

General Staff College, where he was one of only three Black officers in his class.

In 1965, Major General Dillard made history by becoming the first Black officer to graduate from the National War College. He later served in command and intelligence positions in Korea, Germany, and Vietnam, a most remarkable career.

This includes as the first Black general officer in the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff of Intelligence, as deputy chief of staff to the U.S. Army Forces Command, and as deputy chief of staff of intelligence for the U.S. Armed Forces in Europe.

During his extraordinary 34 years of service, Major General Dillard received nine military awards and two civilian medals, including the Distinguished Service Medal, the Silver Star, the Purple Heart, and the Combat Infantryman's Badge with star.

He retired from military service in 1980 and later passed away in 2015 in Canton, Michigan, where this VA outpatient clinic will reside and where his son, Oliver, still resides.

Earlier this year, I had the privilege of touring this facility alongside the Dillard family, with my incredible colleague and champion for this legislation, Congresswoman DEBBIE DINGELL, who will be representing Canton in this upcoming Congress.

The naming of the Canton VA clinic is just a small token of our appreciation and recognition to Major General Dillard for his exemplary service, leadership, and sacrifice to our Nation.

I know that this VA clinic will serve as a proud commemoration of the man who dedicated his life to serving others and as an inspiration to those who will continue to hear his name.

I thank both the Dillard family—in specific, his son, Oliver—and Congresswoman DINGELL for their work and input on this legislation.

I also thank Canton Township Supervisor Anne Marie Graham-Hudak for her leadership in getting the VA outpatient clinic to its current place.

I also thank our entire Michigan delegation, as well as the Michigan American Legion, the Michigan Disabled American Veterans, and the Michigan Veterans of Foreign Wars, for their support on this bill.

I thank my colleagues for their consideration of this bill.

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

□ 1500

Mr. ELLZEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I am going to go off script for a moment here and just say that the more I hear about these veterans that we are honoring here today, they are just incredible. I want to know more about Major General Dillard and his Bronze Star, Silver Star, and Purple Heart.

As we are on the heels of Veterans Day this last weekend, the remarkable bravery that General Dillard must

have shown to receive those awards is staggering, and I would like to come up and see the clinic in Michigan at some point just to honor the man and meet his family.

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I share the sentiment of my colleague from Texas. You cannot be indifferent to the stories as we read the accounts of these great American heroes. I am personally affected by the part of Major General Dillard's history in terms of his opposition to Don't Ask, Don't Tell way before it was overturned. The fact that he himself knew the sting of discrimination and could not brook that this discrimination would apply to any other group of Americans is especially poignant to me.

I thank the gentlewoman from Michigan for bringing Major General Dillard to our attention to memorialize him in the way that she has done.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 7903, as amended. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7903, as amended.

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

The title of H.R. 7903 was amended so as to read: "A bill to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic located in Canton, Michigan, as the 'Major General Oliver W. Dillard VA Clinic'."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SY KAPLAN VETERANS CENTER

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7925) to designate the outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Palm Desert, California, as the "Sy Kaplan Veterans Center", as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7925

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

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Seymour "Sy" Kaplan was born on February 28, 1924.

(2) Sergeant Kaplan served in the United States Army from 1942 to 1945 as a combat engineer.

(3) Sergeant Kaplan served in the 2d, 4th, and 14th Armored Divisions, seeing service in North Africa, Italy, and France.

(4) Sergeant Kaplan rose to the rank of Technical Sergeant and earned 3 Battle Stars and 2 Purple Hearts.

(5) Sergeant Kaplan served under General George Patton at the Battle of the Bulge and received 2 Purple Hearts for his service.

(6) In April 1945, Sergeant Kaplan was grievously wounded in an enemy mortar attack in Czechoslovakia and returned to the United States a wounded warrior.

(7) Sergeant Kaplan served as Commander of the Disabled American Veterans, Chapter 78 (Coachella Valley) for many years.

(8) Sergeant Kaplan was instrumental in the opening of the Department of Veterans Affairs clinic in Palm Desert.

(9) Sergeant Kaplan personally provided countless local veterans with advice and assistance in obtaining their earned Department of Veterans Affairs benefits.

(10) Sergeant Kaplan received the Senior Inspiration Award from Riverside County Supervisor Roy Wilson in 2001.

(11) Wilson also appointed Sergeant Kaplan the first chair of the Desert Palms Community Council.

SEC. 2. DESIGNATION OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINIC LOCATED IN PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic located in Palm Desert, California, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the "Sy Kaplan VA Clinic".

(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 "Sy Kaplan VA Clinic".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ELLZEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 7925, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the life of Technical Sergeant Seymour "Sy" Kaplan, a wounded warrior, a World War II veteran, and a decades-long advocate for other veterans living in the Coachella Valley of southern California.

