

my colleagues to render their full support for its adoption.

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, it is with pleasure that I yield 6 minutes to my good friend and the chief sponsor of this proposed bill, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD).

Mr. BAIRD. Madam Speaker, it is indeed an honor for me to be here along with such distinguished colleagues giving just praise and recognition to a nation which is a leader in a very, very difficult environment. I want to thank Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and the distinguished gentleman from American Samoa, and I particularly want to thank the chairman of the committee, Mr. LANTOS, for supporting and introducing this resolution.

We all know the Middle East is a region which is fraught with difficulties. If ever there is a region that needs and deserves models of courage, integrity and vision that is such a region, and if ever there were such models of integrity, vision and courage, Jordan and King Abdullah II are precisely those models.

In the most recent municipal elections, we saw not only a commitment to democratic reforms, but a commitment to moving forward with women's rights, and as many of us who have had the privilege traveling to Jordan know, the kingdom has been a real leader in this region, not only in promoting democratic reforms, but seeing that women are promoted to high positions of office within the cabinet and within the Parliament. It is a lesson that not only nations within the Middle East but within the world at large could benefit from.

In addition, the Kingdom of Jordan and King Abdullah II have led efforts to try to bring Islamic scholars from around the world to craft new visions for modern, pluralistic, tolerant and progressive visions of Islam, and the Oman declaration, which does not get nearly the attention it deserves, has been, I think, a visionary statement guiding and inspiring many people throughout the region.

In addition, I think it is worth saying that the Kingdom of Jordan has stepped up to try to help in the region. As we deal with the conflict in Iraq, they have provided valuable training to the Iraqi police and others. One of the challenges Jordan faces right now is the influx of nearly 1 million refugees, as was mentioned. This is a country that faces challenges in terms of energy costs, water availability, et cetera, and still, with all the challenges they face, they have reached out to try to assist others.

We have talked a lot in this body and elsewhere about the need for models in the Middle East in the hope that Iraq could one day become a model of democracy. I certainly share that hope. But I would say to my colleagues, we already have some very, very good

models in that region, and it is deserved that we would commend them and recognize them today. Jordan is precisely such a model. King Abdullah is precisely such a leader.

I am grateful that my colleagues today would take the time and the effort to recognize such achievements by such a courageous leader in such a wonderful country.

I would urge my colleagues to visit Jordan, to meet with their King, with the members of their Parliament and their cabinet officials, and I am sure they will share my sense of deep admiration and respect for what has been happening there.

So I urge passage of this legislation. I hope it marks a positive step, not only in recognition of Jordan, but a step in which this body finds ways to acknowledge the many positive achievements that are taking place in a region which we all know has many difficulties. But if we only focus on the difficulties or the bad news and we neglect the good news and the accomplishments, particularly when they are achieved by nations and individuals of such prestige and courage as Jordan, we would be missing a golden opportunity.

Thankfully, today, this House of Representatives will not miss that opportunity. We will acknowledge and recognize the recent elections and reforms by the Kingdom of Jordan and extend a hand of friendship and admiration to all the people of Jordan and to King Abdullah II himself.

With that, I thank all of those who cosponsored this legislation on both sides of the aisle. It truly has been a bipartisan effort.

Madam Speaker, I urge passage of this fine resolution.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I commend my good friend, the chief sponsor of this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 575, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1200

#### PERCY SUTTON POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the bill (H.R. 954) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 365 West 125th Street in New York, New York, as the "Percy Sutton Post Office Building".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 954

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

#### SECTION 1. PERCY SUTTON POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 365 West 125th Street in New York, New York, shall be known and designated as the "Percy Sutton Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Percy Sutton Post Office Building".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Vermont.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 954.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, as a member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I rise in support of H.R. 954, which designates the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 365 West 125th Street in New York City as the Percy Sutton Post Office Building. This measure, which has the support of the New York delegation, was unanimously reported from our committee on July 19, 2007.

