

AUTHORIZING SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO TRANSFER NAMES OF FACILITIES, STRUCTURES, OR REAL PROPERTY OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. TRONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 3527) to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to transfer the name of property of the Department of Veterans Affairs designated by law to other property of the Department.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 3527

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

SECTION 1. AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO TRANSFER NAMES OF FACILITIES, STRUCTURES, OR REAL PROPERTY OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 531 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by striking “Requirement” and inserting “Requirements”;

(2) by striking “Except as expressly provided by law” and inserting the following:

“(a) NAMING LIMITATION.—Except as expressly provided by law or as authorized under subsection (b)”;

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) TRANSFER OF NAMES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may transfer the name of covered property of the Department to other covered property of the Department if—

“(A) the original covered property was designated with that name by law;

“(B) the Department no longer offers benefits or services at the original covered property;

“(C) the other covered property is similar in type and purpose as the original covered property;

“(D) the other covered property is located in a different location or at a different address from the original covered property within the town, city, or other local government area specified in the designation made by such law; and

“(E) such transfer occurs not less than 30 days after the Secretary notifies the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate, the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives, and each member of Congress representing the State in which the original covered property and other covered property are located of the intent of the Secretary to transfer the name of the original covered property to the other covered property.

“(2) REFERENCES.—If the Secretary transfers the name of covered property under paragraph (1), any reference in a law, regulation, map, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the covered property originally named by law shall be deemed to be a reference to the covered property to which the name has been transferred under such paragraph.

“(3) COVERED PROPERTY.—In this subsection, the term ‘covered property’ means a facility, structure, or real property of the Department or a major portion (such as a wing or floor) of any such facility, structure, or real property.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 5 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 531 and inserting the following new item:

“531. Requirements relating to naming of Department property.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. TRONE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TRONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on S. 3527.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in support of S. 3527, a commonsense piece of legislation introduced by the chairman of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee, JON TESTER.

The purpose of this bill is to ensure the Secretary has the authority to transfer the name of a facility to another physical property should VA decide it needs to relocate the facility. Such a relocation could occur if there is a need to increase clinic space or to move a facility closer to the veteran population.

I hope my colleagues see the benefit of such authority and will join me in supporting this legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 3527.

When Congress acts to name a VA medical facility in law, the name should stay with that facility even if it moves to another location in the same area. That is common sense, and it is what this bill would allow.

A lot of thought and hard work goes into honoring a veteran or other individual by naming a VA facility after them. The person who is honored this way often has a storied history that becomes important to the veterans served by that facility. That should not be taken away, and it should not be taken lightly.

I am grateful to Senator TESTER for his work on this legislation. I urge all of my colleagues to join in supporting this bill today, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TRONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in passing S. 3527, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. TRONE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 3527.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina. Mr. 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.

DANIEL KAHIKINA AKAKA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINIC

Mr. TRONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1760) to designate the community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs planned to be built in Oahu, Hawaii, as the “Daniel Kahikina Akaka Department of Veterans Affairs Community-Based Outpatient Clinic”.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1760

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

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION OF DANIEL KAHIKINA AKAKA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINIC.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs planned to be built in Oahu, Hawaii, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the “Daniel Kahikina Akaka Department of Veterans Affairs Community-Based Outpatient Clinic” or the “Daniel Kahikina Akaka VA Clinic”.

(b) REFERENCE.—Any reference in any law, regulation, map, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the community-based outpatient clinic referred to in subsection (a) shall be considered to be a reference to the Daniel Kahikina Akaka Department of Veterans Affairs Community-Based Outpatient Clinic.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. TRONE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland.

□ 1530

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TRONE. Mr. 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 S. 1760.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer my strong support for S. 1760, a bill to designate the veterans’ health facility in Oahu, Hawaii, as the Daniel Kahikina Akaka Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic, named after the first United States Senator of Native Hawaiian ancestry, the late Daniel Akaka.

I recognize Senator MAZIE HIRONO for spearheading this effort to honor a man of such great esteem. The CBOC in

Oahu will stand as a lasting testimony to his commitment to the men and women of the Armed Forces, providing countless services and benefits to our Nation's veterans for years to come.

