

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

fixing fences and working with his one hired hand, and hop in the truck and drive to Roswell, fly out, take a shower at his apartment in Washington and come to the floor of the House.

Throughout his service in the Congress, he kept a foot in both worlds, and the country and New Mexico benefited from it. He leaves behind a proud tradition of public service in which he has been a positive influence on many people's lives, including my own.

Joe died peacefully in his sleep of Parkinson's disease and its complications in Roswell, New Mexico, on December 7, 2003. His wonderful wife Mary was with him.

Joe was truly a great New Mexican. He will be deeply missed, and now, near his hometown in Roswell, New Mexico, there will be a building with his name on it. Every time people in Roswell walk by that building, they will look up and smile.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL).

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3734 and to honor Mr. Joe Skeen of New Mexico. Joe served New Mexico with distinction and dedication. During the 4 years we served together in the Congress, I found Joe to be a true gentleman and a statesman.

Today, I am pleased that we will be passing this legislation to name the Federal building in Roswell, New Mexico, after Joe. It is an excellent tribute to honor a great man.

One of the things I respected about him the most was his bipartisanship, and I think every Member of Congress, Democrat and Republican, every Member of this House, loved him for that. He loved this institution. He had a great sense of humor. He did not take this place, where we do this the serious business of the country, too seriously, and he would always have a good story or a quip.

It is difficult to capture with words the impact and the significance that Joe has meant not only to New Mexicans, but to the citizens of the United States and the institution of the Congress as well.

During his tenure as New Mexico's longest-serving U.S. House Member, he built a dedicated and talented staff on Capitol Hill. He was renowned for his tireless work on behalf of agrarian interests. Although he did not get the credit he deserved, he also helped steer millions of Federal dollars to our State.

I was proud to work with Joe on legislation that helped return mineral rights to the Acoma Pueblo. That bill, now Federal law, was easily steered through Congress by Joe's knowledge of the legislative process. While we were ultimately not as successful as we would have liked, we also fought to-

gether to change the dairy sections of the 2002 farm bill that were unfair to our State's strong milk and cheese industry. Through it all, I enjoyed working with him every step of the way.

Throughout his years of service, he was a model of integrity and truth. The way he approached his job is the way every elected official should, as a highly principled individual who stuck to his beliefs. He walked his talk. While we did not agree on everything, he always did what he believed in his heart to be true, and he always worked in a bipartisan way to accomplish important work.

Again, this is a deserved honor for a great public servant.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE).

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3734 would designate the Federal building located at Fifth and Richardson Avenues in Roswell, New Mexico, as the Joe Skeen Federal Building.

On December 7, 2003, the Nation lost a leader, but New Mexico lost a friend. As others have said, Joe Skeen was born in Roswell, New Mexico. He was an Aggie, and he stayed an Aggie for his whole life.

He joined the Navy and he served there. Again, that has been mentioned, but I do not think that other people realize just how much he saw the light when he left the United States Navy and scooted over to the U.S. Air Force, but as a former Air Force pilot, I recognized what was going on in his life.

He continued to see the real light when he saw Mary Helen Jones and married her in 1945. I will tell my colleagues that Mary and Joe continued to be favorites throughout their entire careers in New Mexico. Even today people say, "Tell Mary that we are thinking about her."

One of the most important things that people remember about Joe was his sense of humor, and I hear about that constantly. When I go to town hall meetings, they listen to me for 2 hours, and then the first thing they say is, "Joe Skeen was funny." I have enjoyed the comparisons. They also tell me that "Joe Skeen left big shoes to fill; make sure you fill them, son."

Joe was just a lifelong servant to the Nation and to the State. He has been recognized throughout New Mexico, though. They have begun to name different buildings after him already. He helped at New Mexico State University, New Mexico Tech, Holloman Air Force Base and White Sands, and those institutions have begun to name buildings after him. New Mexico Tech named their library after Joe Skeen. New Mexico State University named their new agricultural research building after Joe and Mary Skeen. Chaves County named their new administrative building after Joe Skeen, and New Mexico has named Highway 70, the Joe Skeen Highway.

Today, I am pleased the U.S. House of Representatives will act so that the

Federal Government will name a Federal building after Joe Skeen, who left after 22 years of service in this House of Representatives.

□ 1615

Mr. Skeen was a strong supporter of rural New Mexico and all that it requires. He supported roads, schools, medical care, electricity and water and sewage treatment plants. He was impartial when it came to serving the people of New Mexico.

Joe was tremendously respected. He was quiet, yet he had a demeanor that created respect. And his sense of humor disarmed people with grudges and helped all citizens realize that by working together we can solve the people's problems. Joe used to say, let us talk about what we can agree on, and we will work from there.

The people of New Mexico will never forget Mr. Skeen. He was a man of the people. People in the second district have expressed their love for him as I travel through the district. As I took my place in this national Congress and heard from his many friends, I realized he was just as respected nationally as he was in the state.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3734.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to thank the gentlewoman from Texas and the speakers here today as they honor Joe Skeen. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 3734 in naming the Federal Building in Roswell, New Mexico, for our former colleague.

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3734, a bill to name a federal building in Roswell, New Mexico as the "Joe Skeen Federal Building." We were all saddened when our dear friend and colleague retired at the end of the 107th Congress and passed away in December 2003. However, we were fortunate to serve with Joe and the people of New Mexico were better off because of his 20 years of service.

As Members of Congress, we often work with colleagues from different parts of the country and from across the aisle. It was a great privilege to have worked with Joe Skeen. Since his first election in 1980, he served on the Appropriations Committee, chairing the Subcommittee on Agriculture and then the Subcommittee on the Interior. Joe has always been a true gentleman and always told it like it was. When dealing with Joe, I always knew he would give me a fair hearing on an issue and try to accommodate me when he could and politely say "no" when he couldn't. I could also always depend on Joe telling me a good story to underscore the point he was making.

