

a family member because it has got the best chance for a match and the best chance for success.

Yet the VA had a limitation that he had to be a veteran. Now, what are the chances of all your family being veterans when all of a sudden you have renal failure and have to have a kidney? They have got to be off the wall, and that is ridiculous.

So, Mr. Speaker, I filed this bill to correct this mess.

My colleague has given a great description of what happened to the Nelsons. But, more importantly, common sense—and I like the mention of that—tells us that you can't eliminate the best pool of donors that a family has because of their lack of being a veteran.

And we all know—we heard Mr. O'ROURKE say previously—we are down to about 1 percent of our Nation actually serves in the military anymore.

So this is a commonsense fix for a commonsense problem.

Mr. Speaker, I am really proud of my staff. They have worked really hard on this. They stayed at it and stayed at it. We got the attention of the VA, and I am happy for their cooperation. I want to thank the committee. They were overwhelmingly supportive on both sides of the aisle. I urged my colleagues to fix a commonsense problem and allow a son to give a kidney to his father at a facility that is most convenient to the family, which is all common sense, so that our veterans, who have given their all for us, have the right to have the best healthcare available to American citizens, and that is what this bill will provide.

There was such a good explanation by my colleagues that I didn't go into the details. But I just want to tell you that when you have a constituent come in with a commonsense problem, we have a duty and a responsibility to fix it because common sense is in short supply in Washington, D.C.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I thank Judge CARTER. Everybody make note of this. Common sense is going to prevail. We are in full support of H.R. 1133.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to vote accordingly, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, in closing, once again, I urge my colleagues to pass this very important bill. I encourage the Senate to pass it as soon as possible so we can get it on the President's desk.

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 Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1133, 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 amend the Vet-

erans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide for an operation on a live donor for purposes of conducting a transplant procedure for a veteran, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NATIONAL VETERANS MEMORIAL AND MUSEUM ACT

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1900) to designate the Veterans Memorial and Museum in Columbus, Ohio, as the National Veterans Memorial and Museum, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1900

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 "National Veterans Memorial and Museum Act".

SEC. 2. DESIGNATION OF NATIONAL VETERANS MEMORIAL AND MUSEUM.

(a) DESIGNATION.—Subject to the condition described in subsection (b), the memorial and museum that is, as of the date of the enactment of this Act, being constructed on an approximately 7-acre area on West Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio, bounded by the Scioto River and the Scioto Greenway, shall be designated as the "National Veterans Memorial and Museum".

(b) WITHDRAWAL OF DESIGNATION.—The designation under subsection (a) may be withdrawn no earlier than five years after the date on which the museum opens the public, pursuant to an Act of Congress, if the progress and operation of the museum are found to be unsatisfactory based on the report submitted under subsection (c).

(c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—As a condition of the designation under subsection (a), the director of the memorial and museum described in that subsection shall submit to Congress a report on the memorial and museum by not later than the date specified in paragraph (2). Such report shall include each of the following:

(A) The projected budget for the memorial and museum for the five-year period beginning on the date the memorial and museum is expected to open to the public.

(B) A description of the outreach conducted by the memorial and museum to veterans across the United States to receive input about the design and contents of the memorial and museum.

(C) A description of the process by which decisions are made about the contents of the exhibits displayed at the memorial and museum.

(D) A description of the organizational structure of the memorial and museum.

(E) A copy of the bylaws and rules of the memorial and museum.

(F) A list of any organizations or entities that have accredited the memorial and museum.

(2) DEADLINE FOR REPORT.—The date specified in this paragraph is the earlier of the following dates:

(A) The date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(B) The date that is 30 days before the date on which the memorial and museum is first open to the public.

(d) EFFECT OF DESIGNATION.—The national memorial and museum designated by subsection (a) is not a unit of the National Park System, and the designation of the national memorial and museum shall not be construed to require Federal funds to be expended for any purpose related to the national memorial and museum.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1900, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1900, as amended.

H.R. 1900, as amended, would designate the Veterans Memorial and Museum in Columbus, Ohio, as the National Veterans Memorial and Museum. The national designation is appropriate because this will be the only memorial and museum in the Nation that will honor our veterans throughout our Nation's history.

