

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE
ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 9544) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 340 South Loudon Avenue in Baltimore, Maryland, as the "United States Representative Elijah E. Cummings Post Office Building".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 9544

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

**SECTION 1. UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE
ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS POST OFFICE
BUILDING.**

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 340 South Loudon Avenue in Baltimore, Maryland, shall be known and designated as the "United States Representative Elijah E. Cummings Post Office Building".

(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 "United States Representative Elijah E. Cummings Post Office Building".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. LANGWORTHY) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LANGWORTHY. 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 this measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill, which would rename a post office in Baltimore after Congressman Elijah Cummings.

Congressman Cummings was born in Baltimore on January 18, 1951, and was elected to the Maryland House of Delegates in 1982. In 1996, Mr. Cummings was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and later served as the chairman of the House Oversight and Reform Committee.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in very proud support of H.R. 9544. It is a proud day for people of Maryland. It is a proud day for the House Oversight Committee.

It is a proud day for the United States Congress that we have the opportunity to vote on a post office

named after the late, great chairman of the House Oversight Committee, Elijah Cummings.

Mr. Speaker, Elijah Cummings was a favorite son of Maryland who devoted his life and his career to making the government an instrument of the common good for everyone and uplifting everybody in our society together. He was always seeking that higher ground, always telling us in the midst of debate and discussion we are better than this, that we can always lift ourselves higher to find unity and consensus around the values that make our country great.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. MFUME), who is both his predecessor and his successor in office.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland, the ranking member, for his kind and overly gracious remarks.

Mr. Speaker, in his absence, I thank Chairman COMER who made a commitment several months back that we would get to this point and for his co-sponsorship of this bill. I thank my other colleagues from the State of Maryland, some of whom will be speaking today.

I rise in obvious support of this, encouraging Members of this body to embrace it and to say that the diligence and the collective commitment to your word to get us to this point means a lot to me. It is not lost on me. It is not lost on the people of the State of Maryland.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation designates the United States Postal Service facility, as you heard, located at 340 South Loudon Avenue in Baltimore, Maryland, as the United States Representative Elijah Cummings Post Office Building.

This legislation will bestow, I believe, a very fitting honor on a former chair of the Oversight Committee, former chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, and, most importantly, an unwavering servant of the people in the House that we now all serve in.

His legacy, in many respects, lives through the work that he has done, and this legislation will ensure once and for all that his name will continue to be called by the people that he so dutifully served.

Mr. Speaker, Elijah Cummings, as was noted a moment ago, was born on January 18, 1951, to Ruth Elma and Robert Cummings, two South Carolina sharecroppers who moved to Baltimore in search of more opportunities during the period of the Great Migration.

Elijah's parents worked long and hard, as did many parents in that era, because they were up against so many things coming out of the Great Depression and out of a period of war that our Nation found itself in.

They worked and also served as preachers of a local church that both of them founded. With their teachings, his parents instilled in Elijah a sense of faith, justice, and morality that would

go on to exemplify his four decades of public service.

While they were not formally educated in the traditional sense, Elijah's parents made certain that all of their children understood the importance and the essence of education. He tirelessly worked, as many of you know, over and over again to earn his Phi Beta Kappa key at Howard University and his juris doctorate degree at the University of Maryland School of Law.

Elijah knew that his story would ultimately illustrate the power of hard work and perseverance, and he always did that in a sense of believing that it would be the kind of message that young people who might be lost in many different ways would find a way to latch onto.

His values instilled in that generation, we believe, a whole new sense of public service. As a young lawyer in 1983, Elijah was elected and served with distinction in the Maryland House of Delegates. I might say, his personal credibility and relationships with members of that body existed then, and they still exist now.

He has, in many respects, given us the sort of model and the sort of example that we all talk about and many of us strive to attain.

In 1996, Elijah won his first of 12 elections to this body, assuming the seat that I had voluntarily vacated to head up the presidency of the NAACP.

Elijah's sense of fairness, his respect for others, and his relentless efforts to make life better for all people won him the respect and the admiration of his colleagues on this side of the aisle and his colleagues on that side of the aisle.

He and I were friends for 42 years up until the day of his death, and so I carry with me a lot of memorable moments of his congressional career, of the time that we served together on the board at Morgan State University, and as our people will tell you, as part of our organizations, our time together learning politics in the street, finding a way to organize and make a real difference.

He was the only person that I know of who continued to remind us that we could be better than this. I am so glad that Mr. RASKIN brought that up.

Mr. Speaker, I am hoping I might get an additional 30 seconds here. I would like to conclude. I know we are running out of time.

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, in this time of national division and in this time of great partisanship, I am reminded of when we went through similar periods, and it was always Elijah Cummings on this side of the aisle and others who would remind us that we really were better than this, that we really did have a higher calling.

For me, personally, as a friend, as a former colleague, and as someone that

I admired—even though he would tell you he admired me, I admired him even more—it is just a great honor to bring this bill forward. I would ask that it is adopted today, and I thank all of those Members who supported this, both Democrats and Republicans, and the sponsor.