I thank my colleague, a fellow Californian and member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, Dr. RAUL RUIZ, for his work on this bill, which will designate a brand-new VA outpatient clinic in Palm Desert, California, the Sy Kaplan VA Clinic.

The state-of-the-art Palm Desert clinic provides primary care, behavioral health services, and preventative medicine to thousands of veterans in the Inland Empire as part of VA's Loma Linda Healthcare System.

Sergeant Kaplan enlisted in the military in 1942 and served overseas as a combat engineer in northern Africa, Italy, and France. He fought under

General Patton in the Battle of the Bulge, which helped ensure Allied victory in the Second World War. In 1945, he was seriously wounded by an enemy mortar attack during a bridge-building mission in Czechoslovakia.

For his heroism, Sergeant Kaplan earned three battle stars and two Purple Hearts and returned home 100 percent disabled.

His injuries did not impede Sergeant Kaplan's unwavering commitment to our Nation's veterans, however. For 25 years, he served as commander of Disabled American Veterans Chapter 78 in the Coachella Valley. In this role, Sergeant Kaplan assisted countless veterans, helping ease their transition back to civilian life and providing them with a tight-knit sense of community.

His passion, leadership, and sense of purpose were evident to all who knew him.

Following a lifetime of service, Sergeant Kaplan passed away in April 2019, not long after celebrating his 95th birthday. His legacy continues, however, in the grateful community of those whose lives he touched.

I am happy to know that for generations of veterans to come, this VA facility will honor Sergeant Kaplan's memory.

H.R. 7925, as amended, has been endorsed by The American Legion, DAV, and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of support for H.R. 1925 from The American Legion, VFW, and Disabled American Veterans, as well as the California delegation.

THE AMERICAN LEGION,
DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA,
Sanger, CA, July 18, 2022.

Hon. RAUL RUIZ, M.D.,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN RUIZ: On behalf of The American Legion, Department of California, we thank you for your continued leadership in advocating for the more than 120,000 veterans living in Riverside County. TAL Department of California is proud to support your legislation, designating the outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Palm Desert, California, as the, Sy Kaplan Veterans Center".

By naming the Palm Desert outpatient clinic after United States Army Technical Sergeant, Seymour "Sy" Kaplan, not only memorializes his contributions and sacrifices made fighting in North Africa, Italy and France during World War II, but also underscores his significant contributions towards Veterans Advocacy in the Palm Desert area. This advocacy was instrumental in the opening of the very VA clinic your legislation hopes to name after him.

Thank you again for your leadership and advocacy of all veterans. TAL Department of California recognizes all the work that went into this effort and wholeheartedly supports this legislation. Moreover, we hope this bill will be passed and signed into law most expeditiously.

Sincerely,

JERE ROMANO, COMMANDER,
The American Legion Department
of California.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS,
June 6, 2022.

Rep. RAUL RUIZ,
Washington DC.

DEAR HON. REPRESENTATIVE RUIZ, MD: The Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of California takes great pleasure in supporting your bill to name the VA's Outpatient Clinic building in Palm Desert, CA as the Sy Kaplan Veterans Center.

Sergeant Kaplan's service to our country in WWII is impressive. He not only gave his all during his service, but he also continued that back at home in service to veterans and with the same commitment. His legacy is worthy of and in line with this Department's desires to pay honor to our servicemen and women by naming California veteran facilities after them.

On behalf of the 61,000+ combat veterans of this Department, we thank you for recognizing our nation's heroes.

Sincerely,

DAWN M. NAPIER,
State Commander.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS,
San Diego, CA, December 5, 2021.

Hon. RAUL RUIZ M.D.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN RUIZ: I am writing this letter of endorsement to rename the Desert Clinic the Seymour (Sy) Kaplan Desert Clinic. This is an Honor he richly deserves. Mr. Kaplan, a force to be reckoned with, was the catalyst in the establishment of the clinic. His tireless commitment to all veterans was inspiring. A highly decorated war hero, Mr. Kaplan spent a lifetime giving to the veteran community, not only in the desert community but the State of California.

I thank you in advance for all your consideration in this matter.

NANCY CASEY,
Department of California DAV, Jr. Vice
Commander, National Service Officer,
Disabled American Veterans.

NOVEMBER 1, 2022.

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

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

DEAR CHAIRMAN TESTER AND RANKING MEMBER MORAN: We write in support of H.R. 7925, legislation to rename the Palm Desert Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) outpatient clinic after Sy Kaplan.

Sy Kaplan served in the U.S. Army from 1942 to 1945 as a combat engineer. He rose to the rank of Technical Sergeant and earned three Battle Stars and two Purple Hearts. In April 1945 he was grievously wounded in an enemy mortar attack in Czechoslovakia and returned to the U.S. a wounded warrior.