Madam Speaker, I thank Representative KAI KAHELE, whose constituency includes parts of Oahu, for leading this effort on the House side. He grew up the son of a Native Hawaiian mother and a father of Chinese and Native Hawaiian heritage. As a student of Kamehameha, a high school for boys, a military school, Senator Akaka's path was forever changed after having witnessed firsthand Japanese fighter planes attacking Pearl Harbor in 1941.

Like most patriotic Americans during World War II, Senator Akaka wanted to join in the U.S. effort to defend our freedom. He ultimately ended up joining the Army Corps of Engineers and served throughout the Pacific theater.

After the war, Senator Akaka took advantage of the GI Bill benefits, and earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Hawaii. After working several years in State government, Akaka was persuaded to enter elected office to ensure there would be a Native Hawaiian presence in his State's decisionmaking process.

Elected to the House of Representatives in 1977, Daniel Akaka became a congressional champion of indigenous and veteran issues. In 1990, he was elected to represent Hawaii in the United States Senate.

Thanks to Senator Akaka's commitment to recognizing the military contributions of the AAPI community, more than 30 Medals of Honor were awarded to Asian and Asian-American World War II veterans; a recognition of their patriotism and bravery that was long overdue.

When it comes to the question of naming the VA community-based outpatient clinic in Hawaii, I ask this body: Who better than Daniel Kahikina Akaka; a Hawaiian-born, Hawaiian-serving veteran whose life philosophy was sharing aloha and was a true public servant for over three decades.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of support from our colleagues in the Hawaiian Congressional Delegation, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Disabled American Veterans.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, November 17, 2021.

Hon. JON TESTER,
Chairman, Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Washington, DC.

Hon. JERRY MORAN,
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN TESTER AND RANKING MEMBER MORAN: We, the Hawaii Congressional Delegation, write in support of legislation to designate the planned outpatient clinic on the Island of Oahu, Hawaii as the "Daniel Kahikina Akaka Department of Veteran Affairs Community-Based Outpatient Clinic," to honor and commemorate Senator Daniel Akaka's service to his country during World War II and his service to the people of Hawaii in Congress.

Born in 1924 in Honolulu, Hawaii, Senator Akaka attended public grade school, but went to Kamehameha School for Boys and graduated from there in 1942. From 1943 to 1945, after graduating from high school, he served as a civilian worker in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He continued to serve in the Army Corps of Engineers after being drafted in 1945, including assignments on Saipan and Tinian, until being honorably discharged in 1947.

He returned to Hawaii and pursued his education at the University of Hawaii utilizing the GI Bill. He spent 15 years as an educator and administrator in public schools before transitioning into government service. During his time in government, he was the Chief Program Planner for the Hawaii Department of Education, Director of the Hawaii Office of Economic Opportunity, Director of the Progressive Neighborhood Program, and Special Assistant in the Office of Governor George Ariyoshi.

Senator Akaka was first elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1976, where he represented the people of Hawaii for 14 years. In 1990, he was appointed to fill a Senate vacancy after the death of Senator Spark M. Matsunaga. He was elected to the seat that fall and continued to serve as Senator for 23 years until his retirement in 2013. Senator Akaka was the first U.S. Senator of Native Hawaiian ancestry, and during his tenure was the only Chinese-American member of the Senate.

Senator Akaka was a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee (SVAC) from 1990 through 2013, and was the chairman of the committee from 2007 to 2011. During his tenure, he expanded benefits for veterans and worked to ensure those who had served our country were properly recognized for that service.

Mr. Akaka sponsored legislation in 1996 to review the service records of Asian-Americans who had fought in the 442nd Central Postal Directory and the 100th Infantry Battalion during World War II. The review resulted in over 30 Medals of Honor being belatedly bestowed, some posthumously, on Asian-American veterans. Many of these veterans were of Japanese heritage, and included his fellow Senator from Hawaii, Daniel K. Inouye.

As chairman, in 2008, he oversaw the largest increase ever in funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). At the time, he said it was important to ensure VA had the funding needed to respond to veterans' needs. He said at the time, "as the ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan continue, we must recognize that care for those wounded in combat is part of the cost of war."

