

Character does count, respect for the truth, respect for hard work, respect for each other. He demonstrated that as a role model. So I thank him. I thank the members of the Committee on Government Reform and the Subcommittee on Postal Service for bringing this bill out on the floor of the House. So I ask people to vote for it.

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

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time we have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GIBBONS). The gentleman Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) has 8 minutes remaining.

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

Mr. Speaker, as I listened to the distinguished gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ), I could not help, Mr. Speaker, but think about my own life in South Baltimore and watching Roberto Clemente on television.

I just want the gentleman from Illinois to know, Mr. Speaker, that he is absolutely right. Roberto Clemente was more than a hero to just the Puerto Rican community or Hispanic community, but he was a hero to all of us. When we look at what he accomplished in his life, he not only touched the Hispanic and Puerto Rican community, but he touched the world. He touched the world in a way that we could probably never do right by in these proceedings.

1515

Last but not least, I was also very moved, Mr. Speaker, by the comments of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ), when he talked about the naming of a post office so that the children could have an opportunity to see that name on that post office. Many, many years from now, when that post office stands and that name is up there, it may be so long from now that somebody may say, well, who was that. The fact is that somebody will know who he was and will know that he came upon this Earth, he saw it, he looked and said, I can make a difference by simply being the best that I can be, working hard, and giving to mankind.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the gentleman for this bill. I want to thank the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) and the entire committee for making sure this bill got to the floor, and I urge all my colleagues to vote in favor of it.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GIBBONS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4831, as amended.

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

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to redesignate the

facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2339 North California Avenue in Chicago, Illinois, as the 'Roberto Clemente Post Office'."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

SENSE OF CONGRESS WITH RESPECT TO POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 163) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to postpartum depression.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 163

Whereas postpartum depression is the name given to a wide range of emotional, psychological, and physiological reactions to childbirth including loneliness, sadness, fatigue, low self-esteem, loss of identity, increased vulnerability, irritability, confusion, disorientation, memory impairment, agitation, and anxiety, which challenge the stamina of the new mother suffering from postpartum depression and can intensify and impair her ability to function and nurture her newborn(s);

Whereas as many as 400,000 American women will suffer from postpartum depression this year and will require treatment. This constitutes up to 20 percent of women who give birth. Incidence of mild, "transitory blues" ranges from 500 to 800 cases per 1,000 births (50 to 80 percent);

Whereas postpartum depression is the result of a chemical imbalance triggered by a sudden dramatic drop in hormonal production after the birth of a baby, especially in women who have an increased risk. Those women at highest risk are those with a previous psychiatric difficulty, such as depression, anxiety, or panic disorder. Levels of risk are greater for those with a family member suffering from the same, including alcoholism;

Whereas women are more likely to suffer from mood and anxiety disorders during pregnancy and following childbirth than at any other time in their lives. 70 to 80 percent of all new mothers suffer some degree of postpartum mood disorder lasting anywhere from a week to as much as a year or more. Approximately 10 to 20 percent of new mothers experience a paralyzing, diagnosable clinical depression;

Whereas many new mothers suffering from postpartum depression require counseling and treatment, yet many do not realize that they require help. It is imperative that the health care provider who treats her has a thorough understanding of this disorder. Those whose illness is severe may require medication to correct the underlying brain chemistry that is disturbed. This often debilitating condition has typically been a silent condition suffered privately by women because of the feelings of shame or guilt;

Whereas postpartum depression frequently strikes without warning in women without any past emotional problems, without any history of depression and without any complications in pregnancy. Postpartum depression strikes mothers who are in very satisfying marriages as well as those who are sin-

gle. It strikes women who had easy pregnancies and deliveries, as well as women who suffered prolonged, complicated labors and caesarean section deliveries. Symptoms may appear at any time after delivery, often after the woman has returned home from the hospital. It may strike after the first, third, or even fourth birth;

Whereas postpartum depression is not a new phenomenon. Hippocrates observed the connection between childbirth and mental illness over 2,000 years ago. Louis V. Marce, a French physician, detailed the identifiable signs and symptoms of postpartum depression in 1858;

Whereas the most extreme and rare form of this condition, called postpartum psychosis, hosts a quick and severe onset, usually within 3 months. 80 percent of all cases of this more extreme form present within 3 to 14 days after delivery with intensifying symptoms; once suffered recurrence rate with subsequent pregnancies is high;

Whereas postpartum mood disorders occur after the mother has had frequent contact prenatally with health care professionals who might identify symptoms and those at risk. In the United States, where medical surveillance of new mothers often lapses between discharge from the hospital and the physical checkup 6 weeks later, the recognition of postpartum illness is left mainly to chance. The focus of the 6-week checkup is on the medical aspects of her reproductive system and not her mental health;

Whereas having a baby often marks one of the happiest times in a woman's life. For 9 months, she awaits her child's birth with a whole range of emotions ranging from nervous anticipation to complete joy. Society is quite clear about what her emotions are expected to be once the baby is born. Joy and other positive feelings are emphasized, while sadness and other negative emotions are minimized. It is culturally acceptable to be depressed after a death or divorce but not by the arrival of an infant. Because of the social stigma surrounding depression after delivery, women are afraid to say that something is wrong if they are experiencing something different than what they are expected to feel. Mothers are ashamed, fearful, and embarrassed to share their negative feelings and can also be fearful of losing their babies;

Whereas treatment can significantly reduce the duration and severity of postpartum psychiatric illness;

Whereas postpartum depression dramatically distorts the image of perfect motherhood and is often dismissed by those suffering and those around her. It is thought to be a weakness on the part of the sufferer—self-induced an self-controllable;

Whereas education can help take away the "stigma" of postpartum depression and can make it easier to detect and diagnose this disorder in its earliest stages, preventing the most severe cases;

Whereas at present, the United States lacks any organized treatment protocol for postpartum depression. Sufferers have few treatment resources. The United States lags behind most other developed countries in providing such information, support, and treatment;

Whereas the United States Government and its agencies collect very little data on postpartum illness;

Whereas if early recognition and treatment are to occur, postpartum depression must be discussed in childbirth classes and obstetrical office visits, as are conditions, such as hemorrhage and sepsis;

Whereas early detection, diagnosis, and treatment of postpartum illness will become easier if public education is enhanced to lift the social stigma, thereby increasing the chance that women will inform others of her