

It is fitting and proper to honor the distinguished Judge Watson with this designation, and I urge support for the bill.

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

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise with great enthusiasm in support of H.R. 1018, the bill designating the building located at 1 Federal Plaza in New York City as the "James L. Watson United States Court of International Trade Building."

I first introduced this bill in the 107th Congress when it was passed in the House but failed to be brought up in the hectic closing days of the Senate. I commend Chairman YOUNG and Ranking Member OBERSTAR for their commitment to this initiative and willingness to move the legislation early in the 108th Congress. I look forward to speedy action in the Senate to ensure enactment of this legislation that honors one of this nation's greatest jurists.

This bill will attach Judge Watson's name to the courthouse housing the U.S. Court of International Trade where he served for 36 years until his death, having achieved senior status in 1991. He was appointed to what was then the United States Customs Court in 1966 by President Lyndon B. Johnson. Reorganized and renamed by Congress in 1980, the court deals primarily with matters involving trade, including the classification and valuation of imported goods, tariffs, customs and duties and charges of unfair practices by U.S. trading partners.

Judge James L. Watson, who died at the age of 79 in the fall of 2001, was a fine man, a distinguished jurist and a pillar of the Harlem community where he was born. I was honored to have served as one of his law clerks soon after my graduation from law school.

Judge Watson was the nation's most senior African American federal judge, and was the first Black Customs Court judge in modern times assigned to cases in the deep South. As was the practice in the Customs Court, he was also assigned to preside over various criminal and civil matters in Federal District Courts across the country.

The scion of an accomplished family of lawyers, public servants and business people with roots in Jamaica, West Indies, Judge Watson had a distinguished career in New York, prior to his service on the Court of International Trade. After his service in the U.S. Army in WWII, he graduated from New York University and Brooklyn Law School. Moving from the private practice of law into the political arena, he was elected to the New York State Senate, where he served from 1954 to 1963, when he was elected to the Civil Court.

Long before this legislation, Judge Watson had placed his stamp on the functioning of the Court of International Trade. In 1970, he helped modernize the court, bringing it more in line with the rest of the federal judiciary and, as chairman of its committee on rules and practices, was instrumental in rewriting its rules and communications systems.

Judge Watson was a trailblazer in government and the law, with a reputation for fairness, good judgment, and the common touch with people. I will never be able to thank him enough for his service to our community and to our nation. More personally, I will be forever grateful for the opportunity he provided me as a young lawyer and the wisdom he instilled, which guides me to this day.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1018, a bill to designate the court of international trade building at 1 Federal Plaza in New York City as the "James L. Watson United States Court of International Trade Building." The House passed legislation regarding this designation in the 107th Congress, unfortunately, the other body never acted. I am glad that the House is acting on this bill early in the session so that there will be ample opportunity for the other body to complete action on it during this Congress.

Judge Watson, a native New Yorker, was born in Harlem in 1922 and lived and worked his entire life in New York. During World War II, he served with the legendary Buffalo Soldiers Division in the 371st Infantry Regiment, 92nd Division in World War II. After being wounded during service in Italy, he was decorated with a Purple Heart, the Battle Star, the Combat Infantry Badge, and a U.S. Army Commendation.

After the war, Judge Watson graduated from New York University in 1947 and from Brooklyn Law School in 1951. He was elected to the New York State Senate in 1954. In 1962, President Kennedy selected him to accompany then Vice-President Johnson to the Jamaican Independence celebration. In 1963, he was appointed to the Civil Court of New York and hired our colleague CHARLIE RANGEL as one of his staff attorneys. Congressman RANGEL has said: "Judge Watson was my friend and constituent for many years; he was the Judge for whom I clerked after completing law school; and the man who contributed with all of his heart to his family, his community and our Nation."

President Johnson appointed Judge Watson in 1966 to what was then known as the United States Customs Court, now known as the United States Court of International Trade. During his years on the Court of International Trade, he worked to help modernize the Court and facilitated the introduction of computers into the courtroom. After 36 years on the bench, Judge Watson took senior status in 1991. He passed away at his home in Harlem in 2001.

Mr. Speaker, Judge Watson was the Nation's most senior ranking African-American Federal judge and enjoyed a national reputation for handling or fair and just sentences. He was a sought-after public speaker, who served on both the Board of Visitors of Fordham University and the board of the Harlem YMCA. Judge Watson's life serves as a model of diligence, hard work, and fairness. Many, many people, including colleagues, politicians, and other lawyers, sought the wise advice and sage counsel of Judge Watson.

I urge all Members to support H.R. 1081 and honor Judge Watson by naming the building in which he served with distinction for over three decades in his honor.

Mr. LATOURETTE. 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 Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1018.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 166 and H.R. 1018.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

COMMEMORATING 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF ORPHAN DRUG ACT AND NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR RARE DISORDERS

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 147) commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the Orphan Drug Act and the National Organization for Rare Disorders, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 147

Whereas Congress passed, and President Ronald Reagan signed into law on January 4, 1983, the Orphan Drug Act;

Whereas there are many diseases and conditions, such as Huntington's disease, myoclonus, ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease), Tourette syndrome, and muscular dystrophy, that affect such small numbers of individuals—populations under 200,000—residing in the United States that the diseases and conditions are considered rare;

Whereas there are 6,000 known rare diseases and conditions, affecting approximately 25,000,000 Americans;

Whereas these rare diseases and conditions are sometimes referred to as "orphan" diseases and conditions, and drugs (including biological products) to treat them are sometimes referred to as "orphan drugs";

Whereas, prior to 1983, because so few individuals were affected by any one orphan disease or condition, a pharmaceutical company that developed an orphan drug may have reasonably expected the drug to generate relatively small sales in comparison to the cost of developing the drug and, therefore, to incur a financial loss;

Whereas the object of the Orphan Drug Act was to stimulate the development of orphan drugs;

Whereas the Orphan Drug Act is one of the most successful Federal laws enacted in the last 20 years;

Whereas, prior to 1983, less than 40 therapies existed to treat orphan diseases and conditions as compared today to the more than 238 drugs, foods, and devices that now exist to treat an estimated 11,000,000 patients in the United States;

Whereas 85 percent of orphan drugs are being used to treat serious or life-threatening diseases, 31 percent treat rare forms of cancer, and approximately 50 percent are approved for pediatric uses;

Whereas the National Organization for Rare Disorders, established in 1983, is a federation of voluntary health organizations dedicated to helping people with orphan diseases and conditions and assisting the organizations that serve them; and