In his farewell speech, Senator Akaka credited the GI bill with saving him from some of the effects of PTSD after returning from the war, saying he "would not be standing before you today without the opportunity the GI bill gave me, not only to get an education but to have structure and a path forward." As chairman of SVAC, he worked with Senator Jim Webb to pass the Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act to update and expand GI Benefits so that Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans had the same opportunities he was once afforded.

Senator Akaka and Senator Inouye pursued legislation to provide one-time compensation for members of the Philippine Scouts, an American-led unit of mostly Filipino and Filipino-American recruits who fought alongside United States troops but did not qualify for Veterans Administration benefits. The Senators successfully secured the funding for this compensation in the 2009 stimulus bill.

While much of what Senator Akaka accomplished benefitted veterans across the coun-

try, he never stopped advocating for the Native Hawaiian veteran community. Using his roles on both SVAC and the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, he highlighted the unique challenges faced by Native Hawaiian veterans, including holding a field hearing in Hawaii in 2006 in which these specific issues were discussed.

The Daniel Kahikina Akaka Department of Veteran Affairs Community-Based Outpatient Clinic is an appropriate and a meaningful way to honor Senator Akaka's lifetime of service to his country and to the people of Hawaii and continue his legacy on behalf of veterans. Senator Akaka in his farewell speech to Congress speak volumes as to his commitment to veterans:

"I want to take this moment to urge all of my colleagues and all of the incoming Senators and Representatives to do everything they can for our veterans and their families because we ask them to sacrifice so much for us. They put their lives on the line while their wives and husbands watch over their families. Caring for them is one of our most sacred obligations as a nation."

Legislation to name the clinic has been introduced in the Senate (S. 1760) with a companion measure introduced in the House (H.R. 3406), with the full support of Hawaii Congressional delegation.

Thank you for your consideration of this legislation.

Sincerely,

MAZIE K. HIRONO,
U.S. Senator.
KAIALI'I KAHELE,
U.S. Representative.
BRIAN SCHATZ,
U.S. Senator.
ED CASE,
U.S. Representative.

THE AMERICAN LEGION,
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAII,
Honolulu, HI, October 20, 2021.

Subject: The proposed legislation to rename the Ewa Plain VA Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) the DANIEL KAHIKINA AKAKA VA Outpatient Clinic (CBOC).

The American Legion Department of Hawaii fully supports legislation proposed by Hawaii US Senator Mazie Hirono to rename the Ewa Plain VA Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) the DANIEL KAHIKINA AKAKA VA Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) after the late US Senator Daniel Akaka.

Senator Akaka was a military veteran who served honorably in the US Army from 1945-1947 in Saipan and Tinian during World War II. Following military service, he returned to Hawaii to attend college, then pursued a career of teaching. Eventually he entered politics, first as a US Congressman where he served his Hawaiian constituents for seven terms. Following Hawaii's US Senator Matsunaga's death, he was appointed to fill his vacancy in US Senate. Senator Akaka then served successfully in the US Senate for three more terms. As Hawaii's junior US Senator, he served on the US Senate's Committee on Indian Affairs and on the US Senate's Committee on Veterans Affairs. Two of the more prominent legislation that he championed and saw passed were: spearheading awarding nearly 2 dozen Medals of Honor to soldiers of the famous World War II 442nd/100th "Go for Broke" Battalion; and passing legislation authorizing World War II Philippine Scouts just compensation for denied veterans benefits.

US Senator Akaka was a true pioneer, the first native Hawaiian to serve in the US Senate. He was also a military veteran who would take care of veterans while serving in the Senate. It is only appropriate that the Ewa Plain VA Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) be

renamed the Daniel K. Akaka VA Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) honoring a Patriot who served his community, his veterans, and his nation with distinction.

Always Serving Veterans with Aloha,
JIM HUSSEY,
Commander.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS,
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAII,
Honolulu, HI, April 6, 2021.

Hon. MAZIE HIRONO,
U.S. Senator, the State of Hawaii,
Washington DC.

ALOHA SENATOR HIRONO: The Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Hawaii, is writing to support your legislation to name the ALOHA Project VA Clinic the "Department of Veterans Affairs Daniel Kahikina Akaka Community-Based Outpatient Clinic". We support this effort to celebrate our fellow veteran for his service in WWII and his service as the first Native Hawaiian to serve in the U.S. Senate.

