

concluded that there was the potential for the fort to be considered as an affiliated area of the National Park System.

This bill, H.R. 359, would achieve just that, designating Fort San Geronimo as the first affiliated area in Puerto Rico. The National Park Service would be authorized to enter into cooperative agreements with the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture to provide technical and financial assistance for the fort's preservation. This would support and strengthen ongoing efforts to rehabilitate the site without placing it under Federal ownership.

Affiliated area designation would also bring national recognition to Fort San Geronimo's role in our military history. It would help us better interpret and tell the full story of the San Juan National Historic Site and that of the oldest and largest Spanish fortification system in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman WESTERMAN and Ranking Member GRIJALVA for their support. I look forward to continuing working together to get this legislation across the finish line and to help protect Fort San Geronimo for future generations.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I urge support of the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, as the gentlewoman from Puerto Rico (Mrs. GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN) stated, this is a commonsense bill that will improve the conservation and protection of a key historical site. It does so while avoiding unnecessary Federal involvement. I thank the gentlewoman again for her leadership on this effort.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 359.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. 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.

HERSHEL "WOODY" WILLIAMS NATIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR MONUMENT LOCATION ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2717) to authorize the National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation to establish a commemorative work on the National Mall to honor the extraordinary acts of valor, selfless service, and sacrifice displayed by Medal of Honor recipients, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2717

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 "Hershel 'Woody' Williams National Medal of Honor Monument Location Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Congress in 2021 unanimously passed, and the President signed, Public Law 117–80 (40 U.S.C. 8903 note), which authorized the National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation to establish on Federal land in the District of Columbia a commemorative work to honor the acts of valor, selfless service, and sacrifice displayed by Medal of Honor recipients.

(2) The Medal of Honor was established by President Abraham Lincoln and first awarded 160 years ago on March 25, 1863, and is part of Lincoln's lasting and living legacy.

(3) In 1991, during the administration of President George H.W. Bush, this legacy was extended further when National Medal of Honor Day was established as March 25th of each year.

(4) The Medal of Honor is awarded to all branches of the United States Armed Forces as our nation's highest recognition for valor in combat.

(5) The number of living Medal of Honor recipients has been steadily declining, making it even more crucial to honor and recognize their heroic sacrifices and inspire future generations.

(6) Hershel "Woody" Williams, the last World War II Medal of Honor recipient, passed away in 2022 and laid in honor at the United States Capitol.

(7) The Medal of Honor represents the very best of our Nation—ordinary citizens, who took extraordinary action above and beyond the call of duty and became heroes of our Republic.

(8) These examples inspire all citizens and ignite within us the very spirit of America.

(9) The Medal of Honor rises to the level of supreme national and historical importance necessary to warrant representation on the National Mall.

(10) Locating the National Medal of Honor Monument in close proximity to the Lincoln Memorial within the Reserve would be a respectful extension of his enduring legacy and recognition of what ordinary people can accomplish when working for the greater good.

SEC. 3. NATIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR MONUMENT LOCATION.

(a) *SITE.*—Notwithstanding section 8908(c) of title 40, United States Code, the commemorative work authorized by section 1(a) of Public Law 117–80 (40 U.S.C. 8903 note) shall be located within the Reserve (as defined in section 8902(a) of title 40, United States Code).

(b) *APPLICABILITY OF COMMEMORATIVE WORKS ACT.*—Except as provided in subsection (a), chapter 89 of title 40, United States Code (commonly known as the "Commemorative Works Act"), shall apply to the commemorative work.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2717, as amended, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, this Saturday is Veterans Day. There is perhaps no greater way to celebrate this day than passing H.R. 2717, which seeks to honor the valor and sacrifice of some of our Nation's bravest heroes, Medal of Honor recipients.

Mr. Speaker, 160 years ago, President Abraham Lincoln awarded the first Medal of Honor in the midst of the Civil War. It is our Nation's highest honor awarded to members of the Armed Forces and is bestowed sparingly to only those who have demonstrated the highest acts of valor. Less than 100 Medal of Honor recipients are alive today out of the more than 3,500 medals that have been awarded.

