Hoke, Cumberland, and Scotland Counties of that State and has approximately 60,000 members. That means it is the largest Tribe in North Carolina, the largest Tribe east of the Mississippi River, and the ninth largest Tribe in America.

In 1885, this Tribe was recognized by the State of North Carolina. It then sought Federal recognition from the United States in 1889, and they have been seeking that recognition ever since.

Over the past 130 years, numerous bills have been introduced in Congress to federally recognize the Lumbee people, resulting in a record of hearing

transcripts and committee reports. In addition, numerous academic studies have been undertaken on Lumbee ancestry, and reports have been requested and filed by the Department of the Interior on the Tribe's validity.

All of these documents consistently conclude one thing: The Lumbee people are indeed a distinct, self-governing Indian community that has been continuously and undeniably present in the Robeson County area.

In 1955, the Lumbee Tribe sought Federal recognition. Unfortunately, this was during the era known as the termination era, when the United States sought to terminate relationships with Tribal governments and force the assimilation of indigenous people into mainstream American society.

To that end, the Department of the Interior recommended that Congress amend the legislation to deny eligibility for the benefits and services available to the Tribe recognized under the bill.

Congress then enacted this amended legislation in 1956, giving it the dubious effect of simultaneously federally recognizing the Lumbee Tribe and then effectively terminating that recognition.

In 1987, the Lumbee Tribe again attempted to restore their Federal recognition, this time through the newly created Federal acknowledgment process at Interior. However, the Department determined that the Tribe was ineligible to participate in that process because Congress, pursuant to that 1956 act, had terminated the relationship with the Tribe and, therefore, only Congress could restore the relationship. That is exactly what enactment of this bill will accomplish.

Federal recognition is the formal establishment of a government-to-government relationship between the United States and a Tribal nation. Its importance to Tribes cannot be overstated.

Federal recognition allows a Tribe to establish a homeland and to put land into trust to protect future generations. This, in turn, allows the Tribe to manage its own resources and gives them control over local jurisdiction and taxation issues.

Recognition also entitles Tribal people to distinctive benefits, including eligibility to participate in many Federal programs, including healthcare and education.

That is why enactment of this bill is so vital to the Lumbee people and why they have been seeking Federal recognition for so very long.

Other Tribes that were terminated by congressional action have come before Congress, and they have had their relationship reestablished through legislation. It is finally time that we act on that prerogative and extend Federal recognition to the Lumbee Tribe.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative BUTTERFIELD for being a champion of this bipartisan legislation, and I urge its quick adoption.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BISHOP), who has the proper last name, if not the correct first name.

Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for yielding.

Since 1885, the State of North Carolina has recognized the Lumbee Indians of North Carolina, but today marks the first time in U.S. history since the Lumbee first sought Federal recognition in 1885 that legislation for full and bona fide recognition will pass the U.S. House while a companion bill awaits action in the U.S. Senate strongly favored by two North Carolina Senators and with the President of the United States having promised to sign the legislation that will result.

For 64 years, the 66,000-strong Lumbee have existed in a kind of official limbo that reflects the worst of our Federal Government.

In 1956, Congress passed a law simultaneously granting recognition of the Tribe and terminating it, according to the movement of that era. "Nothing in this Act," said the legislation, "shall make such Indians eligible for any services performed by the United States for Indians because of their status as Indians, and none of the statutes of the United States which affect Indians because of their status as Indians shall be applicable to the Lumbee Indians."

One wonders if they had heard about equal protection.

For the opponents of Lumbee recognition, including other Tribes, it has always been about the money. Of course, there have been fellow travelers motivated by racial prejudice or neglect.

It cannot be disputed, though, that the Lumbee have been, for three centuries, a cohesive and distinct community of aboriginal origins and durable institutions, especially schools, living near the Lumber River, which was known until 1809 by the unfortunate but accurate name Drowning Creek.

Although the Lumbee have also been known by other names—the Croatan, the Cheraw of Robeson, the Siouan Indian Community of Lumber River—they are the continuously present and vital people shown on a map drawn in 1725 whose common modern surnames appear on a document written in 1771, such as Locklear, Chavis, Dees, Sweat, and Groom. They are the Lumbee who were living in Long Swamp in the 1730s, the community now known as Prospect, where I visited just weeks ago.

My maternal forebears were Kinlaws in Bladen County, adjacent to Robeson. We also trace a genealogy to the early 1700s, and our family name evolved, like the Lumbee's did. We were once McKinlaws and, before that, McKinlochs, desperately poor but independent Scots-Irish from the borderlands of the English Civil Wars.

I can only imagine what it would mean to me to have been singled out by the United States Government for centuries of official disregard and denial of my very identity. That is the longstanding injustice that we are correcting today, and the happy ending is already being written by the Lumbee themselves.

I know the Lumbee. I know the Warrior's Ball and Lumbee Homecoming, UNC-Pembroke and Old Main, the Lumbee Cultural Center and even the Cozy Corner.

The Lumbee are supremely patriotic Americans, God-fearing and washed in the blood, devoted to the liberating cause of education and to civic involvement, proud of their community, loving and welcoming to strangers.