Mr. Speaker, I thank our distinguished ranking member, Mr. WALZ, of course, for working with the bill sponsor; and our chairman, Chairman ROE; and, of course, Mr. STIVERS, who is the bill's sponsor; and me, to ensure that the Veterans Memorial and Museum will maintain the highest standards after it receives the national designation.

H.R. 1900, as amended, will require the museum to provide a report to Congress that would include information on its organizational and financial projections.

The bill specifically states that, after 5 years, if the memorial and museum is not operating satisfactorily, then Congress may withdraw the national designation. We hope that doesn't happen.

Moreover, H.R. 1900, as amended, makes it clear that the museum and memorial is not affiliated with the National Park System, and that the bill does not authorize Federal funds for the museum.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 1900, as amended, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the manager's amendment to H.R. 1900, as amended, the National Veterans Memorial and Museum Act.

I would also like to say that when I came to Congress, this is how I thought things were supposed to work: citizens

come together, they come up with a great idea, they decide that they are going to honor our Nation's veterans, they talk to their Members of Congress, they bring it here, we all work together, we come up with a plan to put it in place, and we come to the floor to pass a piece of legislation.

□ 1515

This is one of those times where that little cartoon, "I am just a bill sitting on Capitol Hill," actually worked that way. For that, I am grateful for the work that has been done.

I would especially like to thank Chairman ROE for his willingness, as we looked at this bill, to put some guardrails in place making sure that before we designate the memorial and museum to U.S. veterans of all eras, that it truly is the National Veterans Memorial and Museum.

The materials provided to Members of the Veterans' Affairs Committee clearly demonstrate the intent to create an architecturally stunning, state-of-the-art institution in the heart of the country that honors veterans and educates the country about those sacrifices. That is an incredibly noble cause.

Just as important to the eventual success of this effort is the responsibility of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee to ensure that it be established and operated to the highest possible standards forever, as are the museums and cemeteries under its jurisdiction run by the National Cemetery Administration and the American Battle Monuments Commission. I feel the legislation we are voting on today does exactly that.

Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge the efforts of the gentlewoman from Columbus, Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY). I would also like to thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS) for working with us on this. The gentleman truly represents the best of what it means to be a representative. His good-faith effort to continue to improve on a piece of legislation, taking in the concerns that people had to make it work, it is, to me, incredibly encouraging. I thank the gentleman for that. His work is going to ensure that this is going to be a spectacular museum and monument to our Nation's veterans.

Under the bill before us today, the museum will submit a report to Congress before it opens. The report will address the issues of budget, governance, operations, vision, and veteran outreach.

There is a provision we are adding as part of the manager's amendment that allows Congress to remove that designation after 5 years. We will not need to do that. This will be a wonderful facility. We put this in place as part of our responsibility of oversight.

With the addition of these provisions, I believe the committee has done its due diligence before recommending the House to confer this national designation.

In addition, it has put in place the necessary guardrails to ensure that this will be built in Columbus, Ohio, to the highest standards. I am proud to say this will be the National Veterans Memorial and Museum.

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the ranking member. We had a little issue in committee, but we didn't stall the bill. We worked that out and moved forward. So let's get the Senate to pass it now after we pass it today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS), the sponsor of the bill.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida for everything he is doing to lead this bill on the floor today. I would like to also thank the ranking member from Minnesota for his good-faith effort and his work. We worked in a collaborative way to address his concerns.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank my colleague from Columbus, JOYCE BEATTY; and my other colleague from Columbus, PAT TIBERI, for their work in a bipartisan fashion for making this bill better, helping this bill pass the House. I hope we can get it passed in the Senate here shortly as well.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to speak today in support of the bill that will designate the National Veterans Memorial and Museum being built in Columbus, Ohio, as America's National Veterans Memorial and Museum.

The National Veterans Memorial and Museum will serve as a civic landmark to honor, connect, inspire, and educate all Americans about the service and sacrifice of our Nation's 22 million veterans. It will be the only public museum of its kind that exists for the exclusive role of sharing the experiences of veterans across all eras, conflicts, and branches of military service.

