

the bill (H.R. 2496) to extend the authorization for the replacement of the existing Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Denver, Colorado, to make certain improvements in the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Reserving the right to object, I do not object, but I do want to thank my colleague from Colorado concerning what will be a short time to continue negotiations to finish our hospital in the Denver area.

As we come into this Memorial Day weekend, veterans in the Rocky Mountain West have waited 15 years for this hospital to be built. Substantial construction has taken place. Any further delay just delays delivering good services—great services—to our veterans.

We need to continue to move this along. The fact that we are moving beyond Memorial Day, keeping this project going forward, without mothballing it, is a step in the right direction; but, Mr. Speaker, I ask the majority and the Republican leadership to work with the VA to get this finished, so that we can provide the best medical care possible, similar to what Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS was talking about at her hospital in Washington. We want that same thing in Denver, Colorado.

We need to finish this hospital as soon as possible.

I withdraw my reservation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman withdraws his reservation.

Is there objection to the original request of the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. COFFMAN)?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2496

*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 “Construction Authorization and Choice Improvement Act”.

#### SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZATION FOR MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY CONSTRUCTION PROJECT PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may carry out the replacement of the existing Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Denver, Colorado, in fiscal year 2015, in an amount not to exceed \$900,000,000.

(b) LIMITATION ON OBLIGATION OF FUNDS.—Notwithstanding section 8104(c) of title 38, United States Code, or any other provision of law, funds may not be obligated or expended for the project described in subsection (a) in an amount that would cause the total amount obligated for that project to exceed the amount specified in the law for that project (or would add to total obligations exceeding such specified amount).

#### SEC. 3. CLARIFICATION OF DISTANCE REQUIREMENT FOR EXPANDED AVAILABILITY OF HOSPITAL CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES FOR VETERANS THROUGH THE USE OF AGREEMENTS WITH NON-DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ENTITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 101(b)(2) of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-146; 38 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B), by inserting “(as calculated based on distance traveled)” after “40 miles”; and

(2) in subparagraph (D)(ii), by striking subclause (II), and inserting the following new subclause (II):

“(II) faces an unusual or excessive burden in traveling to such a medical facility of the Department based on—

“(aa) geographical challenges;

“(bb) environmental factors, such as roads that are not accessible to the general public, traffic, or hazardous weather;

“(cc) a medical condition that impacts the ability to travel; or

“(dd) other factors, as determined by the Secretary.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act and apply with respect to care or services provided on or after such date.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 10 a.m. tomorrow.

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

There was no objection.

#### BENGHAZI ATTACK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, nearly 3 years, on September 11 and 12, 2012, the United States facilities in Benghazi, Libya, were the target of terrorist attacks. These attacks resulted in the deaths of four Americans: Sean Smith; Tyrone Woods; Glen Doherty; and the U.S. Ambassador to Libya, Chris Stevens, as well as two other Americans critically injured.

It comes at a time close to Memorial Day, when this country can honor these individuals that gave their life and their service not just for this country, but for the freedom and democracy around the world of others.

The gravity of the attacks raise serious questions regarding the U.S. presence in Benghazi, Libya, particularly as those questions related to the policies, decisions, and activities of the administration and relevant executive branch agencies before, during, and after the attacks.

For nearly 2 years, Congress sought answers to these questions. However,

the administration’s valid response has exposed the limits encountered by our standing committees.

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These responses revealed a less than competent or transparent accounting about the attacks. Consequently, the House created, with the support of our Democratic colleagues, the Select Committee on the Events Surrounding the 2012 Terrorist Attacks in Benghazi, Libya.

Everywhere I go, Mr. Speaker, I have people ask me: What is taking so long? What is taking so long for us to get the facts about what happened in Benghazi?

We are going to do our best today to explain to the American people and to the public and to you, Mr. Speaker, why it has taken so long, why it is requiring us to continue to subpoena and beg and plead for the information that we need to be able to deliver this report to this body and to the American people.

The Speaker appointed me and six of my Republican colleagues to this committee. The minority leader appointed five of our Democratic colleagues. We have been directed by the House to conduct a complete investigation across the spectrum of all, A-L-L, all relevant executive branch agencies and issue a definitive final report on the events surrounding the September 11-12, 2012, terrorist attacks in Benghazi, Libya.

Specifically, we are directed to investigate and report on: all policies, decisions, and activities that contributed to the attacks on United States facilities in Benghazi, Libya, on September 11 and 12, 2012, as well as those that affected the ability of the United States to prepare for those attacks; number two, all policies, decisions, and activities to respond to and repel the attacks on United States facilities in Benghazi, Libya, on September 11 and 12, 2012, including efforts to rescue United States personnel; number three, internal and public executive branch communications about the attacks on the United States facility in Benghazi, Libya, on September 11 and 12, 2012; number four, accountability for policies and decisions relating to the security of facilities in Benghazi, Libya, and the response to the attacks, including individuals and entities responsible for those policies and decisions; number five, executive branch authorities’ efforts to identify and bring to justice the perpetrators of these attacks on the U.S. facilities in Benghazi, Libya, September 11 and 12, 2012; number six, executive branch activities and efforts to comply with congressional inquiries into the attacks on the United States facilities in Benghazi, Libya, on September 11 and 12, 2012; recommendations for improving executive branch cooperation and compliance with congressional oversight investigations; information related to lessons learned from the attacks and executive branch