As the highest and most prestigious military decoration in the United States, it symbolizes exceptional acts of bravery, selflessness, and sacrifice beyond the call of duty. Through the recognition of these remarkable individuals, the Medal of Honor inspires a sense of national pride, honors the memory of fallen heroes, and motivates future generations to embody the values of courage and honor. Inspired by the Victoria Cross, the Medal of Honor continues to instill a profound sense of respect and gratitude for the sacrifices made in the defense of freedom and justice.

Congressman MOORE's bill, the Hershel "Woody" Williams National Medal of Honor Monument Location Act, would ensure that the monument honoring these brave heroes can be placed on what is known as the Reserve but is commonly referred to as The National Mall here in Washington, D.C.

A monument honoring our most exceptional citizens should be reflected in the location of the memorial. Millions of Americans and visitors from across the world travel every year to our Nation's Capital to learn about the history of our great Nation. According to National Park Service data, The National Mall receives upward of 25 million visitors each year. The monuments and memorials located on The National Mall are the centerpiece of this history, and it is appropriate to include a new monument honoring veterans who have displayed the most courageous acts of valor recognized by our country.

In my home State of Arkansas, our State capital also has a memorial dedicated to Medal of Honor recipients on its grounds. I hope this monument in D.C., like the one in Arkansas, can inspire reflection, patriotism, and gratitude for our Nation's military heroes.

Earlier this year, the Committee on Natural Resources had the privilege of hearing from 1 of the 65 living Medal of Honor recipients, Master Chief Special Warfare Operator Britt Slabinski. In

his inspiring testimony, he reminded us that the Medal of Honor serves to represent those willing to go above and beyond in any circumstance, no matter how small.

This monument will serve as an everlasting reminder of the greatness of this country and the difference that one single person can make. The legislation before us today, H.R. 2717, would authorize the location of the national Medal of Honor memorial in a prominent location on The National Mall, with the intent to keep it near the Lincoln Memorial, as President Lincoln was the first to ever give out this special award.

Mr. Speaker, I was proud to support the original legislation authorizing this memorial, and I am proud to be supporting this subsequent legislation today.

Mr. Speaker, I note that this bill has been named after Hershel “Woody” Williams, who sadly passed away last year. He was known for his extraordinary heroism in the pivotal Battle of Iwo Jima during the Second World War. At the young age of 21, he singlehandedly cleared a path for American troops against Japanese forces in an act of extraordinary bravery. This is a touching tribute in his honor.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill. I thank Congressman MOORE for his leadership, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2717, the Hershel “Woody” Williams National Medal of Honor Monument Location Act, introduced by our colleague from Utah, Representative BLAKE MOORE.

This legislation would authorize the construction of a Medal of Honor memorial on The National Mall. The Medal of Honor is the highest military decoration awarded to individuals whose extraordinary acts of valor, selfless service, and sacrifice exceed the call of duty.

This memorial would honor over 3,500 Medal of Honor recipients from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard, ensuring that their courage, sacrifice, patriotism, citizenship, integrity, and commitment to preserving this great democracy of ours are preserved for generations to come.

I thank Representative MOORE and cosponsor Representative MARC VEASEY for their leadership on this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on the bill.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MOORE), the lead sponsor of the bill.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2717, the Hershel “Woody” Williams National Medal of Honor Monument Location Act. I thank the chairman and ranking mem-

ber for their leadership in prioritizing this important piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, Woody Williams was born on a West Virginia dairy farm in 1923 and was first drawn to the Marine Corps by their trademark uniforms. At 5-foot-6, Williams was unable to enlist in the Marines due to height restrictions. After that regulation was changed in 1943, Woody enlisted and was in the Pacific theater in less than 90 days.

On February 21, 1945, then-Corporal Williams landed on the beach at Iwo Jima, where he distinguished himself by repeatedly risking the threat of enemy fire and bayonet charges over several hours while singlehandedly destroying enemy pillboxes, or concrete trenches, to make way for American tanks and infantry.