During his twenty-three years on the Committee of Veterans Affairs and also serving as Chairman from 2007 to 2011, Senator Akaka sponsored legislation expanding benefits, increasing funding for veteran healthcare, and ensuring proper recognition for our comrades who served, especially for those who had served in Iraq and Afghanistan. This included ensuring that the VA handles both PTSD and TBI claims with the respect they deserved and expanding the GI Bill.

In 1996 he cosponsored legislation that reviewed the records of Asian-Americans including Hawaii's own 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the 110th Infantry Battalion for action seen during WWII. As a result, many heroic actions were properly recognized. This included thirty Medals of Honor, including for his fellow Senator from Hawaii, Daniel K. Inouye.

Before leaving office, Senator Akaka initiated the VA Aloha Project legislation. We believe that is fitting and pono to name this clinic after him. This action will ensure that his honor and his dedication to veterans will be remembered for generations to come. We respectfully request that the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee quickly consider this important legislation.

RON LOCKWOOD,
Veterans of Foreign
Wars Department of
Hawaii, State Com-
mander.

GEORGE BARLETT,
Department of Hawaii
Adjutant.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS,
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAII,
Honolulu, HI, May 18, 2021.

Re Support for Renaming the Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic in Ewa Plain, Oahu, Hawaii, as the Daniel Kahikina Akaka Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic.

Ms. Hirono plans to introduce the following bill: which is expected to be referred to the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs: A BILL To name the Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic in Ewa Plain, Oahu, Hawaii, as the Daniel Kahikina Akaka Department of Veterans Affairs Community-Based Outpatient Clinic.

The Disabled Americans Veterans, Department of Hawaii is writing this letter in support of legislation introduced by Ms. Hirono. The proposed legislation would name the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Clinic in Ewa Plain, Hawaii after Senator Daniel Kahikina Akaka.

The Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic in Ewa Plain, Oahu, Hawaii,

shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the Daniel Kahikina Akaka Department of Veterans Affairs Community-Based Outpatient Clinic. Any reference to such outpatient clinic in any law, regulation, map, document, record, or other paper of the United States shall be considered to be a reference to the Daniel Kahikina Akaka Department of Veterans Affairs Community-Based Outpatient Clinic.

During World War II Senator Akaka served in the United States Army Corps of Engineers, including service on Saipan and Tinian. He served from 1945 to 1947.

Akaka was appointed by Governor John Waihee to the U.S. Senate in April 1990 to serve temporarily after the death of Senator Spark Matsunaga. During his tenure, Akaka served as the Chair of the United States Senate Committee on Indian Affairs and the United States Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

He attended his final session in the Senate on December 12, 2012. He closed his speech with a traditional Hawaiian farewell, "a hui hou" (until we meet again).

Former president Barack Obama remembered Akaka as "a tireless advocate for working people, veterans, native Hawaiian rights, and the people of Hawaii . . . He embodied the aloha spirit with compassion and care."

Akaka died of organ failure in the early hours of April 6, 2018, at the age of 93.

Sincerely,

GREGORRIO ALIP,
Department Commander.

Mr. TRONE. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support S. 1760, to designate the soon-to-be-constructed VA community-based outpatient clinic in Oahu, Hawaii, after our friend and former colleague, Daniel Kahikina Akaka. In doing so, this body will appropriately commemorate the significant achievements of America's first Senator of Native Hawaiian ancestry.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 1760, a bill to name the VA community-based outpatient clinic in Oahu, Hawaii, after World War II veteran and former Hawaiian Senator, Daniel Akaka.

Senator Akaka has a long and proud record of service in a uniform and out. Following his time in the Army, he represented his fellow Hawaiians in both the House and the Senate. During that time in the Senate, he served as chairman of the Veterans Affairs' Committee, where he also represented his fellow veterans.

Mr. Speaker, it is only fitting that the community-based outpatient clinic in his hometown of Oahu be named in his honor. I am proud to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TRONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. CASE), who serves on the Appropriations Committee and the Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues, including my colleagues kindly speaking here today from Maryland and Illinois, in strong

support of House passage of S. 1760, introduced by my colleague Senator MAZIE HIRONO, and passed unanimously by the Senate.