On a personal note, I had the pleasure of working with Joe to further the progress of Parkinson's Disease research in America. In 1999, along with my colleagues, Mr. EVANS, Mr. MARK UDALL, TOM UDALL, and Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. Skeen and I formed the Congressional Working Group on Parkinson's Disease.

Joe Skeen was a true leader in the fight against Parkinson's Disease. Over the years, the Working Group has sought to increase awareness among Members of Congress on Parkinson's related issues. Most importantly, the Working Group advocates for accelerated and increased funding for Parkinson's research in the hopes that we soon find the cure for what leading scientists call the most curable neurological disorder.

We will carry on the fight to cure Parkinson's, in part, inspired by the legacy of the great Joe Skeen. This bill ensures that the people of New Mexico and those around the country never forget our friend, Joe. I fully support its passage in honor of Joe Skeen—a true national treasure.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, 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. 3734.

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.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURNS. 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.R. 3428 and H.R. 3734, the measures just concluded by the House.

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

There was no objection.

THE ADOPTION TAX RELIEF GUARANTEE ACT

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1057) to repeal the sunset of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 with respect to the expansion of the adoption credit and adoption assistance programs.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1057

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 Adoption Tax Relief Guarantee Act".

SEC. 2. REPEAL OF APPLICABILITY OF SUNSET OF THE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND TAX RELIEF RECONCILIATION ACT OF 2001 WITH RESPECT TO ADOPTION CREDIT AND ADOPTION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.

Section 901 of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply to the amendments made by section 202 (relating to expansion of adoption credit and adoption assistance programs).”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

Michigan (Mr. CAMP) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP).

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1057, a bill to make permanent the adoption tax credit and assistance programs contained within the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Act, which we passed in 2001.

The importance of the Adoption Tax Relief Guarantee Act could not be clearer: helping abandoned children find safe, loving, permanent homes. Three years ago, we took a giant step forward. Our failure to act today would be an equally giant step backward.

The adoption tax credits were originally limited to 10 years. No child should have limits placed on their hopes, dreams, and opportunities for the future, and no loving parent willing to take a child in should be denied due to the financial burdens imposed by the adoption process. By voting in favor of H.R. 1057, we will eliminate the sunset and will make adoptions easier for all families for generations to come.

Adoptions can be prohibitively expensive. Licensed private adoption agencies charge fees ranging from \$4,000 to \$30,000. Independent adoptions can cost anywhere from \$8,000 to \$30,000. If the adoption tax credit is cut, the prior law level of \$5,000, many families will not be able to afford adoptions. Money may not be able to buy you love, but in the case of adoptions, it may keep you from it.

There are over 565,000 children in publicly-funded foster care waiting to be adopted. Even more are in the private system. Cutting the adoption tax credit will make it more difficult to move children out of foster care and into permanent homes. With H.R. 1057, we will permanently put the health and safety of children first and give our Nation's foster children a fighting chance. We cannot allow this credit to lapse. Over half a million children are counting on us to finish the job we started over a year ago.

Temporary is not an option for adoption, and it should not be for this tax credit either. I urge my colleagues to support this vital piece of legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, there is broad bipartisan support for assisting adoptive families in meeting their expenses. Helping families afford the cost of adopting children in loving homes is clearly a worthy policy, and targeted tax relief can help promote that goal. I, therefore, support this effort to eliminate the sunset provision in the current adoption tax credit, and I want to compliment my colleague, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP), for his work and leadership on this issue.

This extension is particularly worthwhile given the change in the adoption

tax credit that took effect last year. Let me just point that out, Mr. Speaker, the adoption tax credit now provides a guaranteed \$10,000 tax credit for the adoption of special-needs children who are classified as being more difficult to place for adoption because of certain factors, including physical, mental or emotional impairment. Prior to that change, it was very difficult for people adopting special-needs children to qualify for the tax credit. In fact, less than 15 percent did, because many of their expenses included in the adoption credit were already paid for.

We know that people who adopt children with special needs incur additional costs, including modifying their home to take care of the physical impairments of the child and other types of expenses. Now that we have modified the tax credit, those families can take advantage of this \$10,000 credit, and therefore, it is really helping deal with the placement of special-needs children, one additional reason why it is important for this tax credit program to continue without interruption, one additional reason why this legislation should pass.

My only regret about this legislation is that there was no effort to offset its cost. Relative to the other tax extensions, the cost of the adoption tax credit is relatively modest. Let me point out, Mr. Speaker, that the sunset provision is now in the year 2010. There are many other tax provisions that have much sooner sunset dates that we have not acted on yet and we need to deal with.

I support this change, and it has a modest cost, but I am sorry that we did not take advantage of this opportunity to close some tax loopholes, including those available to companies who ship jobs overseas, that could have offset easily the cost of this bill so we do not continue to add to the growing deficit.

The current budget deficit is \$422 billion in this fiscal year, and it is projected to grow to over \$1.6 trillion over the next 5 years. This amount will be added to a current overall of \$7.3 trillion. It should, therefore, be no surprise that we are about to raise our government debt limit for the third time in just the last 3 years. At some point, we are going to have to own up to the fact that we are simply passing on our obligations to our children rather than living within our means.

Mr. Speaker, I hope we will find a way to pay for this and other tax extenders through commonsense changes in the tax code. In the meantime, I support this extension of the adoption tax credit, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation but to continue to work for more responsible fiscal policies.

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

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I appreciate the gentleman's comments in support of the bill. I would like to say that we have confirmed with the