

his retirement, Halvorsen has continued his humanitarian and community service. He has voluntarily represented the U.S. Airforce and the United States abroad and has re-enacted his famous candy drops several times in Berlin, the Middle East, and around the world in an effort to bring peace and relief. He was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal, a German Order of Merit, an Air Force Commendation Medal, and a Medal for Humane Action. Halvorsen has also been a tremendous boon to his community through church service.

His non-profit organization, the Gail S. Halvorsen Aviation Education Foundation, advances aviation education, promotes youth leadership development, enhances community capacity for emergency response, and encourages humanitarian service on macro- and micro-levels. The Foundation also provides education by giving free lectures and multimedia presentations on aviation, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) topics at local schools, community groups, and at its own facility at the Spanish Fork Airport in Spanish Fork, Utah.

Renaming the Provo Vet Center in Orem, Utah after Colonel Halvorsen is a fitting and deserved recognition for such an exemplary U.S. Air Force veteran and American hero. Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL S. LEE,  
United States Senator.  
JOHN CURTIS,  
Member of Congress.  
BURGESS OWENS,  
Member of Congress.  
MITT ROMNEY,  
United States Senator.  
BLAKE MOORE,  
Member of Congress.  
CHRIS STEWART,  
Member of Congress.

Mr. TRONE. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting S. 2514, and 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. 2514, a bill to rename the Provo Veterans Center in Utah after Colonel Gail Halvorsen.

Colonel Halvorsen is a Salt Lake City native who joined the Army Air Corps in 1942, in the midst of World War II. He served as a transport pilot and participated in the Berlin Airlift.

It was in Berlin where he earned the nickname "The Candy Bomber" for handing out pieces of candy to local children and, later, dropping candy from his aircraft while flying missions over the city.

Colonel Halvorsen retired from the military in 1974 after 31 years in uniform. He spent his civilian life as an active volunteer in his church and community. He passed away in February of this last year at age 101.

Mr. Speaker, it is with the deepest respect for Colonel Halvorsen's long life of service that we support the bill to allow the Provo Vet Center to bear his name.

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

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 my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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Mr. TRONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in passing S. 2514, 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. 2514.

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.

#### FISCAL YEAR 2022 VETERANS AFFAIRS MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. TRONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7500) to authorize major medical facility projects for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2022, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7500

*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 "Fiscal Year 2022 Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Authorization Act".

#### SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY PROJECTS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may carry out the following major medical facility projects in fiscal year 2022 at the locations specified and in an amount for each project not to exceed the amount specified for such location:

(1) Restoration and consolidation of the Gulfport Hospital in Biloxi, Mississippi, in an amount not to exceed \$341,500,000.

(2) Construction of a community living center and renovation of domiciliary and outpatient facilities in Canandaigua, New York, in an amount not to exceed \$443,900,000.

(3) Construction of a spinal cord injury center in Dallas, Texas, in an amount not to exceed \$292,239,000.

(4) Construction of a new health care center in El Paso, Texas, in an amount not to exceed \$150,000,000.

(5) Seismic corrections to the mental health and community living center in Long Beach, California, in an amount not to exceed \$387,300,000.

(6) Construction of a new medical facility in Louisville, Kentucky, in an amount not to exceed \$953,000,000.

(7) Construction of a new surgical intensive care unit and renovated operating rooms in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, in an amount not to exceed \$47,564,000.

(8) Seismic retrofit and renovation of buildings 100 and 101 in Portland, Oregon, in an amount not to exceed \$20,000,000.

(9) Construction of a spinal cord injury building with a community living center, including a parking garage, in San Diego, California, in an amount not to exceed \$262,100,000.

(10) Construction of a new research facility in San Francisco, California, in an amount not to exceed \$254,880,000.

(11) Replacement bed tower and clinical building expansion in St. Louis, Missouri, in an amount not to exceed \$135,340,000.

(12) Construction of a new critical care center in West Los Angeles, California, in an amount not to exceed \$115,790,000.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2022 or the year in which funds are appropriated for the Construction, Major Projects account, \$3,403,613,000 for the projects authorized in subsection (a).

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 H.R. 7500.

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 today in support of H.R. 7500, the Fiscal Year 2022 Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Authorization Act.

I thank my colleague from Texas (Mr. ALLRED) for his work on this bill. I also thank the chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, Senator TESTER, for introducing the Senate companion to this important legislation.

Each year, the Department of Veterans Affairs submits an annual budget request to Congress, and it is our job to authorize and appropriate the funding the VA needs to care for America's veterans and their families.