This critical measure, companion legislation to H.R. 3406, which I co-introduced in the House with its principal sponsor, my colleague and partner, Congressman KAIALI'I KAHELE, will designate the new community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs, now literally rising out of the ground at Kalaeloa in Hawaii, and known to date as the Advanced Leeward Outpatient Healthcare Access, or ALOHA project, as the Daniel Kahikina Akaka Department of Veterans Affairs Community-Based Outpatient Clinic.

Daniel K. Akaka was many things throughout his long and full 93 years of life: teacher, Member of this House from 1977 to 1991, the first U.S. Senator of Native Hawaiian ancestry from 1991 to 2012, beloved mentor to generations, and on and on. Of all of these, he was a deeply proud veteran, having served in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the Second World War, deploying to the Western Pacific in support of the critical island-hopping campaign, which won the Pacific war.

Senator Akaka carried his pride and passion and commitment to our Nation's veterans into his work in Congress. As member and chair of the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, he produced an unmatched record of progress on healthcare, compensation, and other benefits for veterans, including crafting the new veterans' GI Bill in Congress to ensure more education benefits for veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan.

In this Asian-Pacific Heritage Month, it is fitting to recognize his work focusing on specific issues affecting our Asian-American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander veterans.

The importance of the ALOHA project to our veteran 'ohana, or family, throughout Hawaii and the Pacific cannot be overstated. On its projected completion in late 2023, it will bring our VA healthcare system to our veterans, relieving significant and growing pressure in Hawaii on that system, increasing healthcare access for Hawaii's over 110,000 veterans and more, and alleviating significant and growing logistical and capacity challenges at Tripler Army Medical Center and the Spark M. Matsunaga Medical Center.

I cannot think of a more deserving and appropriate individual to grace this facility and those who work and are healed there with his name and his still living, breathing spirit, than Daniel Kahikina Akaka.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this measure so that it may be sent directly to the President for his consideration and enactment.

"Mahalo nui loa." "Thank you very much."

Mr. TRONE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I encourage all my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TRONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in passing S. 1760, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. TRONE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1760.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina. Mr. 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.

COL. GAIL S. HALVORSEN "CANDY BOMBER" VETERANS CENTER

Mr. TRONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2514) to rename the Provo Veterans Center in Orem, Utah, as the "Col. Gail S. Halvorsen 'Candy Bomber' Veterans Center".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2514

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

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION OF THE COL. GAIL S. HALVORSEN "CANDY BOMBER" VETERANS CENTER.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) Gail Halvorsen was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, on October 10, 1920, and spent his youth with his family on small farms in Utah and Idaho.

(2) After a brief stint at Utah State University, Gail Halvorsen joined the Civilian Pilot Training Program where he earned his pilot's license in 1941. During that same year, Halvorsen joined the Civil Air Patrol as a pilot.

(3) Gail Halvorsen joined the United States Army Air Corps in 1942 and trained flying fighter jets with the Royal Air Force. Upon his return from training, he was assigned to fly transport missions in the South Atlantic Theater.

(4) After World War II and the division of Berlin into occupation zones, disputes broke out between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union over the future of Europe.

(5) Negotiations deteriorated, and in June of 1948 Soviet forces locked down all land routes connecting Western Germany with the allied portions of Berlin. Approximately 2,000,000 people in West Berlin were left completely isolated. Starvation, poverty, and desperate want ensued.

(6) In an effort to alleviate the immense human suffering, the allies decided to drop supplies to people of West Berlin from the air until a diplomatic solution to the blockade could be reached. Termed by United States forces "Operation Vittles", the Berlin Airlift began on June 26, 1948.

(7) Gail Halvorsen was assigned to Germany in 1948 to work as an airlift pilot

where he flew C-47 and C-54 cargo planes as part of Operation Vittles.

(8) While on mission at Tempelhof Airport in Berlin, Halvorsen noticed a group of German children standing just outside the barb wire fence.

(9) The children were destitute and clearly had very little to eat. Halvorsen gave the children two sticks of gum he had in his pocket, which they split into little pieces to share among themselves.

(10) Colonel Halvorsen was deeply affected by the experience and wanted to do more to help. He promised the children he would drop more candy to them from his plane as he flew his regular airlift missions.