They are the best of America, and the only honorable course for the United States Congress is to accord them their due recognition at long last.

Mr. Speaker, I give my thanks to Representatives BUTTERFIELD, HUDSON, and GRIJALVA, and to Ranking Member ROB BISHOP, staunch supporters of the Lumbee's pursuit of justice, and also to President Trump. When I had the right moment to bring this to the President's attention, in characteristic practice, he made no promises other than to give it a close look. When he decided to throw his support behind recognition, he did it all the way, including traveling to Lumberton to tell the Lumbee himself.

Today is a gratifying capstone for my first partial term in the U.S. House.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to unanimously pass the Lumbee Recognition Act.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD).

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman very much for yielding time this afternoon.

I rise, Mr. Speaker, in strong support of H.R. 1964, the Lumbee Recognition Act, and I urge my colleagues to vote for its passage.

Mr. Speaker, let me just take a moment to thank the chairman of the committee—he is not here today—Mr. GRIJALVA. I thank him so very much for his friendship and for his leadership on this issue. I thank Mr. HUFFMAN for managing the floor today and recognizing me for just a few moments. And to the ranking member, Mr. BISHOP from Utah, I thank him so very much. He is the ranking member of the committee, and I thank him for his leadership as well.

Mr. Speaker, I particularly want to thank Mr. HUDSON—I don't see Mr. HUDSON on the floor, but I know he is very close by—and my friend, Mr. BISHOP from North Carolina. I thank both of them for their unwavering support for this legislation.

I might say that Robeson County—someone mentioned “Robeson County” a few moments ago; it is actually

“Robeson County”—is a part of Mr. BISHOP's Ninth Congressional District.

This bill, Mr. Speaker, will finally extend full Federal recognition to the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, making its members eligible for the same services and benefits provided to members of other federally recognized Tribes. Most importantly, the bill will establish once and for all the Lumbee Tribe as an independent and sovereign entity under Federal law.

North Carolina, as Mr. BISHOP, I believe, or Mr. HUFFMAN mentioned a moment ago, has recognized the Lumbee Tribe since 1885. This body even recognized the Lumbees in the 1950s, but during the dark days of the termination era, they refused to allow the Lumbee Tribe access to federally funded services and benefits.

Almost all the Tribes that were terminated in this troubling era have since been restored to Federal recognition. We are long overdue in delivering the same justice to the Lumbee Tribe.

This legislation, Mr. Speaker, has tremendous bipartisan support, as you can see today, tremendous bipartisan support that has only accelerated over the past few months.

At the end of September, under Chairman GRIJALVA's leadership, the Natural Resources Committee passed this bill by a voice vote. It was non-controversial. Shortly thereafter, Democratic Leader STENY HOYER announced his support for full Federal recognition for the Lumbee Nation and his intention to bring the bill to the floor.

Mr. HOYER told me, and he told Chairman Godwin in a telephone call a few weeks ago, that he would bring this bill, H.R. 1964, to the floor on November 16. Today is November 16.

□ 1615

During the Presidential campaign, Joe Biden gave his unconditional support to this legislation, and President Trump, as Mr. BISHOP said, did so as well.

Now is the time for the House to get this done. When this legislation passes, it is my fervent hope that our Senate colleagues from both parties will support passage and send it to the President's desk for his immediate signature.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, let me remind the House that this legislation has been before this body many times over the years since I have been in Congress. I recall Democratic Congressman Mike McIntyre repeatedly introducing this legislation. In the 110th and the 111th Congress, the House passed this legislation, but it never ever saw the light in the other body.

It appears that the legislation now has the support of Senators BURR and TILLIS. I am not suggesting that they didn't support it previously. It was another time and another Congress, but it appears that the legislation has the support of Senator BURR and Senator TILLIS and it should be favorably considered in the Senate.

Therefore, I respectfully ask my colleagues to extend a hand of friendship to the 66,000 members of the Lumbee Nation and grant them their long overdue full Federal recognition.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to vote “aye” on H.R. 1964.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD an email from the CBO. While we do not have an official CBO score, we do have this email today confirming that the bill will not affect direct spending or revenues.

From: Jon Sperl

Sent: Monday, November 16, 2020 12:06 PM

To: Lim, Sarah

Cc: Urbina, Luis

Subject: RE: HR 1964 (Lumbee Recognition)

MORNING SARAH: My manager has informed me that she won't be able to get to the Lumbee bill today.

For your purposes: HR 1964 would increase discretionary spending. The legislation would not affect direct spending or revenues.

Cheers,

JON.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this longstanding issue has been one that has been before many Congresses, so I appreciate Mr. BUTTERFIELD for his efforts and Mr. BISHOP—both of them North Carolina Representatives—for bringing their State together and coming up with a cooperative way of doing it.

The issue with the Lumbees goes back to 1956, as has been mentioned, but also had, starting in 1988 and 1989 and finishing in the last administration, conflicting opinions from solicitors of the Interior Department that have caused this problem regarding the Lumbee Tribe on what they may or may not pursue as far as administrative recognition or other issues that are dealt with.