Madam Speaker, I have many remarks that I can make about Mr. Sutton, somebody that I don't know but read about as a young man growing up in, of all places, Massachusetts and then Vermont. But whatever I say is not worth listening to when we have another member of the New York delegation, remarkable in his own right, who actually knows Mr. Sutton and I expect is going to share some of his good qualities and be somewhat silent on anything else that may not be appropriate stories about the interactions of these two terrific men.

So I am going to reserve my time, and when the appropriate moment comes, allow the distinguished Member from New York to speak on behalf of the merits of Mr. Sutton, where he will be forever commemorated by having his name on a post office in the great city of New York.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Thank you, Madam Speaker. I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Percy Sutton, a noted civil rights activist, lawyer and entrepreneur, has had numerous achievements in his lifetime. Today we honor Percy Sutton

with the naming of a post office in his hometown neighborhood of Harlem, New York.

Born in 1920 in San Antonio, Texas, he was the youngest of 15 children raised in a family with strong values in education. He found his niche at a young age with the Boy Scouts and rose to the rank of Eagle Scout. He attended Prairie View A&M University, Tuskegee Institute and Hampton Institute, and he earned his law degree from Brooklyn Law School.

As a teenager, he learned to fly small planes and worked as a stunt pilot at county fairs. Upon the U.S. involvement in World War II, he enlisted with the Army Air Corps but was rejected because of his race. Shortly after, he moved to New York where he was accepted into the Corps and flew with the legendary Tuskegee Airmen. His military service awarded him Combat Stars as an intelligence officer with the 332nd Fighter Group's Black 99th Pursuit Squadron.

Percy Sutton gained national recognition during the 1950s and 1960s as a close friend and lawyer to civil rights leader Malcolm X. Sutton had moved to the Harlem area of Manhattan and formed his own law firm with the help of his brother and a close friend. The area, as well as his firm, quickly became associated with the civil rights movement and current politics of the era.

Sutton ran unsuccessfully for public office, so he formed his own Democratic organization with other notable Harlem community leaders called the Harlem Clubhouse. He tried many cases during the 1960s defending the rights of many fellow African Americans in the Southern States. Still heavily interested in public service, he ran for and won an election to serve in the New York State Assembly in 1964.

His political career continued through the years and ended in the late 1970s. Over time and while still practicing law, he expanded his business by buying a radio station, the famous Apollo Theater, a local newspaper, and a cable television franchise.

Beyond his success in business, he has earned numerous awards for his charitable, civil rights and business achievements. Therefore, it is highly appropriate that we honor him with the naming of this post office.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL).

(Mr. RANGEL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to support the naming of this post office on 125th Street after Percy Ellis Sutton.

Madam Speaker, 125th Street is the economic corridor of the village of Harlem. It is the exciting comeback of a

community that is enjoying the creation of jobs through the Empowerment Zone. But it is also where our former President, Bill Clinton, has his offices and also one of the institutions that is driving it, the Apollo Theater. It is there because Percy Sutton brought it back from the ashes. So when tourists come and they see this wonderful new community that has come back, they will be able to look at our post office and maybe ask the question, but who was Percy Sutton?

Not too long ago, the President of the United States, George Bush, right here in the Capitol, gave the President's Congressional Gold Medal to the Tuskegee Airmen. My brothers and sisters, every day that we are fortunate enough to live in this great country, we fail to realize that we are making history, especially those of us who are honored to be elected.

As the House and Senate head toward getting the bill approved, with the help of Senator LEVIN on the other side, the President spoke to these people that sometime in 1941, black and as African American as they were, were denied the opportunity to join the United States Army Air Force in order to fight the enemies of the United States of America.

Under great protest, they were allowed to try a pilot project in Tuskegee in order to see whether the outrageous charges that they were cowardly, that they couldn't learn, and they never would be able to manipulate these fighter pilots were true. And while they shattered all of the myths and turned out to be one of the most decorated outfits that survived World War II, the President, as he looked at them right here in Statuary Hall, reminded them that he knew that even though they became officers, that many of the enlisted men refused to return the salutes to them because of prejudice, racism and discrimination.