(11) Halvorsen told the children they would recognize his plane by a back-and-forth waggle of his wings as he flew over.

(12) Colonel Halvorsen enlisted his copilot and engineer in the project and began attaching their candy rations to miniature parachutes which they dropped from their plane to the starving children below.

(13) The children of Berlin gave Halvorsen many nicknames including "Uncle Wiggly Wings", "The Chocolate Flier", "The Gum Drop Kid", and "The Chocolate Uncle". He eventually became known around the world as "The Candy Bomber".

(14) Lieutenant General William H. Turner, who directed the Berlin Airlift, learned about Halvorsen's efforts and officially expanded the idea into a full-blown operation known as "Little Vittles" as a play on the broader operation's name.

(15) As the candy drops continued, word of Operation Little Vittles reached the United States. Families, schoolchildren, and candy-makers in the United States began contributing candy and homemade parachutes that Halvorsen and other pilots could drop.

(16) When the Berlin Airlift ended, an estimated 250,000 parachutes containing approximately 21 tons of candy had been dropped by Halvorsen and his fellow airmen as a part of Operation Little Vittles.

(17) Halvorsen retired from the military in 1974 after 31 years of service and more than 8,000 hours of flying time.

(18) Since his retirement, Halvorsen has continued his humanitarian service. He has voluntarily represented the United States Air Force and the United States abroad and has re-enacted his famous candy drops several times in Berlin and around the world.

(19) Halvorsen has also been a tremendous boon to his community through church service and other local contributions.

(20) Gail Halvorsen turned 100 years old on October 10, 2020.

(b) DESIGNATION.—The Provo Veterans Center of the Department of Veterans Affairs located at 360 State Street, Orem, Utah, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the "Col. Gail S. Halvorsen 'Candy Bomber' Veterans Center".

(c) REFERENCE.—Any reference in any law, regulation, map, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the veterans center referred to in subsection (b) shall be considered to be a reference to the Col. Gail S. Halvorsen "Candy Bomber" Veterans Center.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. TRONE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TRONE. Mr. 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 S. 2514.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer my support for S. 2514, a bill to recognize and remember the life of Colonel Gail Seymour Halvorsen, who passed away on February 16, 2022, at 101 years old.

I thank Senator LEE and my colleagues from Utah's congressional delegation for their work to pay tribute to Colonel Halvorsen. Colonel Halvorsen was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, and in 1942 he joined the Army Air Corps and trained as a fighter pilot. While stationed in Germany, where he flew C-47 and C-54 cargo planes as part of Operation Vittles; Halvorsen noticed dozens of hunger-starved German children outside of the barbed wire fence. Having two pieces of gum, Halvorsen broke it into strips and gave it to the children to share amongst them. Inspired by the children's glee, Halvorsen committed to more frequently distributing candy from his plane to them.

Earning his nickname "The Candy Bomber," Halvorsen dropped miniature parachutes of candy rations in the street of Berlin to feed the children. By the end of the Berlin Airlift, Halvorsen and his fellow airmen distributed an estimated 250,000 parachutes with over 20 tons of candy throughout Operation Little Vittles.

The Provo Vet Center plays a vital role in the community and provides important services such as counseling for veterans with PTSD and confidential counseling sessions to those who have experienced military sexual trauma—all free to the veterans, reservists, and members of National Guard—regardless of service connection or VA health enrollment status.

To rename this important vet center after Colonel Halvorsen would be a fitting honor for one of the Beehive State's most selfless members of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of support from the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Disabled American Veterans, the American Legion, and a letter dated July 28, 2021, from the U.S. Senate.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS,
DEPARTMENT OF UTAH,
November 1, 2021.

Chairman JON TESTER,
Committee on Veterans' Affairs,
Washington, DC.

Chairman MARK TAKANO,
Committee on Veterans' Affairs,
Washington, DC.

Ranking Member JERRY MORAN,
Committee on Veterans' Affairs,
Washington, DC.

Ranking Member MIKE BOST,
Committee on Veterans' Affairs,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN TESTER, RANKING MEMBER MORAN, CHAIRMAN TAKANO, RANKING MEMBER BOST: We, the members of the Utah Veterans of Foreign Wars, write to support that the