

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO RUTH LARABEE ON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 7, 2004

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay special tribute to Mrs. Ruth Larabee, upon her retirement from her position as the Director of the Wood County Department of Job and Family Services in Bowling Green, Ohio.

Ruth Larabee grew up in the small community of Landeck, Ohio, in Allen County where the leadership skills which have served her well over the years were instilled at an early age. Ruth graduated from Notre Dame College in South Euclid, Ohio with majors in biology and physical science. Upon graduation, Ruth began her career of serving others by teaching Junior High School. When Ruth became a mother of six, she stopped teaching so that she could dedicate all her time and resources to raising her children.

Mr. Speaker, as Ruth's children grew; she accepted a position with the WSOS Head Start Administration. It was in this capacity that she embarked on a career of compassion, always wanting to assist those less fortunate.

Ruth accepted her current position as Director of the Wood County Department of Job and Family Services in 1987, where she has provided constant leadership. Drawing upon her past experiences, she has brought stability and calm to an agency which has seen tremendous change. Despite shifts in public policy brought on by welfare reform, demands for increased services for children and the growing needs of the unemployed, Ruth has continued to be a steadfast leader.

As Director of the Wood County Job and Family Services, Ruth has displayed great leadership by effectively communicating the mission at hand and adapting to the ever changing world around her. Through her drive and leadership, Ruth has worked tirelessly to better the life of abused children, people in need of public housing, the elderly, and those desperately seeking employment. Through her 17 years of distinguished service to the residents of Wood County, Ruth leaves behind the legacy of an Agency inspired by dedication and compassion.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to Mrs. Ruth Larabee. Our communities are served well by having such honorable and giving citizens, like Ruth, who care about their well being and stability. We wish Ruth and her family all the best as we pay tribute to one of Ohio's finest citizens.

HONORING THE BAY SPECIAL CARE HOSPITAL

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 7, 2004

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to honor the faculty and staff of Bay Special Care Hospital of Bay City, Michigan, for providing 10 years of superior medical care to patients requiring extended care management. On July 15, 2004, the hospital, along with the community, will commemorate this special occasion.

Bay Special Care Hospital, a McLaren health service, opened in 1994, and is the first of its kind in Northeastern Michigan. The mission of Bay Special Care is to provide extended care to patients with complex medical needs and require a 25-day or longer stay. The hospital is staffed with a team of highly skilled healthcare professionals, who have committed themselves to providing each patient with intensive personalized care.

Bay Special Care has consistently received high marks for its service from the Michigan Department of Consumer and Industry Services and most importantly from the patients they serve. I commend these men and women for their dedication to detail and commitment to sustaining life.

Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honor and a pleasure for me to have this opportunity to recognize this outstanding group of medical professionals. Many families have benefited from their care and services. The staff considers it their duty and privilege to protect and defend human dignity and the quality of life for their patients. I am grateful for Bay Special Care's commitment to go beyond the ordinary when providing healthcare services. I ask my colleagues in the 108th Congress to please join me in paying tribute to the Bay Special Care Hospital for 10 years of outstanding service to the community.

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT FOR H.R. 4768, VETERANS MEDICAL FACILITIES MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2004

HON. ROB SIMMONS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 7, 2004

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I am introducing H.R. 4768, the Veterans Medical Facilities Management Act of 2004. This legislation will help address needs in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to modernize health care facilities, make better use of VA's existing portfolio of properties and dispose of unneeded properties over the next several years.

In legislation I introduced last year that was included in Public Law (P.L.) 108-170, the

Veterans Health Care, Capital Asset, and Business Improvement Act of 2003, a three-year program of delegated authorizations was established to allow the Secretary to update, improve, establish, restore or replace major VA health care facilities. Congress delegated authority to the Secretary to approve individual facility projects based on recommendations of an independent capital investments board and on criteria that places a premium on projects to protect patient safety and privacy; improve seismic protection; provide barrier-free accommodations; and improve VA patient care facilities in specialized areas of concern.

Many VA community based clinics operate in leased facilities. P.L. 108-170 did not provide the Secretary any new authority concerning execution of major medical facility leases. The Department has identified the need for authorization or renewal of major medical facility leases under title 38, United States Code, section 8104(a)(2) at a cost of approximately \$24 million in fiscal year 2005. This legislation would authorize leases in the Department's recommended locations as follows:

Site	Annual lease cost
Wilmington, North Carolina Outpatient Clinic	\$1,320,000
Greenville, North Carolina Outpatient Clinic	1,220,000
Norfolk, Virginia Outpatient Clinic	1,250,000
Summerfield, Florida Marion County Outpatient Clinic	1,230,000
Knoxville, Tennessee Outpatient Clinic	850,000
Toledo, Ohio Outpatient Clinic	1,200,000
Crown Point, Indiana Outpatient Clinic	850,000
Fort Worth, Texas Tarrant County Outpatient Clinic	3,900,000
Plano, Texas Collin County Outpatient Clinic	3,300,000
San Antonio, Texas Northeast Central Bexar County Outpatient Clinic	1,400,000
Corpus Christi, Texas Outpatient Clinic	1,200,000
Harlington, Texas Outpatient Clinic	650,000
Denver, Colorado Health Administration Center ...	1,950,000
Oakland, California Outpatient Clinic	1,700,000
San Diego, California North County Outpatient Clinic	1,300,000
San Diego, California South County Outpatient Clinic	1,100,000

This bill would also provide that the Department may enter into a long-term lease of up to 75 years for land to construct a new medical facility on the Fitzsimons Campus of the University of Colorado, in Aurora, Colorado. It is anticipated that this new VA facility will be a significant shared facility with the University. The extended lease authority will enable all parties to the relationship to obtain a higher level of confidence in planning and constructing an important health care facility for veterans throughout the intermountain west.

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