You might ask: Why would we want to do this in Columbus, Ohio?

Well, first and foremost, Ohio has the sixth largest veterans population in the United States, and it is easily accessible to almost anyone in the United States. We are within a 10-hour drive of almost 60 percent of the veterans in the United States.

I believe that it is going to be a great opportunity to have not everything in Washington, D.C., but have it out in the rest of the country.

Ohio is a great place of military history. Ohio was recently selected to be the future home of the United States Veterans Affairs National Archives in Dayton, and that will make sure that military records dating back to the Revolutionary War are kept there.

Ohio is the birthplace of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and that is one of the earliest adopted veterans service organizations.

This museum will also be, and is, supported by veterans service organiza-

tions around the country, and we want to thank them for that.

A lot of veterans have worked hard to make that happen. For example, Colonel Tom Moe, a Vietnam veteran and a POW who flew 85 missions, is leading Veterans' Outreach for the National Veterans Memorial and Museum, and he is part of the Veterans' Advisory Committee working closely with the VSOs across the country to make sure this museum is truly a national reflection of veterans and their stories.

Additionally, the Columbus Downtown Development Corporation is managing this project. They are a 501(c)(3) that will operate, fund, and manage the museum, led by a national board of directors, including veterans, veterans service organizations, and the families of America's veterans. This 501(c)(3)'s mission will remain focused on ensuring that the museum conveys the reverence owed to our veterans of yesterday and today, as well as tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Chairman ROE for his leadership in this legislation and allowing this to go through regular order through the Veterans' Affairs Committee. There were hearings. It was a collaborative process, and we worked to address some issues from the other side of the aisle. We worked in a good-faith effort.

I think we came up with a good solution that ensures that this museum will have the highest standards and will be representative of the national designation in a way that we can all be proud of.

I am convinced that both the minority and majority staff wanted to make this museum the greatest it can be, and I want to thank them for all their efforts.

We were able to hear from VSOs testifying in support of this museum that included The American Legion, the VFW, the Paralyzed Veterans of America. I believe that through their testimony and our work, there was a lot of great information that was exchanged, and we are excited to move forward with the National Veterans Memorial and Museum.

One last point is that this museum was funded with private donations. It requires no Federal funding to open the doors. I believe that is another competitive advantage.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman ROE, Ranking Member WALZ, Chairman BILIRAKIS, the members of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, and, most importantly, my co-lead and colleague on this effort, JOYCE BEATTY and PAT TIBERI from Columbus.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his words. I appreciate his work.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY), a staunch and truly effective advocate for her constituents and for veterans across this Nation. This museum will reside in her district.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, first let me say I certainly want to join my colleague, Congressman STEVE STIVERS, in thanking Congressman BILIRAKIS and Congressman WALZ for all of their work in allowing us to make this possible to be here today.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to rise to offer my enthusiastic support for the National Veterans Memorial and Museum Act, H.R. 1900, designating it as a public museum for the exclusive purpose of sharing the experience and voices of veterans across all eras, conflicts, and branches of the military.

As you have heard, it will be housed in my district, so I am especially pleased that it is being built in a partnership with private pay, a partnership with government, and a partnership that is blessed by the veterans of central Ohio and across the Nation.

The museum concept was the brainchild of the Nation's good friend: World War II veteran, legendary astronaut, and former U.S. Senator from Ohio, John Glenn, who was a dear friend and one of my constituents. John also chaired the Veterans Committee.

Mr. Speaker, if Senator Glenn were here today, he would share with us how this museum will honor, connect, inspire, and educate all Americans about the unified service and sacrifices of our Nation's more than 40 million veterans.

I salute this Congress and my community for recognizing the need for veterans of all eras to have a museum to collectively call their own.

Mr. Speaker, I could not stand here without again thanking my colleague and veteran, Congressman STEVE STIVERS, for his relentless work, for his leadership, and his partnership throughout the development of this project.

This project certainly shares with us what bipartisan work can do.

