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It is well known that the VA healthcare system has serious infrastructure issues and needs critical renovations. Authorizing these projects will help the thousands of veterans who live in these six States have better access to care in modern settings.

I appreciate Senator TESTER and Senator MORAN for their work introducing this important bill. I also thank Representative CHAVEZ-DEREMER for introducing a similar bill in the House. It has my full support today.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for S. 30, the Fiscal Year 2023 Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Authorization Act.

I thank the chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, Senator TESTER, and Ranking Member MORAN for introducing this important legislation.

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

More than 9 million veterans are enrolled in VA's healthcare system, utilizing roughly 1,300 healthcare facilities across the system. Within VA's budget request are funds to replace and modernize these medical facilities.

This year's major construction request totals just over \$3.7 billion and will build a new healthcare center in El Paso, Texas; construct an outpatient clinic and a national cemetery in Alameda, California; erect a new medical facility in Louisville, Kentucky; and allow for seismic upgrades and specialty care improvements in Fort Harrison, Montana, among other things.

Mr. Speaker, funding VA infrastructure remains an important and critical issue. In recent years, the committee has highlighted VA's aging infrastructure and the critical need to address that issue. Delivering 21st century healthcare using outdated facilities is far from ideal and certainly not what our veterans deserve. If the VA is to be inclusive and treat all veterans who have served, we should not delay retrofitting facilities as we strive to meet the growing and ever-changing needs of our diverse veteran community.

Last year, we passed my Honoring our PACT Act, which will significantly expand eligibility and, consequently, utilization of VA healthcare in the coming years.

Just last week, NPR published a story highlighting, once again, a Medicare survey showing VA hospitals are outperforming private hospitals in all categories of patient satisfaction. Despite outdated, antiquated facilities, VA still provides exceptional care. Imagine the levels of care VA could achieve if it had all the needed resources.

In order to serve our veterans and provide them with the care they deserve and need, we must start making serious investments in our outdated infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in passing S. 30, the Fiscal Year 2023 Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Authorization Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for S. 30, Fiscal Year 2023 Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Authorization Act.

It is always my honor to address issues related to the wellbeing of the women and men who served and continue to serve our country.

As noted by the Congressional Budget Office, this bill authorizes the appropriation of \$3.7 billion for fiscal year 2023 for the construction and renovation of seven major VA medical facilities for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

With approximately 360,000 employees, roughly 1,600 health care facilities, 144 medical centers, and 1,232 outpatient sites, the Department of Veterans Affairs remains one of the largest and most complex agencies in the U.S. Government.

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) provides health care to approximately 9 million veterans annually.

Over the past ten years, more than 60,000 veterans have died by suicide, and 20 veterans die by suicide each day.

Between 2005 and 2017, nearly 79,000 veterans killed themselves, more than the total number of troops who have died in the wars in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan combined (roughly 65,000).

There has never been a more urgent time than this that requires the urgent need for rebuilding the department's flailing infrastructure and resolving staffing shortage in VA medical facilities.

It is equally important to keep the focus on efforts to reduce wait times and availability by specialty, adequately address the veteran suicide rate, and find lasting solutions to the overall healthcare needs of our veterans.

It is therefore appropriate for this House to vote for this bill to ensure that the Veterans Health Administration's (VHA) major medical facilities receive the needed attention that they deserve to meet the health needs of our veterans.

This bill does not only help with furnishing inpatient and outpatient care and treatment of veterans and their dependents, but also supports the care and treatment in non-VA facilities; community-based outpatient clinics, medical supplies, and equipment.

This bill will benefit the operations of VA medical centers (VAMCs) and other medical facilities, such as community-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs), Vet Centers, and other veteran-related community care programs.

It will also benefit many VA medical facility services like the Community Care Program (VCCP), the Camp Lejeune Family Member Program (CLFMP), CHAMPVA, the Foreign Medical Program (FMP), the Children of Women Vietnam Veterans Health Care Benefits Program (CWWV), and the Indian Health

Service (IHS)/Tribal Health Programs (THP) Reimbursement Agreements Program.

I applaud President Biden's administration for keeping its promise to adopt a comprehensive public health and crisis sector approach to address suicide among veterans, service members, and their families within his first 200 days in office.

Since taking office, the Biden administration has made commendable progress in filling the department's 50,000 empty positions especially in ways that reflect the diversity that exists within the active-duty and veteran community.

This bill helps to build on that progress by addressing the department's aging infrastructure, which has been in place for roughly 58 years.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 30.

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.

PFC. JUSTIN T. PATON DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CLINIC

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3672) to designate the clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Indian River, Michigan, as the "Pfc. Justin T. Paton Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3672

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

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION OF PFC. JUSTIN T. PATON DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CLINIC.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs located at 5739 Hwy M-68, Indian River, Michigan, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the "Pfc. Justin T. Paton Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic".

(b) REFERENCE.—Any reference in any law, regulation, map, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the clinic referred to in subsection (a) shall be considered to be a reference to the "Pfc. Justin T. Paton Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic".

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3672.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3672, a bill to designate the clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Indian River, Michigan, as the "Pfc. Justin T. Paton Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic."