Within that larger funding request is the VA's request for funds to replace and modernize its medical facilities. This year's major construction requests total just over \$3.4 billion. It will build a much-needed spinal cord injury center in Dallas, Texas; erect a new surgical intensive care unit and renovate operating rooms in Oklahoma City; construct a new critical care center in West Los Angeles; and allow for the seismic retrofit and renovation of buildings in Portland, Oregon, among other things.

Mr. Speaker, this Congress, the committee has highlighted VA's aging infrastructure. During our oversight efforts, the committee has learned that in order to fully recapitalize the Department's portfolio, the VA would need roughly \$90 billion.

Delivering 21st century healthcare in buildings that were built during the latter half of the 19th century is far from ideal and certainly not what our veterans deserve.

Given the severity of underfunding as it relates to the VA's capital assets, we cannot afford to wait until the AIR Commission provides recommendations to Congress and the White House, as my colleagues across the aisle would advocate for. Life-safety and seismic issues across the portfolio must be recognized now. Regular maintenance should not be delayed because of budgetary concerns, nor should we delay retrofitting facilities to meet the VA's fastest-growing population, women veterans, or delay addressing the lessons learned from this Nation's first pandemic in more than 100 years.

If we are going to build back veterans' trust in the VA, we have to start making serious investments in the outdated infrastructure meant to serve them, and nearly three-fourths of Americans agree.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support and pass this legislation, and 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 H.R. 7500, the bill that would authorize VA major medical facility construction projects in Mississippi, New York, Texas, California, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Missouri.

It is well known that the VA healthcare system has very serious infrastructure issues. The average VA medical center is decades older than the average private-sector hospital.

Authorizing these projects won't fix that, but it will help thousands of veterans who live in those eight States to have better access to the care that they have earned and deserve.

I appreciate Congressmen Allred and Ellzey for their work introducing this important bill. It has my full support today. I encourage 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 H.R. 7500. 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, H.R. 7500.

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.

## PATIENT ADVOCATE TRACKER ACT

Mr. TRONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5754) to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the ability of veterans to electronically submit complaints about the delivery of health care services by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5754

*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 "Patient Advocate Tracker Act".

### SEC. 2. SYSTEM FOR ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE DELIVERY OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Section 7309A(c) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(3) Beginning not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this paragraph, the Director shall establish an information technology system that will allow a veteran (or the designated representative of a veteran) to electronically—

"(A) file a complaint that will be received by the appropriate patient advocate; and

"(B) at any time view the status of the complaint, including interim and final actions that have been taken to address the complaint.".

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 H.R. 5754.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5754, the Patient Advocate Tracker Act, sponsored by the gentleman from Michigan (Mrs. McCLAIN).

This bill will require VA to create a system to allow veterans to electronically submit complaints about the delivery of VA healthcare services and to track the resolution of those complaints by local VA patient advocates through an online system in real time. VA's existing IT system only allows VA employees to track complaint resolution, but not patients.

This bill has garnered the bipartisan support of an impressive 115 cosponsors since it was introduced 7 months ago. H.R. 5754 is also endorsed by numerous veterans service organizations, including the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed

Veterans of America, and Student Veterans of America.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and 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 H.R. 5754, the Patient Advocate Tracker Act. This is an excellent piece of legislation that is the brainchild of a veteran named Cameron Zbikowski.

Cameron worked on VA's patient advocate program as a student veteran fellow for the VFW and Student Veterans of America. During his fellowship, he recognized that veterans would be better served if they could submit complaints to VA patient advocates online and track the status of those complaints online as well.

Cameron was spot on, and this bill will require VA to make that happen. This will make patient advocates more accessible to veterans than ever before, and it will increase the transparency and accountability of the VA patient advocacy program so that we can make sure that it is working as it should for veterans across the country.

I know Cameron is watching today, and from one veteran to another, I thank him for his great work.

This bill is sponsored by the gentleman from Michigan (Mrs. McCLAIN). I thank her for her hard work on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I am a proud supporter of this bill today, and I hope that all of my colleagues will join me in supporting it. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TRONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 5754, the Patient Advocate Tracker Act, 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, H.R. 5754.

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.

## VETERANS ELIGIBLE TO TRANSFER SCHOOL (VETS) CREDIT ACT

Mr. TRONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6604) to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the method by which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines the effects of a closure or disapproval of an educational institution on individuals who do not transfer credits from such institution, as amended.