

I take my ranking member's comments to heart. I certainly hope that this study will not only evaluate and investigate how we can create a national forest in Hawaii but how we can make that a model for how national forests can and should be administered throughout our country. I endorse his concerns as to the administration of our national forests and, certainly, would look forward to working with him in our subcommittee and committee.

As we continue to identify solutions to our climate and biodiversity crises, I hope we can all see the value in taking this step toward protecting our unique forest resources and their native species, along with providing important opportunities.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, I thank the ranking member, Mr. WESTERMAN from Arkansas, for his positive comments and bipartisan spirit, and I thank Mr. CASE.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SOTO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 297.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mrs. GREENE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

NATIONAL PULSE MEMORIAL

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 49) to designate the National Pulse Memorial located at 1912 South Orange Avenue, Orlando, Florida, 32806, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 49

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

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION OF NATIONAL PULSE MEMORIAL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Pulse Memorial located at 1912 South Orange Avenue, Orlando, Florida, 32806, is designated as the “National Pulse Memorial”.

(b) EFFECT OF DESIGNATION.—The national memorial designated by this section is not a unit of the National Park System and the designation of the National Pulse Memorial shall not require or permit Federal funds to be expended for any purpose related to that national memorial.

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

Florida (Mr. SOTO) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the measure under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise, along with Representative DEMINGS and Representative MURPHY from central Florida, in strong support of our bill, H.R. 49.

Nearly 5 years ago, 49 angels lost their lives and 53 others were injured when a deranged gunman opened fire at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida.

You can see here photos of those who we lost, lives cut short.

This horrific act of hate and terror against our LGBTQ and Latino community, African-American community, and Anglo community could have divided us, but we came together stronger than ever before.

Orlando swore as a community to never forget those we lost that night. Their stories, their images, their memories, and their spirits must live on in our hearts.

We were all there for vigils in Orlando, where the bell rang 49 times for those angels we lost, and I am honored to say, across this Nation and all 50 States, and many countries, we saw vigils also recognizing it, which is why it is so critical that this is a national memorial, because it was truly a national and international tragedy.

To honor the fallen and survivors of this tragedy, I join my colleagues to introduce landmark legislation to designate the Pulse nightclub as a federally recognized national memorial site. This designation as a nonaffiliated National Park Service national memorial would not require Federal funds, but it would honor the 49 lives taken on June 12, 2016, as well as the survivors, the first responders who so heroically came to the rescue of so many others, and the entire central Florida community.

Together, we will open minds and hearts. We will make the Pulse Memorial a national symbol of hope, love, and change.

I would like to, again, thank my amazing colleagues, Congresswoman VAL DEMINGS and Congresswoman STEPHANIE MURPHY, for joining me in leading this important legislation, and I urge a “yes” vote.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 49, offered by my colleague from Florida (Mr. SOTO).

Nearly 5 years ago, on June 12, 2016, a senseless and horrific mass shooting was perpetrated by an ISIS-inspired coward at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida. In the attack, 49 innocent people were killed and 53 were wounded.

This bill, and the number H.R. 49, is a thoughtful tribute to the 49 individuals killed in the attack. In the aftermath of the unspeakable tragedy at Pulse, the owner of the club established a nonprofit called the onePULSE Foundation to memorialize those who died in the mass murder, known as the 49.

The foundation worked quickly to establish an interim memorial in Orlando and has been working to build a permanent Pulse memorial and museum, which will be completed in coming years.

This bill would redesignate the Pulse Memorial in Orlando, Florida, as the “National Pulse Memorial.” The bill makes clear that this memorial will not be a unit of the National Park System and that designation as a national memorial does not require any Federal funds to be expended.

The House’s action on this bill today complements the United States Senate resolution passed on June 11, 2020, honoring the victims of this tragedy, as well as the State of Florida’s designation of June 12 as Pulse Remembrance Day.

Madam Speaker, I urge adoption of the measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, I thank the ranking member, Mr. WESTERMAN from Arkansas, for his bipartisan support.

Madam Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS).

Mrs. DEMINGS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join us in supporting H.R. 49 to finally designate the Pulse nightclub as a national memorial in honor and remembrance of the 49 people who lost their lives on this tragic night 5 years ago.

“Orlando Strong” is more than just a slogan. It is a promise to support each other and to never forget those we lost and those who were injured on that tragic night. By establishing Pulse as a national memorial, we will honor their memories and remind ourselves of that promise.

My bishop once called the Pulse nightclub a place for late-night fellowship, a place for fun, laughter, family, and friendship. These are such fundamental things. We know this now more than ever. After the pandemic, we see just how precious these things truly are.

Madam Speaker, I thank the House for moving forward with this legislation. I thank my constituents. I thank the cosponsors, Congresswoman MURPHY and Congressman SOTO, for their work to make this day a reality.

As we pass this legislation, I know that the memories of those who died will live on in our hearts. They will not be defined by their tragic deaths through gun violence but by the lives they lived, the people they touched, and the love they gave.