□ 1615

His gallant actions took place on the same day as the famous flag raising on Mount Suribachi, which he witnessed from about 1,000 yards away.

After returning home, President Harry Truman awarded Corporal Hershel Williams the Medal of Honor, our Nation’s highest recognition for valor in combat. He recognized his “aggressive fighting spirit and valiant devotion to duty throughout this fiercely contested action, [sustaining] and [enhancing] the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.”

Following his distinguished marine career, Williams continued to serve others in many capacities. Some of my colleagues may remember last summer when Hershel Williams lay in state in the U.S. Capitol rotunda as the last World War II Medal of Honor recipient to pass away.

Since its inception by President Lincoln in 1862, 3,517 brave soldiers have received the Nation’s highest honor for going above and beyond the call of duty and risking life and limb in selfless service to their countrymen. This elite class represents less than 0.001 percent of the 40 million brave sons and daughters who have served in the Armed Forces since the American Civil War.

While a permanent memorial for Medal of Honor recipients has been discussed for years, it was not until 2021 when President Biden signed a bill that Congressman VEASEY and I introduced to authorize the creation of a new monument to honor those who have been awarded the Medal of Honor. Today, we continue this work to authorize the creation of this monument in the Reserve, also known as the great cross-axis of The National Mall.

The monument will stand as a testament to those who protect our Nation’s values, such as the nearly half dozen from my home State of Utah. We envision it as an educational platform for future generations to learn about what has been required to maintain our Republic.

By siting this monument near the Lincoln Memorial, we can pay fitting

tribute to the President who established the award and embodied its principles. Our work to form a more perfect Union is unending, and I find it fitting that a monument honoring our Nation’s greatest heroes will be visible from the memorial honoring one of our greatest martyrs.

Today, our Nation finds itself sharply divided along partisan lines. This monument will remind our great Nation and its people that there is far more that unites us than divides us. It is my hope that constructing this monument in its rightful place will inspire all Americans and allow us to pay our respects to and learn from these individuals and these families who, in Lincoln’s words, “have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.”

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2717.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY), the co-lead of the legislation.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to urge the passage of the Hershel “Woody” Williams National Medal of Honor Monument Location Act.

The Medal of Honor is our Nation’s highest military decoration that is awarded to U.S. servicemembers who have distinguished themselves with extraordinary acts of valor and sacrifice that far exceed the call of duty.

Texas, my home State, is home to over 70 valiant Medal of Honor recipients, and we also have over 1 million veterans and Active Duty military that call the Lone Star State their home. That is why I teamed up with the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MOORE), my good friend, again to lead the passage of this Act.

Last year, we had the opportunity to work on a designation for a National Medal of Honor Museum being built in Arlington, Texas, that was in my district at the time. This amazing bill will authorize a monument right here in Washington, D.C., for Medal of Honor recipients, their families, their friends, loved ones and people who want to learn more about the history of the Medal of Honor to be able to come to D.C. and see why it is important that we create this lasting impact to the recipients of this highest award.

Today’s bill, the Hershel “Woody” Williams National Medal of Honor Monument Location Act, is a continuation of the efforts that we worked on last year and will position this monument where it rightfully belongs, near the Lincoln Memorial, honoring President Lincoln, who was awarded one of the first Medals of Honor in 1863.

I end today by thanking Congressman MOORE for continuing to work with me on this important issue. I urge my colleagues to support this new bill that commemorates the bravery, service, and sacrifice of more than 3,500 Medal of Honor recipients that have lived across our communities here in the USA.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. MILLER).

Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in favor of the Hershel "Woody" Williams National Medal of Honor Monument Location Act, which would locate the new National Medal of Honor Monument near the Lincoln Memorial on The National Mall here in Washington, D.C.

Woody was an American hero from my home State of West Virginia. When he passed away last year, we paid tribute to him as he was laid in honor in the rotunda of the United States Capitol. It was his dream to honor the final Medal of Honor recipient in our Capitol, never dreaming that it would have been himself.