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the former distinguished majority leader of the House of Representatives.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, we are better than this. Surely, all of us ought to be saying that to ourselves as we conclude this Congress. We are better than this. You will hear that said so often when we talk about our friend, Elijah Cummings.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this legislation. The Old Testament tells us of a man long ago who saw injustice, wrongdoing, and suffering and devoted his life to banishing these evils from his native land, a man who kept an enduring faith not only in God, but in his fellow men and women, a man who inspired that same faith in the people around him. That man was Elijah the prophet.

□ 1530

The Elijah I served with in Congress for nearly 23 years was my dear friend Elijah Cummings. He was like Elijah the prophet. He possessed a moral clarity that guided him in every part of his life.

Whether it was protecting voting rights, alleviating poverty, expanding civil rights, or promoting justice, Elijah Cummings demonstrated principled tenacity and boundless energy when standing up for the causes in which he believed. He believed in this House's ability and sacred responsibility to better our Republic and the lives of each and every one of our citizens.

It was because of that belief that he held all who served in this House to such a high standard of ethics, the same standard to which he held himself.

When he believed this institution was falling short of that standard, he would demand of us, as I said at the beginning and will repeat again: "We are better than this."

Frankly, as we sit in these extraordinary seats given to us only through the hands of our neighbors and friends in our districts, when we have the opportunity to make a decision, we ought to have resounding in our head that someone will say when we act that we are not better than this but we are what we have done. We need to be better.

No place benefited from Elijah's principled leadership more than his hometown. He was a true son of Baltimore.

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, he was a true son of Baltimore, the city of grit, of opportunity, of hard work, and, as they would say of themselves, of charm.

He loved his city, and his city loved him in return.

Naming this post office after him pays tribute to his lifelong devotion to Baltimore, to democracy, to justice, to the average person, to every person, to his brothers and sisters, and to his country.

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 10 seconds to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, we lost Elijah far too early. His memory continues to guide us. His example is one to which all Members of this institution, all Members, all Americans, and all people ought to aspire.

Attaching his name to this post office will serve as a reminder to all who seek, in his words, "not just common ground, but higher ground."

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES).

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I certainly support this legislation to pay tribute to the giant Elijah Cummings.

I have so many memories of Elijah. The first memory I have is that we both represented Baltimore for many years together. I started to notice that he and I, even though we represented different parts of Baltimore, there would be events that were for the benefit of the entire city, and we would always be showing up at those together. It gave me great pride because I felt like that showed we had some shared values about what was important. His leadership in those places was unrivaled.

A second observation I have is that—and certainly KWEISI knows this intimately—Elijah was always the person who the family wanted to come to give the eulogy at the funeral. It was because oftentimes he had a deep connection to the family that made a difference. They also knew that he would articulate what that person had meant to the community better than anybody else could. It was always an inspirational time when you would sit there and hear those powerful words with that powerful voice kind of enveloping you.

The thing I remember most is the story he would tell about when he was sworn in and his father was sitting up in the gallery. Many of us know this story. His father began to cry. Afterward, Elijah went to him and said that he noticed that he was crying. He had never seen his father cry. He observed that not even when his own mother died had his father cried. He asked why he had been crying. His father said: You think it is because you became a Congressman, don't you?

Elijah said yes. His father said no, that was not the reason, although he was very proud of him. He said that he was crying because, looking at Elijah, he could see what he could have been.

That is an observation that many generations of Americans who encounter barriers could make looking at the success of the next generation and the generation beyond, "I see what I could have been," and how emotional that is. Elijah was representing all of those generations, but in the same way, they were saying that those children and grandchildren could look at an Elijah and say not that is what I could have been, but that is what I can be. This is why he made such a powerful difference in the lives of so many.

If we could all reach a little bit for the kind of service that Elijah Cummings gave to this country, the world would be a better place.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman MFUME for leading this effort to pay tribute to our former colleague, our former friend, a giant, Elijah Cummings.

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the distinguished gentlewoman from New York (Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ), the vice ranking member of the Oversight Committee.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank my colleague, Representative MFUME, for presenting this tremendously important legislation.

What else can there be said about the great chairman, Elijah E. Cummings? He was a father, mentor, visionary civil rights leader, and fierce defender of democracy.

As the son of sharecroppers rising to become chairman of one of the most powerful committees in the United States Congress, his life and his existence were a testimony to the American Dream.

As chairman of the House Committee on Oversight, he would often remind us of our purpose within this body. He asked: "When we are dancing with the angels, the question will be asked . . . what did we do to make sure we kept our democracy intact?"

Our democracy is what made Elijah's life possible, the great arc of his life possible. He was an inspiring coach and mentor who was uniquely focused on serving his hometown of Baltimore and improving the lives of the American people.

His work inside and outside of this building was a master class in how to speak truth to power and keep our country together. He was tough yet compassionate and always reminded people that they were never too late to do good.