Paraphrasing Dr. King: So I decided as an individual to stick with love because, yes, hate is too great of a burden to bear, and it has been on me, my community, my city, and my Nation for too long.

Madam Speaker, I thank my colleagues for joining us in supporting this legislation.

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

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SOTO) for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 49 to designate the Pulse nightclub as a national memorial site and to honor those whose lives were taken by a gunman with hate in his heart.

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I thank the gentleman for his leadership and his response with H.R. 49 along with Congresswoman MURPHY. I visited with Mr. SOTO in Florida near Orlando and actually toured the Pulse nightclub site, and what a poignant visitation that was.

Almost 5 years ago, the Nation awoke to the heartbreaking news of a mass shooting that unfolded at a nightclub in Orlando. Forty-nine lives were taken, and 53 others were injured. It was another devastating loss to the LGBTQ-plus community and our Nation.

The gunman had targeted Pulse nightclub, a nightclub frequented by Orlando's Latino and LGBTQ-plus communities. This was a safe place for many of the people who were there that night. The shooter violated a safe space where LGBTQ people, and, in this case, LGBTQ-plus people of color were able to be themselves and to live and dance freely without fear or judgment.

Our community—that is, the LGBTQ-plus community—is still healing from this attack, and families and friends are still mourning the loss of their loved ones. I will never forget waking up in my Washington, D.C. apartment as I was scrolling through the news, and I was just in disbelief that another shooting had occurred. Since then, we have had so many other senseless shootings.

By designating the Pulse nightclub as a national memorial site, we can always remember the vibrant lives of those we lost. This memorial will serve as a reminder that we cannot stop fighting for equality.

Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to vote “yes” on H.R. 49.

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

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California, Chair TAKANO, for taking the pilgrimage to the Pulse Memorial, along with me and others and listening and paying respects. So I appreciate that.

Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE).

Mr. CICILLINE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. Five years ago, 49 people were murdered in a violent, hate-filled, mass shooting at an LGBTQ nightclub in Orlando, the Pulse nightclub. I thank Congressman SOTO for his leadership and our colleagues, Congresswoman MURPHY and Congresswoman DEMINGS. I, too, had the opportunity to go to the site and to read the beautiful notes written about the young lives that were taken that night, and the very special place that Pulse was.

I was, in fact, in Florida this weekend with Barbara Poma, the owner of the Pulse nightclub, who was leading an effort to turn this site into not only a sacred place, but a museum. I shared with her what for young LGBTQ people nightclubs were and still are, a place of sanctuary, a safe place where people can be themselves where they go to dance, to be with friends, and to share a sense of community. That was all shattered by the brutality of the events of the evening in which this occurred.

This shooting was an act of terror and an act of hate. It left the Nation really grasping for answers. In the days that followed, we heard stories of incredible courage, bravery, and resolve. But mostly, there was unspeakable pain for those who lost someone in this attack.

Although I pray that the passage of 5 years has brought some measure of relief, the truth is that their pain will never fully go away. It is critical to designate this memorial today so that our country never forgets those who were lost. Congressman SOTO will remember we had on the steps of the Capitol a beautiful remembrance with full-sized photographs of each of these young people who had so much to give and so much to offer whose lives were taken that night.

But in addition to remembering, it is also important that we take action to do everything we can to make sure that nothing like this ever happens again. Individuals who are convicted of hate crimes should never own a gun, and that is why I plan to reintroduce the Disarm Hate Act to do just that, because we know if you commit a hate crime, it often escalates and those crimes become increasingly violent as time goes on. No American family should have to suffer because of the loophole that currently exists today. Let's disarm hate once and for all.

Today, we remember the 49 young lives lost at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando. Let's be sure that we designate this memorial officially, so that everyone will know the story of what hap-

pened to these young people who were killed because they were in a place of sanctuary, and safety, and community, but because they were members of the LGBTQ community, our allies.

Madam Speaker, I thank again the gentleman for yielding and for his incredible leadership on this issue, and I urge all my colleagues to vote “yes.”

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

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) for making the pilgrimage and paying his respects at the memorial.

Madam Speaker, at this time, I have no further requests for time, and I would inquire whether my colleague has any remaining speakers on his side.

Mr. WESTERMAN. In closing, Madam Speaker, again, I urge adoption of H.R. 49, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, I thank the ranking member, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and our colleagues across the aisle for their bipartisan support of this really important bill for our Nation. I thank also Representatives DEMINGS, MURPHY, CICILLINE, and TAKANO for their support here today.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SOTO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 49.

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.

BLACKWATER TRADING POST LAND TRANSFER ACT

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 478) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to take certain land located in Pinal County, Arizona, into trust for the benefit of the Gila River Indian Community, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 478

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 “Blackwater Trading Post Land Transfer Act”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) BLACKWATER TRADING POST LAND.—The term “Blackwater Trading Post Land” means the approximately 55.3 acres of land as depicted on the map that—

(A) is located in Pinal County, Arizona, and bordered by Community land to the east, west, and north and State Highway 87 to the south; and

(B) is owned by the Community.

(2) COMMUNITY.—The term “Community” means the Gila River Indian Community of the Reservation.