But the President said that, on behalf of the people of the United States of America, allow him to salute them. It was so moving. There wasn't a dry eye in the whole group as these warriors, these courageous fighter pilots that have done so much for this country, were able to hear the present Commander in Chief and President of the United States thank them.

So, in a way we are privileged by naming this post office not to be able to thank each and every one of the Tuskegee Airmen, but to thank at least one of them that comes from the village of Harlem, that you would say that our "thank you" may not be a salute from the Commander in Chief, but we are saying thank you for having confidence in this country and having confidence in this democracy and giving us a chance to honor Percy Sutton.

He came back home, got involved in the NAACP, got involved in politics, became an assemblyman, became a borough president and became a well-known business person. But no matter what part of the United States you

come from, we have to take time out to thank those of us who made the sacrifice, and Percy Sutton is one of them.

So I am glad that this committee has come together to pay tribute to him, because by doing this, we pay tribute to ourselves and for those people who we don't know their names but have made sacrifices, so that we could have the honor to serve this great country.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers at this time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume for a closing remark.

Percy Sutton was the embodiment of the American Dream, and he did it as a man who grew up with the kind of prejudice that the chairman just alluded to. It is just an honor, I think, for all of us to have the kind of inspiration that a person like Percy Sutton has provided to our country, service in the military, and really the most decorated service unit in the whole war and accomplishing that against enormous obstacles. People didn't want them to serve, yet they did, and they had confidence in us and our country despite the fact many in our country did not have confidence or even respect for them.

Then his array of accomplishments in politics, as a civic leader, a commitment to this community. Harlem, which the chairman called a village, at many other times had really tough times, and this man had confidence that this community and the people in it had as much a future as any other American. He then acted with the skills that he possessed, the energy that he had, and made Harlem into what is now, a very vital community in the City of New York.

So the Committee on Government Operations, with support from both sides of the aisle, is very proud to be bringing to the House for its full consideration the naming of this post office in honor of a great American.

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to vote for H.R. 954, a bill I introduced to designate the post office located at 365 West 125th Street in Harlem as the Percy Sutton Post Office Building. I express sincere thanks to Chairman HENRY WAXMAN and Ranking Member and Member TOM DAVIS of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform as well as Chairman DANNY DAVIS and Ranking Member KENNY MERCHANT of the Subcommittee on Federal Workforce Postal Service, and District of Columbia for their support of this bill. It is appropriate to designate the post office in Mr. Sutton's honor because he worked at a New York post office as a clerk while attending law school.

Percy Sutton, my very dear friend, was born the youngest of fifteen children on November 24, 1920 in San Antonio, Texas. His family owned land, a farm, and a funeral home. His entrepreneurial spirit was developed while working for the family businesses as a youngster. He was educated at Prairie View A & M University, Tuskegee Institute, Hampton University, and Brooklyn College Law School.

His career as a public servant began in 1941, when he was selected to work in Army Intelligence during World War II as a member of the Tuskegee Airmen. Just prior to that selection, he was not allowed to fly fighter planes for the Army Air Corps because of racial discrimination. Despite being subjected to racial discrimination, he was committed to serve his country.

After an honorable discharge from the Army, he decided to study law. To support himself while attending law school, he worked for the United States Post Office in New York as a clerk during the evening shift and later as a conductor in the New York City subway system. He maintained this schedule for 3 years. His dedication to finish law school still inspires me today.

Motivated to fight racial discrimination, he represented the controversial revolutionary Malcolm X and other activists during the civil rights era. He also served as president of the New York chapter of the NAACP. His commitment to fight for justice and equality for African Americans was bold and admirable.

A strong interest in politics led him to campaign for the New York State Assembly several times. Finally, in 1964, he was elected and served for two years. Immediately thereafter he became the president for the Borough of Manhattan and remained in that role until 1977.

As an entrepreneur, his love of business and his Harlem community led him to purchase and totally revitalize the legendary Apollo Theatre in 1980. As the Harlem business district has flourished, the Apollo Theatre remains a community landmark and symbol. Another successful business venture he created is the Inner City Broadcasting Company, which housed the first African American owned radio station in New York. Today, there are nineteen radio stations in the Inner City network.