Woody was a country boy. He tried to enlist at the age of 16. He wasn't very tall and he wasn't allowed in then, but he made it in at 17 years old. He grew up hunting on a farm and was always a good shot. He loved his country more than anything, and he would do anything possible to defend it, so he did. He really epitomized that great, great Greatest Generation.

He was awarded the Medal of Honor in 1945 for his courage in the battle of Iwo Jima where he singlehandedly—he was the guy that made the shot—fought the Japanese with the flamethrowers, clearing the path for more American troops.

Marines raised the American flag on Mount Suribachi—we can visualize that picture because we have all seen it—that very day, resulting in the iconic photo that showed that America was winning the war in the Pacific.

Woody was not just a constituent and a hero; he was a friend. I served with him for years in Rotary, right there in little Milton, West Virginia. His legacy of service, dedication, and patriotism will live through the countless lives that he touched. His impact on our West Virginia community cannot be overstated, as his service to our veterans has continued and continued long after his career in the Marine Corps.

With Veterans Day on Saturday, this bill couldn't be more timely to honor our servicemen and -women who are willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

This monument pays tribute to the recipients of America's highest military honor for valor in combat.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from West Virginia.

Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, the monument will remind future generations of the values that shaped and preserved our great Nation. I urge every Republican and Democrat in the House and Senate to vote for this bill.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Let me just comment on all the commentary from the sponsors of the legis-

lation, Mr. WESTERMAN, and our other colleagues, who outlined the importance of the legislation and the memorial.

There is a border community in my district, Douglas, and very prominent in their plaza is a memorial to all the men and women who have died in combat from that region, from the community of Douglas and from the county of Cochise.

I was talking to one of the VFW commanders on that visit, and he said: In this plaque, in this piece of granite, we have every ethnicity, every creed, representing different histories and cultures, and they all bled, and some died together in defense of this country.

I think this memorial will go a long way to say if that kind of sacrifice and that kind of unity is possible under the most extreme of circumstances, certainly being able to live in some sense of unity should be an ongoing goal. I think that will be part of what this memorial will mean to people.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member GRIJALVA and all the cosponsors of this bill and the great bipartisan work that has gone into making this happen. What a fitting tribute to Mr. Williams to name this bill after him.

I think back about a codel we made this past summer down to the country of Palau. We went out to a small island called Peleliu where one of the most bitter battles of World War II was fought. On that small island, really in a very hard place to get to, there stands a small monument to commemorate eight U.S. servicemembers who received the Medal of Honor in one battle.

As we were there, I thought not many Americans are ever going to get to see this small monument, and it made me realize how important it is that we do this monument here in Washington, D.C., to recognize not just Mr. Williams but all those who have served, to honor their memory, to remember their legacy, and to stand unwavering in our commitment to upholding the principles for which they fought so valiantly.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2717, as amended.

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. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further pro-

ceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE NATIONAL MONUMENT LOCATION ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1318) to authorize the location of a monument on the National Mall to commemorate and honor the women's suffrage movement and the passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1318

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 "Women's Suffrage National Monument Location Act".

SEC. 2. WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE NATIONAL MONUMENT.

(a) SITE.—Notwithstanding section 8908(c) of title 40, United States Code, the Women's Suffrage National Monument shall be located within the Reserve.

(b) APPLICABILITY OF COMMEMORATIVE WORKS ACT.—Except as provided in subsection (a), chapter 89 of title 40, United States Code (commonly known as the "Commemorative Works Act"), shall apply to the Women's Suffrage National Monument.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE NATIONAL MONUMENT.—The term "Women's Suffrage National Monument" means the commemorative work authorized to be established under Public Law 116-217 (40 U.S.C. 8903 note).

(2) RESERVE.—The term "Reserve" has the meaning given such term in section 8902(a)(3) of title 40, United States Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1318, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 175th anniversary of the beginning of the women's suffrage movement in 1848. For the first 144 years of our Nation's history, women were not afforded the right to vote.

During the 19th century, the women's suffrage movement emerged with the goal of securing this important constitutional right for women across the Nation. It took years of hard work and dedication. Securing this important