Elijah dedicated his life to preserving American democracy, a fight that will be even more prevalent in the years to come, and his legacy guides many in our work today.

I am proud to support the renaming of the South Loudon Avenue post office after Chairman Elijah E. Cummings as a nod to his incredible legacy.

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ).

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I thank my good friends from Maryland, Mr. MFUME and Mr. RASKIN, for their diligent work on this bill to honor the life and legacy of Elijah Cummings.

Chairman Cummings was known throughout this Chamber and the Nation as a man of strength and integrity and someone who compassionately yet fearlessly wielded his powers of oversight and transparency to make our Nation as strong as it could possibly be.

He was also a mentor to me and many others, and someone I proudly called my friend. I had the privilege of serving on the Committee on Oversight and Reform under Chairman Cummings and saw up close how he fought for what is right and just, even if it wasn't popular.

Elijah Cummings was also known for telling hard truths. It didn't matter who you were, what your politics were, or where you came from. He told difficult truths to American baseball heroes who had tarnished our beloved pastimes, and he confronted powerful people who priced prescription drugs beyond the reach of our citizens.

One of Elijah Cummings' best qualities was that he listened, and more importantly, he actually heard you. He heard you whether you were a schoolteacher or a janitor, a colleague here in Congress or the President of the United States.

I still carry the advice that Chairman Cummings gave to me, and I am sure he shared it with many of you as well: You need to think about the decisions you make and their impact not just on the moment at hand but on the future.

I could spend all day listing out his legislative and political accomplishments, but one thing stands out and cements his lasting impact: the thousands of people he inspired to fight for justice and freedom.

He served this House and the American people with grace, unmatched integrity, and passion. He loved the city and the people of Baltimore, and they loved him right back.

This post office is another visible and lasting testament of respect for this true American giant, and I proudly support this bill and encourage all of my colleagues to do the same and continue to acknowledge the incredible legacy and leadership of this remarkable man.

Rest in power, my friend.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I thank the gentlewoman from Florida for those beautiful remarks.

Elijah Cummings was a great Representative for the people of Baltimore and for the people of Maryland. He was a great leader, and he was a great teacher, too.

I remember when I was in my third term in office, and I had started off here on the Judiciary Committee and the Oversight Committee, to which Chairman Cummings had recruited me. I was also on the House Administration Committee. Then, I had an invitation to go on the Rules Committee, but I was afraid that I might be overextended.

I went and sat right over on the floor next to Chairman Cummings where he liked to sit, and I told him that I was afraid that I might be overburdening myself with too many committees. He turned silent for a moment, and then he said: "Raskin"—he spoke very sharply to me at that moment. I had never heard him use that tone of voice. I said: Yes? He said: You are never too busy to do that which you ought to be doing.

I never forgot that, and I have used that line for a lot of other colleagues. People will complain about being tired and exhausted and so on, but we are never too busy to be doing that which we ought to be doing.

Congressman MFUME, with this visionary legislation, is setting up a post office at 340 South Loudon Avenue in Baltimore that will be graced with the name of the great Elijah Cummings. How fitting that is, a place where people go to send letters and messages, because another thing I remember Chairman Cummings always saying was that children are the ultimate message that we send to future generations of people who we will never meet. He meant we have to invest in children and young people because they will end up defining a world that will long outlast and outsurvive us.

□ 1545

I hope that post office lasts forever, and I hope when parents take their kids to that post office to mail their letters, they will be able to tell them that there was once a great man named Elijah Cummings whose whole life repays a lot of study for all of us.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I urge all of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support H.R. 9544, legislation in honor of a true American hero, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I support this legislation to honor Congressman Elijah Cummings. It has been wonderful to hear so many great stories of his time here in these hallowed Halls. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. LANGWORTHY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 9544.

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.

OFFICER NOAH JACOB SHAHNAVAZ POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 9775) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 119 North Anderson Street in Elwood, Indiana, as the "Officer Noah Jacob Shahnava Post Office Building".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 9775

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

SECTION 1. OFFICER NOAH JACOB SHAHNAVAZ POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 119 North Anderson Street in Elwood, Indiana, shall be known and designated as the "Officer Noah Jacob Shahnava Post Office Building".

(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 "Officer Noah Jacob Shahnava Post Office Building".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. LANGWORTHY) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LANGWORTHY. 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 this measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill which would rename a post office in Indiana for Officer Noah Shahnava.

After graduating from Fishers High School in 2016, he joined the U.S. Army and was deployed to the Middle East.

Later, Officer Shahnava became a dedicated member of the Elwood Police Department in Indiana. Officer Shahnava's life was cut short on July 31, 2022, when he was ambushed by a shot during a routine traffic stop.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I am rising in support of H.R. 9775 to honor Noah Shahnava. Born and raised in Indianapolis, he joined the U.S. Army in 2016 where he was deployed to the Middle East as a