On March 29, 2007, I had the honor and privilege to see Percy Sutton honored with the Congressional Gold Medal along with over 300 other Tuskegee Airmen. It was a great day to see him and other African American veterans finally get the recognition that was so long overdue.

Percy Sutton is a great American and living legend. I'm certain America is a better place because of his contributions. Designating the post office building in Harlem is a great way to keep his legend alive for years to come. Since he is 86 years old and his health is fragile, I urge my colleagues to support this bill. I thank my New York delegation colleagues for cosponsoring this bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 954.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### NATIONAL PASSPORT MONTH

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules

and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 554) supporting the goals and ideals of National Passport Month.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

#### H. RES. 554

Whereas through international travel, Americans can individually play a major role towards improving foreign relations by building bridges and making connections with citizens of other countries;

Whereas interacting with the global community inspires Americans to reflect on the diverse multi-cultural background that has defined the United States as a great country of cooperation and progress;

Whereas having a passport and traveling abroad creates connections with the global community, supporting goodwill throughout the world;

Whereas having a passport and traveling abroad promotes understanding and goodwill throughout the world, opening the doors to increased peace, tolerance, and acceptance;

Whereas having a passport and traveling abroad opens up a preponderance of educational opportunities and experiences for Americans of all ages;

Whereas having a passport and traveling abroad enables Americans to see first-hand the effect of the United States on the world, including the tremendous amount of humanitarian aid given by the United States through both public and private sectors;

Whereas having a passport and traveling abroad reminds Americans that they are members of a global family and gives them opportunities to mend rifts around the world;

Whereas fewer than 23 percent of Americans have passports, thereby limiting their ability to travel outside the United States;

Whereas the more Americans travel outside the United States, the more they will experience opportunities to increase their understanding of the world and the place of the United States in it;

Whereas the creation and support of a National Passport Month signals to Americans the important role they can play as ambassadors for the United States by serving as agents of understanding, tolerance, and mutual respect; and

Whereas travel publishers along with travel editors from the most prestigious media outlets in the United States, student travel organizations, and book sellers have designated September as "National Passport Month" to educate the public about the importance of having a passport and the positive impact international travel has on individuals: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Passport Month; and

(2) requests that the President issue a proclamation calling on the Federal Government, States, localities, schools, nonprofit organizations, businesses, other entities, and the people of the United States to observe National Passport Month with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Vermont.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that

all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore: Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Vermont?

There was no objection.

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Madam Speaker, as a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I am pleased to join my colleague in the consideration of H. Res. 554. This supports the goals and ideals of National Passport Month. H. Res. 554, with 55 co-sponsors, was introduced by Representative BARBARA LEE on July 27, 2007. It was reported from the Oversight Committee on August 1, 2007, by a voice vote.

Madam Speaker, the creation and support of a National Passport Month signals to Americans the important role they can play as ambassadors for the United States by serving as agents of understanding, tolerance and mutual respect to citizens of other countries. The use of a passport and the desire to travel to other nations will bring personal enjoyment, enrichment and interest for both traveler and host, yet less than 25 percent of Americans have passports, thereby eliminating their ability to travel outside the United States. The passport and traveling abroad will create a connection with the global community and support goodwill throughout the world.

Madam Speaker, I commend my colleague, Representative BARBARA LEE from California, for supporting the goals and ideals of National Passport Month, and I support and urge the swift passage of this bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1215

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

September has been recognized by the tourism industry as National Passport Month in an effort to educate the public and increase awareness of the importance of having passports.

The tourism industry brings in more than \$80 billion annually to the U.S. economy. In helping our economy thrive, it also strengthens public diplomacy through each visitor. Similarly, Americans can improve foreign relations by traveling internationally and meeting with citizens of other countries.

The opportunities to learn different cultures, view history and exchange ideas are endless for those having passports. Interacting with the global community enables travelers to promote understanding and good will.

National Passport Month educates the public on the value and positive impact international travel has on individuals. Without passports, these opportunities could not be achieved. So, therefore, Madam Speaker, I encourage everyone to support H. Res. 554.