Mr. Speaker, I also would like to thank Congressman TIBERI for joining us. I greatly appreciate and want to personally thank the leadership of Chairman ROE and Ranking Member WALZ, and also the subcommittee leadership, because they expressed their concerns. We addressed the concerns in a very constructive way. That is what partnerships and leadership is all about. Because of their good work, it has strengthened the operations of the project and the viability of the project.

H.R. 1900 has the support of The American Legion, the Paralyzed Veterans of America, and the VFW.

Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to support this legislation and to come to Columbus when it is open to see it in person and how it honors the stories and the sacrifices of our Nation's veterans.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. DAVIDSON).

Mr. DAVIDSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, as an Army veteran and former Army Ranger, I am proud to join Representative STIVERS, Rep-

resentative BEATTY, and really the Ohio delegation in today's designation of the Veterans Memorial and Museum in Columbus, Ohio, as the National Veterans Memorial and Museum. I am thankful to all my colleagues and the work of the committee to do this not just as something for Ohio, but something for our Nation and for our Nation's veterans.

This museum is squarely focused on telling the personal stories of those who have served, including those who have lost their lives serving our country. The National Veterans Memorial and Museum will be the only one of its kind that uses personal belongings, letters, and memories to bring the stories of our servicemembers and their families to life.

In addition to world class interactive exhibits that will serve to educate the next generation about the value of military service, this project will also be connected to an online database featuring the collection.

The National Veterans Memorial and Museum will also serve to honor our men and women in uniform by providing space for celebrations, and veterans ceremonies and reunions.

Ohio has a proud history of honoring our Nation's veterans and supporting our current men and women in uniform. Ohio is home to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, the National Museum of the United States Air Force, and was recently selected as the United States Veterans Affairs National Archives. It is fitting that Ohio should be the place for telling these stories.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the bipartisan support on this bill and I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

I thank everyone who spoke here. It is the way it is supposed to work. I am very excited about this.

Mr. Speaker, I would encourage you to go and look. This is going to be spectacular. It is at nationalvmm.org, if you want to see where they are and the progress that is being made. We are going to be open here soon in the spring. I am going to take Mrs. BEATTY up on this as a veteran myself.

I think of the countless families and veterans who will take their children and walk through the halls and tell the story. This is an important piece of our history. It is important to tell the story and it is important for us to preserve these stories.

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, again, we need to teach our children the value of military service so they can appreciate it. These are our true American heroes. I am looking forward to visiting Mrs. BEATTY in Columbus.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mrs. BEATTY and, of course, General Stivers for doing such a wonderful job in getting this bill done, and I also thank the ranking member.

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 Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1900, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1530

VETERANS E-HEALTH AND TELE-MEDICINE SUPPORT ACT OF 2017

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2123) to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the ability of health care professionals to treat veterans through the use of telemedicine, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2123

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 "Veterans E-Health and Telemedicine Support Act of 2017" or the "VETS Act of 2017".

SEC. 2. LICENSURE OF HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PROVIDING TREATMENT VIA TELEMEDICINE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1730A the following new section:

"§ 1730B. Licensure of health care professionals providing treatment via telemedicine

"(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any provision of law regarding the licensure of health care professionals, a covered health care professional may practice the health care profession of the health care professional at any location in any State, regardless of where the covered health care professional or the patient is located, if the covered health care professional is using telemedicine to provide treatment to an individual under this chapter.

"(b) PROPERTY OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.—Subsection (a) shall apply to a covered health care professional providing treatment to a patient regardless of whether the covered health care professional or patient is located in a facility owned by the Federal Government during such treatment.

"(c) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to remove, limit, or otherwise affect any obligation of a covered health care professional under the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 801 et seq.).

"(d) COVERED HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'covered health care professional' means a health care professional who—

"(1) is an employee of the Department appointed under the authority under sections 7306, 7401, 7405, 7406, or 7408 of this title, or title 5;

"(2) is authorized by the Secretary to provide health care under this chapter;

"(3) is required to adhere to all quality standards relating to the provision of telemedicine in accordance with applicable policies of the Department; and