When he retired, Mr. Kaplan served as Commander of the Disabled American Veterans, Chapter 78 (Coachella Valley) for many years, where he personally provided countless local veterans with advice and assistance in obtaining their earned VA benefits. Additionally, he was instrumental in the opening of the VA Clinic in Palm Desert which we wish to name in his honor.

Mr. Kaplan was recognized for his work within his community and received the Senior Inspiration Award from Riverside County Supervisor Roy Wilson in 2001 and was appointed the first chair of the Desert Palms Community Council.

We hope that you will swiftly advance H.R. 7925 to recognize this true war hero and pillar of the community by supporting our bill

to rename the Palm Desert VA outpatient clinic the Sy Kaplan Veterans Center.

Sincerely,

Raul Ruiz, M.D., Dianne Feinstein, Alex Padilla, Kevin McCarthy, Mark Takano, Jared Huffman, Ami Bera, M.D., Nancy Pelosi, Doug LaMalfa, Mike Thompson, Jay Obernolte, Jerry McNerney, Mark DeSaulnier, Jackie Speier, Jim Costa, Anna G. Eshoo, Josh Harder, Barbara Lee, Eric Swalwell, Ro Khanna, Zoe Lofgren; Members of Congress.

Salud Carbajal, Brad Sherman, Grace F. Napolitano, Karen Bass, Ken Calvert, Judy Chu, Pete Aguilar, Norma J. Torres, Lucille Roybal-Allard, Katie Porter, J. Luis Correa, Michelle Steel, Juan Vargas, Darrell Issa, Linda T. Sanchez, Alan S. Lowenthal, Mike Levin, Scott H. Peters, David G. Valadao, Doris Matsui; Members of Congress.

Jimmy Gomez, Mike Garcia, Adam B. Schiff, John Garamendi, Maxine Waters, Jimmy Panetta, Ted Lieu, Tony Cardenas, Tom McClintock, Young Kim, Julia Brownley, Connie Conway; Members of Congress.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, again, I thank Dr. RUIZ and all of our fellow members of the California delegation for their support of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 7925, as amended, a bill to designate the outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Palm Desert California as the Sy Kaplan Veterans Center.

Sy Kaplan enlisted in the Army at age 18. He served in World War II as a combat engineer in the 2nd, 4th, and 14th Armored Divisions during the North Africa campaign and the liberation of Italy and in France. In that service, he earned three battle stars and two Purple Hearts. He rose to the rank of technical sergeant.

At the end of the war, in 1945, he was seriously wounded by an enemy mortar attack in the former Czechoslovakia and returned to the United States due to his injuries.

Following his return, he started and operated his own construction company. He retired in 1991 and moved to California, as everybody did.

Sergeant Kaplan embraced his new community, where he personally provided countless local veterans with advice and assistance in obtaining and earning their VA benefits.

He served as the commander of the Disabled American Veterans Chapter 78 in Coachella Valley for many years, and, of course, he played an instrumental role in establishing the VA clinic in Palm Desert.

Sergeant Kaplan dedicated his life to service and, most importantly, to helping his fellow veterans. Having his name on this VA clinic will continue his legacy of inspiration.

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 7925, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7925, as amended.

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

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic located in Palm Desert, California, as the 'Sy Kaplan VA Clinic'."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MAX CLELAND VA MEDICAL CENTER ACT

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 3369) to designate the medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in metropolitan Atlanta, Georgia, as the "Joseph Maxwell Cleland Atlanta Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 3369

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 "Max Cleland VA Medical Center Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Joseph Maxwell Cleland was born August 24, 1942, in Atlanta, Georgia, the child of Juanita Kesler Cleland and Joseph Hughie Cleland, a World War II veteran, and grew up in Lithonia, Georgia.

(2) Joseph Maxwell Cleland graduated from Stetson University in Florida in 1964, and received his Master's Degree in history from Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia.

(3) Following his graduation from Stetson University, Joseph Maxwell Cleland received a Second Lieutenant's Commission in the Army through its Reserve Officers' Training Corps program.

(4) Joseph Maxwell Cleland volunteered for duty in the Vietnam War in 1967, serving with the 1st Cavalry Division.

(5) On April 8, 1968, during combat at the mountain base at Khe Sanh, Joseph Maxwell Cleland was gravely injured by the blast of a grenade, eventually losing both his legs and right arm.

(6) Joseph Maxwell Cleland was awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious service and the Silver Star for gallantry in action.

(7) In 1970, Joseph Maxwell Cleland was elected to the Georgia Senate as the youngest member and the only Vietnam veteran, where he served until 1975.

