

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding today's markup and for the Committee's consideration of my bill H.R. 7365, the Colonel Edward Shames Post Office Act.

This legislation designates the post office at 1225 Kempsville Road in Virginia Beach, Virginia as the "Colonel Edward Shames Post Office Building.

Colonel Shames was a distinguished Army officer whose life embodied the courage, leadership, and sacrifice of the World War II generation.

Born in Norfolk, Virginia, to David and Sadie Shames, he was raised in a patriotic household and came of age during one of history's defining moments. Following America's entry into World War II, he enlisted in the U.S. Army in August 1942, volunteered for airborne training, and joined the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 101st Airborne Division at Camp Toccoa, Georgia.

On June 6, 1944, he parachuted into Normandy as part of the D-Day invasion, one of the most consequential military operations in history. During the campaign, he received a battlefield commission and was assigned to Easy Company, where he assumed leadership responsibilities under combat conditions.

As an officer in Easy Company, he fought in some of the war's most pivotal battles, including Operation Market Garden and the Battle of the Bulge. He was wounded in combat, received the Purple Heart, and earned the Bronze Star for his leadership and valor, and was among the first American soldiers to enter Adolf Hitler's mountain retreat, the Eagle's Nest, in southern Germany.

The story of Easy Company was later immortalized in Stephen E. Ambrose's book *Band of Brothers* and the acclaimed HBO miniseries of the same name, introducing millions of Americans to the extraordinary service and sacrifice of this remarkable unit. At the time of his passing, Colonel Shames was the last surviving officer of Easy Company, a living connection to one of the most celebrated units in American military history.

Following the war, Colonel Shames continued his service to the nation in both military and civilian capacities. He worked in national security, including as a specialist on Middle East affairs, remained in the U.S. Army Reserve, retired with the rank of Colonel in 1973. He later made Virginia Beach his home, where he became an active member of the community and a dedicated advocate for veterans and preserving the legacy of military service.

Colonel Edward Shames passed away peacefully in 2021 at the age of 99. He is remembered not only as a courageous combat leader and devoted public servant, but as a proud representative of the Greatest Generation whose service helped secure freedom in one of history's darkest hours.

It is fitting that this post office in the community he called home bear his name so that future generations may remember his extraordinary service and sacrifice.

I respectfully urge the committee to favorable report H.R. 7365 to the House, and I yield back.