So the proper way when there are conflicting opinions, especially coming from the executive branch, is for Congress to stand up and do its responsibility and its duty, and that is what H.R. 1964—which was a wonderful year for me; I remember it very well—does is allow Congress to do its responsibility by taking these conflicting opinions and stating what is the purpose and intent of Congress. This is the right way of doing things.

Far too often have we tried to use administrative shortcuts when, in essence, we find out that it produces long-term problems for us. So I commend Representative BISHOP from North Carolina, not only for a great name, but also for the fact that he is representing his constituency extremely well, and he is doing it in the proper way in bringing a piece of legislation to us through markup.

I appreciate, also, the letter that was mentioned by Mr. HUFFMAN as well, because it is significant. One of the things the majority party still has to do is make sure there is a CBO score attached to this bill, perhaps, before it

goes all the way through, but we have overlooked those in the past. We don't need to necessarily overlook them in the future going through there.

But I appreciate what the gentlemen are doing with this process. It is a positive thing, and I urge all of the Members who are here or who are not here to pass this one in the affirmative because it is something that needs to be done. I applaud those who have worked so hard to get unity within the delegation from North Carolina and move forward with it.

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

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I request an "aye" vote, and 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. HUFFMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1964, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### PROPER AND REIMBURSED CARE FOR NATIVE VETERANS ACT

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6237) to amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to clarify the requirement of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense to reimburse the Indian Health Service for certain health care services, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6237

*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 "Proper and Reimbursed Care for Native Veterans Act" or the "PRC for Native Veterans Act".

#### SEC. 2. CLARIFICATION OF REQUIREMENT OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE TO REIMBURSE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE FOR CERTAIN HEALTH CARE SERVICES.

Section 405(c) of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. 1645) is amended by inserting before the period at the end the following: " , regardless of whether such services are provided directly by the Service, an Indian tribe, or tribal organization, through purchased/referred care, or through a contract for travel described in section 213(b)".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN) and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to re-

vises and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material on the measure under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, the bill before us, H.R. 6237, is the PRC for Native Veterans Act, introduced by our colleague from Arizona, Representative GALLEGOS. This bill will ensure that Native veterans can access high-quality healthcare regardless of the system where they choose to seek it.

Providing for the healthcare of our veterans should be one of our top priorities, including the care of approximately 150,000 Native veterans who have served our country.

By law, a Native veteran is eligible to receive services under both the VA and Indian Health Service. They can choose which one of those to use at any given time.

In instances where a Native veteran is eligible for a particular healthcare service from both the VA and IHS, the VA is considered the primary payer. As such, the VA reimburses IHS and Tribal facilities for any direct care they provide.

Here is the problem that sometimes arises: It is with the Purchased/Referred Care Program, known as PRC. IHS and Tribal facilities are not always able to directly provide all of the necessary health services a Tribal member may need, and in order to bridge that gap, the PRC program was created. It authorizes the purchase of services from a network of private providers when care is not available at IHS or Tribal facilities.

During the permanent reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, Congress amended section 405(c) of that law to require the VA to reimburse IHS and Tribes for health services provided under that PRC program.

But the VA now claims that this language does not statutorily require them to reimburse specialty and referral services through IHS or Tribal facilities. The VA, instead, insists that the referral must come from them.

That creates problems. It means that the Native veterans who arrive at IHS or Tribal facilities needing specialty care are often forced to travel extreme distances to the nearest VA just to get a redundant primary care visit and a referral.

These extra steps cause significant hardship for many Native veterans and can delay critical care. The result is that many IHS and Tribal facilities are referring Native veterans out for specialty care and then just paying for it themselves with their already meager PRC fund so that the patient can be treated in a timely and competent manner.

This bill clarifies that the VA is responsible for reimbursing IHS and

Tribes for any specialty care provided through a referral by an IHS or Tribal facility.

I think we can all agree our Native veterans should have timely access to the quality of care they need no matter where they choose to access it.

I want to thank Representative GALLEGOS for championing this bipartisan legislation on behalf of all Native veterans, and I urge its quick adoption.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I, too, wish to support H.R. 6237, which is officially the Proper and Reimbursed Care for Native Americans Act. Over the last century, Native Americans have served in the U.S. armed services at a higher per capita rate than any other ethnicity, and with Veterans Day occurring last week at the same time as the opening of the Native American Veterans Memorial, I thank those who have served and continue to serve in this capacity.

Under current law, the Department of Veterans Affairs or the Department of Defense reimburses the Indian Health Services for any health-related services provided to Native Americans.

Unfortunately, not all Indian Health Services or Tribally operated facilities can provide every level of care, and some patients must be referred. For these situations, the VA or the DOD cannot reimburse the Indian Health Service or Tribal facility for certain services.

H.R. 6237 would amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to fix this problem and ensure that the Veterans Administration or the Department of Defense has authority to pay for the care Native veterans receive regardless of where those services are provided.

So I have to thank subcommittee Chairman GALLEGOS, who is, himself, a marine veteran, for his service and ensuring that Native Americans receive proper care.

I urge adoption of this measure, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I request an "aye" vote, and 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. HUFFMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6237, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### WOUNDED VETERANS RECREATION ACT

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 327) to amend the Federal Lands