Justin Paton was born on July Fourth, 1982, in Emmet County, Michigan. He joined the U.S. Army in 2005 and deployed to Iraq in October 2006, assigned to the 1st Cavalry Division based out of Fort Hood, Texas.

While deployed to Iraq in 2007, his unit came in contact with the enemy just north of Baghdad, with small arms fire being exchanged. While in this firefight, Private First Class Paton was hit by an Iraqi sniper and did not survive his wounds. He was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart and Bronze Star. He bravely answered the Nation's call when it came, like many others before him and so many after.

Naming the VA clinic in his hometown, which he so loved, is an honor that would be a fitting remembrance of Private First Class Paton's life and sacrifice.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 3672, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for H.R. 3672, a bill that would honor the service and sacrifice of Private First Class Justin T. Paton, who was killed by enemy fire during combat operations 40 miles north of Baghdad in February 2007. He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star for his contributions to our country while deployed.

Despite being only 24 years old when he died, Private First Class Paton nonetheless left his mark on the world. A native of the Indian River area, many in his community were struck by his character and leadership potential.

Shortly after word of his death spread throughout the Indian River community, Private First Class Paton's high school football coach noted that he was "the kind of kid you hope your own son grows up to be."

It seems fitting that a clinic where veterans receive the care they earned would be named after Private First Class Paton.

Before enlisting in the Army in 2005, he worked as a rehabilitation technician at Northern Michigan Hospital. The VA providers at the clinic that will bear his name will carry on Private First Class Paton's legacy of serving members of his community.

I thank my colleague, Representative BERGMAN, for introducing this legislation to recognize Private First Class Paton's heroic service to our Nation by designating the Indian River, Michigan, VA clinic as the "Pfc. Justin T. Paton Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic."

We shall never forget the sacrifices of young men and women like Private

First Class Paton, who bravely raised their right hand and swore an oath to protect and defend our Nation.

This bill has letters of support from The American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, and the members of the Michigan delegation.

Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 3672 and urge my colleagues to do the same. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BERGMAN), the sponsor of this legislation and also a very good friend.

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank all my colleagues for getting involved in this relevant and timely bill.

I rise today in support of H.R. 3672 to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Indian River, Michigan, as the "Pfc. Justin T. Paton Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic."

It is an honor for me to lead this legislation to rename the VA care facility in the hometown and the final resting place of a young man who embodied the ethic of service above self as he gave his last full measure of devotion for our Nation.

Justin Paton was born and raised in northern Michigan and graduated from Inland Lakes High School in the year 2000. Feeling called to serve, he enlisted in the Army in 2005 and was deployed to Iraq on October 31, 2006. There, he was assigned to the 1st Cavalry Division, Delta Company and was named one of the unit leaders.

In February 2007, at the age of 24, he was killed in action in Iraq when his patrol came under intense sniper fire north of Baghdad.

Private First Class Paton was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart and Bronze Star for his sacrifice and heroism.

He is interred in the Ohioville Cemetery, just down the road from the Indian River VA clinic opening later this year that I am confident will bear his name.

Naming the Indian River CBOC is one small way to honor Justin and his family's sacrifice. His legacy is beyond deserving of the designation that we are seeking today.

I sincerely thank Pfc. Paton's family for all of their support. I thank the local leaders in Indian River and Tuscarora Township, who have been key in our efforts; the Michigan veterans service organizations for backing this bill; and the entirety of my Michigan delegation colleagues, who have come together in a bipartisan manner to co-sponsor this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3672.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 3672 to designate the clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Indian River, Michigan, as the "Pfc. Justin T. Paton Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic."

I thank my colleague, General BERGMAN, for bringing this legislation to the floor. It is always a poignant matter to consider the sacrifice of such a young American.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3672, which designates the clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Indian River, Michigan as the "Pfc. Justin T. Paton Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic."

This bill honors Private First Class Justin T. Paton and his courageous service to our Nation.

Today and every day, I stand with our Nation's veterans and their brave and selfless service in support of our freedoms.

Over 280,000 of our Nation's veterans reside in the city of Houston and I am proud to fight every day for the honor, recognition, and appreciation they, and all of our Nation's veterans, deserve.

Veterans have kept their promise to serve our Nation; they have willingly risked their lives to protect the country we all love.

We must now ensure that we keep our promises to our veterans by recognizing, remembering, and honoring their service.

I urge my colleagues to join me today in recognizing and honoring the service and sacrifice of Private First Class Justin Paton.

This bill honors the Indian River native who valiantly served in the United States Army with the 1st Cavalry Division, Delta Company until he was killed in action by enemy fire.

Private First Class Justin Paton gave his last full measure of devotion to the United States as he was killed by hostile sniper fire in Iraq in February 2007 at the age of 24.

Paton served as unit leader of his Company and was posthumously awarded a Bronze Star for his selfless actions in service to a grateful Nation.

As such, I rise in support of this bill, which honors his memory by designating the Department of Veterans Affairs clinic in his hometown as the "Pfc. Justin T. Paton Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3672.

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. BOST. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

CONTINUATION OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE WESTERN BALKANS—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 118-48)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message