(8) As a Georgia State Senator, Joseph Maxwell Cleland authored and advanced legislation to ensure access to public facilities in Georgia for elderly and handicapped individuals.

(9) In 1976, Joseph Maxwell Cleland began serving as a staffer on the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the United States Senate.

(10) In 1977, Joseph Maxwell Cleland was appointed by President Jimmy Carter to lead the Veterans Administration.

(11) He was the youngest Administrator of the Veterans Administration ever and the first Vietnam veteran to head the agency.

(12) He served as a champion for veterans and led the Veterans Administration to recognize, and begin to treat, post-traumatic stress disorder in veterans suffering the invisible wounds of war.

(13) Joseph Maxwell Cleland was elected in 1982 as Secretary of State of Georgia, the youngest individual to hold the office, and served in that position for 14 years.

(14) In 1996, Joseph Maxwell Cleland was elected to the United States Senate representing Georgia.

(15) As a member of the Committee on Armed Services, Joseph Maxwell Cleland advocated for Georgia's military bases, members of the Armed Forces, and veterans, including by championing key personnel issues, playing a critical role in the effort to allow members of the Armed Forces to pass their GI Bill education benefits to their children, and establishing a new veterans cemetery in Canton, Georgia.

(16) In 2002, Joseph Maxwell Cleland was appointed to the 9/11 Commission.

(17) In 2003, Joseph Maxwell Cleland was appointed by President George W. Bush to the Board of Directors for the Export-Import Bank of the United States, where he served until 2007.

(18) In 2009, Joseph Maxwell Cleland was appointed by President Barack Obama as Secretary of the American Battle Monuments Commission overseeing United States military cemeteries and monuments overseas, where he served until 2017.

(19) In 2010, Joseph Maxwell Cleland was appointed Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery, where he served until 2017.

(20) Joseph Maxwell Cleland authored three books: *Strong at the Broken Places*, *Going for the Max: 12 Principles for Living Life to the Fullest*, and *Heart of a Patriot*.

(21) Joseph Maxwell Cleland received numerous honors and awards over the course of his long and distinguished career.

(22) Joseph Maxwell Cleland was a patriot, veteran, and lifelong civil servant who proudly served Georgia, the United States, and all veterans and members of the Armed Forces of the United States.

(23) On November 9, 2021, at the age of 79, Joseph Maxwell Cleland died, leaving behind a legacy of service, sacrifice, and joy.

SEC. 3. JOSEPH MAXWELL CLELAND ATLANTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in metropolitan Atlanta, Georgia, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the "Joseph Maxwell Cleland Atlanta Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center" or the "Joseph Maxwell Cleland Atlanta VA Medical Center".

(b) REFERENCE.—Any reference in a law, regulation, map, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the medical center referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the Joseph Maxwell Cleland Atlanta Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ELLZEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to

revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on S. 3369.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer my support for S. 3369, a bill that will appropriately rename the Atlanta VA Medical Center in Decatur, Georgia, in honor of Joseph Maxwell Cleland, an Army veteran, an American statesman, and a distinguished public servant for more than 50 years.

Senator Cleland, who died a year ago this month, long displayed a commitment to assisting disabled American veterans, so it is fitting that part of his enduring legacy includes the naming of this facility, which provides care to so many Georgia men and women who raised their hands and answered the call to serve.

I thank Senator RAPHAEL WARNOCK for championing this legislation, which unanimously passed the Senate this summer, and I also acknowledge the work of my colleague Representative NIKEMA WILLIAMS for introducing a House companion to the bill.

Senator Cleland was born in Atlanta in 1942 and raised a couple of hours away in Lithonia, Georgia. He was an exemplary student at Lithonia High School and went on to study American history at Stetson University in central Florida and Emory University in Atlanta.

Senator Cleland received a military commission through Stetson's ROTC program. He volunteered for service in the Vietnam war in 1967 and was promoted to Army captain.

On April 8, 1968, with a month left on his tour, Senator Cleland and other members of the 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment were dropped by helicopter on a hillside outside Khe Sanh to set up a radio relay station. Senator Cleland reached down to pick up a grenade he thought had fallen from his flak jacket when the grenade exploded, causing several injuries to his lower body. Both of Senator Cleland's legs and his right forearm were amputated, and the Senator, then just 25 years old, used a wheelchair for the rest of his life.

For his meritorious service and gallantry in action, Senator Cleland was awarded the Bronze and Silver Stars.

Upon his return to the U.S., Senator Cleland was elected to the Georgia Senate, becoming the youngest member and only Vietnam veteran in that body.

In 1976, he was appointed to the staff of the U.S. Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, where he investigated hospitals in the Veterans Administration healthcare system and their treatment of wounded servicemembers returning from Vietnam.

The following year, at age 34, President Carter tapped Senator Cleland to head the Veterans Administration,