

thank the gentlewoman from Texas for her comments. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TERRY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BURNS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3428.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REQUEST FOR REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 2028

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, due to the radical changes made by the committee to the introduced bill, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my name as a cosponsor from H.R. 2028.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 7(b) of rule XII, the Chair is constrained not to entertain that request, as the bill has been reported from committee and referred to the calendar.

JOE SKEEN FEDERAL BUILDING

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3734) to designate the Federal building located at Fifth and Richardson Avenues in Roswell, New Mexico, as the "Joe Skeen Federal Building."

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3734

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

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION.

The Federal building located at Fifth and Richardson Avenues in Roswell, New Mexico, shall be known and designated as the "Joe Skeen Federal Building".

SEC. 2. REFERENCES.

Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the Federal building referred to in section 1 shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Joe Skeen Federal Building".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BURNS) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes.

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

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

H.R. 3734, introduced by my colleague, the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON), designates the Federal building located at Fifth and Richardson Avenues in Roswell, New Mexico, as the Joe Skeen Federal Building.

Congressman Skeen was born and raised on his family's farm outside of Roswell, New Mexico. In 1948, Congressman Skeen enlisted in the United States Navy and served for 1 year before transferring to the United States Air Force Reserves, where he served from 1949 until 1952.

Following his military service, Congressman Skeen attended and graduated from Texas A&M University with a degree in agricultural engineering.

After graduation, Congressman Skeen worked as a soil and water engineer for the Zuni and Ramah Navajo Indians. He later purchased and ran his family's sheep ranch.

Congressman Skeen was long dedicated to public service. He was first elected to public office in 1960 where he won a seat in the New Mexico State senate. He served until 1970. For the last 6 years of his time in the State senate, he served as the minority leader.

In 1980, Congressman Skeen ran as a write-in candidate and was elected to serve in New Mexico's 2nd District in the United States House of Representatives. Congressman Skeen served in this body for 11 terms.

Congressman Skeen was known for his commitment to property rights, balancing the Federal budget and increased tax relief. He may have been most influential as chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies, enhancing the agricultural viability in both New Mexico and throughout the United States. He was also chairman of the Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies, dealing with natural resources and public land use.

I support this legislation and encourage my colleagues to do the same.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

H.R. 3734 is a bill to designate the Federal building in Roswell, New Mexico, as the Joe Skeen Federal Building, in honor of a former Member here, Congressman Joe Skeen.

Congressman Skeen was born in Roswell, New Mexico, in 1927, and as a young man, he served a 1-year enlistment in the Navy and served in the Air Force Reserves from 1949 to 1952. In 1950, he got his Texas marks by graduating from Texas A&M University.

He was elected to Congress in 1980 as a write-in candidate in the general election. He was only the third person in the Nation's history to win a U.S. House seat through this type of effort. For more than 2 decades, he served the people of the 2nd district in New Mexico with distinction and devotion, and I had the pleasure of serving with him.

As Congressman, he focused his energy and interests on agriculture, national defense, and public land management. In 1985, he became a member of the House Committee on Appropriations, and in 1995, he became Chair of the Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies. At the beginning of the 107th Congress, he was named the Chair of the Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies.

One of Congressman Skeen's major legislative accomplishments was to ensure the opening of the waste isolation pilot plant, the Nation's first repository for defense-related waste. Concerned about the public's health and safety and the environment, Congressman Joe Skeen worked tirelessly to advance storage of Federal waste.

He supported legislation to maintain the viability of the agricultural industry. He also has been a leader in supporting legislative initiatives on a balanced budget, crime education and military spending. He is an unapologetic advocate of local control, insisting that citizens make their own determination and not let the legislature do it for them.

Congressman Skeen was well respected on both sides of the aisle. He was an earnest and capable legislator, a worthy adviser and a true gentleman devoted to his family and dedicated to his constituents. His goodwill and humor are missed by all of us.

It is fitting and proper to honor Joe Skeen's life and public service with the designation of the Federal building in Roswell, New Mexico, as the Joe Skeen Federal Building.

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

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to my colleague, the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON).

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, when Joe Skeen was elected to the Congress, one of the first acts that he introduced in 1981 was legislation to name the Federal building in Las Cruces, New Mexico, after the man he replaced, the late-Congressman Harold Runnels, and I believe it is appropriate 23 years later to return the favor.

Joe Skeen won his election with a successful write-in campaign. It was only the third such victory in the history of the United States Congress, and during his nearly 22 years in the House of Representatives, he was a defender, a staunch defender, of New Mexico's rural lifestyle and its farming and ranching interests.

Even as Parkinson's began to claim his speech in his later years, Joe's sense of humor remained intact, and it is one of the things that all of us here treasure about him. Just about everybody in this body has a Joe Skeen story, something that makes us smile. One always knew if they had to go to talk to Joe about something, they might as well start smiling because before it was over he was going to make them laugh.

After 11 terms in the United States Congress, Joe decided to return to his ranch, a place that he described as being "at the center of my upbringing and which shaped my character and principles in life."

Joe's ranch in Picacho is 17 miles from pavement, and Joe was never a gentleman farmer. He was a farmer, a rancher and a gentleman. He could be