



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 118th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 170

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2024

No. 144

House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 9, 2024, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION POSES NATIONAL SECURITY RISK

The SPEAKER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. JOYCE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, since taking office, President Biden and Vice President HARRIS have thrown open our doors to more than 10 million illegal immigrants, more than 99.7 percent of whom are still in the United States today.

This mass illegal immigration poses a national security risk, with Border Patrol agents lacking the tools and resources needed to stop, apprehend, and deport illegal immigrants. With cities now strained by illegal immigrants taking up shelter in school gyms and utilizing resources already stressed by record inflation, American communities are now forced to confront this crisis created by an open-border policy.

In New York City alone, free hotels, free healthcare, and debit cards have attracted more than 100,000 migrants since the spring of 2022, and more than 65,000 of them remain in New York City today.

It is time for the House to pass the No Bailout for Sanctuary Cities Act,

which would prohibit our tax dollars from being used by sanctuary cities to benefit these illegal immigrants.

We need to return to the secure-border policies that we had under President Donald J. Trump. It is time to secure our borders, and it is time to disincentivize the policies that made each and every State a border State.

STREAMLINE ENROLLING IN OUT-OF-STATE MEDICAID PROGRAMS

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, later today, the House will consider the Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act. This important legislation will streamline the process for doctors to enroll in out-of-State Medicaid programs in order to provide much-needed care for children.

Last year, I met with two of my constituents from Perry County, Derek and Amy Nesbit, who shared with me the story of their son, William, and William's battle with leukemia.

Throughout William's treatment, the Nesbit family was met with red tape and bureaucracy that led to difficulties in receiving the treatment that William so desperately needed and the treatment that William deserved.

Tragically, William lost his battle with leukemia, and since then, the Nesbits have dedicated their time and resources to advocating for a better system for the children and families who are affected with diseases.

Children enrolled in Medicaid deserve access to the best possible care, and we have a responsibility to remove obstacles that exist because of where a patient lives.

Today, I am proud to support this important bill, the Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act, which will remove these barriers and enable access to timely and quality care for all of our kids.

COMMEMORATING COMMUNITY BLOCK GRANT'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OBERNOLTE). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLEAVER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Community Development Block Grant program, known as CDBG, and I recognize its tremendous contributions to the viability of American communities.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development CDBG program provides funding to over 1,200 States, local jurisdictions, and ancillary areas across the United States.

Since the creation of the program in 1975, HUD and Congress have invested more than \$1.7 billion in job creation, building affordable housing, funding disaster recovery efforts, and supporting economic development and infrastructure projects, primarily serving low- to moderate-income populations.

Notably, the CDBG program is the most flexible source of Federal funding to States, localities, and ancillary areas for economic and community development purposes. State and local governments work with their local program partners with input from the public to develop programs that are initiated, planned, and developed at the local level and meet national objectives.

As a former mayor of Kansas City, Missouri, Missouri's largest municipality, I know firsthand the importance of having a flexible Federal program that can meet unique local challenges. Due to its nature, CDBG is often layered with other HUD funds or used for gap financing to add the final necessary funds that make transformative community projects viable.

In 2023, the CDBG program provided funding for housing-related activities

This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

H5241

that served nearly 62,000 families, including direct homeownership assistance and rehabilitation of homes; assisting more than 25,500 individuals to find permanent employment or to keep full-time jobs they were at risk of losing through economic development activities; improvements to homeless facilities that served more than 52,000 people; and operating costs of homeless and HIV/AIDS patient programs, senior services, food banks, services for the disabled, youth services, transportation services, and general health or mental health services that assisted more than 5.4 million Americans.

HUD requests that grantees report on leveraged funds as well as public-private partnerships to demonstrate local investment. Grantees reported that CDBG investments leveraged an average of \$5.02 for every \$1 of CDBG grant funding during 2022, amplifying the program's return on investment with \$4.9 billion in other resources.

The 50th anniversary is now an opportunity to commemorate this milestone and commit to strengthening the CDBG program with additional funding and programming improvements.

My legislation, the CDBG Improvement Act, would permanently authorize the CDBG program, increase funding to offset inflation and account for the increase in the number of entitlement jurisdictions since 1974, and authorize housing construction as an eligible program activity, among other purposes.

As ranking member of the Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance, with jurisdiction over the CDBG program, I congratulate the CDBG champions and advocates and look forward to working together on this mission.

ESTABLISHING REFUNDABLE TAX CREDIT FOR IVF EXPENSES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill to establish a refundable tax credit for expenses incurred through in vitro fertilization, or IVF.

For many, including some of my own family members, the struggle with infertility has been profoundly heartwrenching. While IVF presents its own challenges, it offers a vital opportunity for pregnancy and parenthood that should be accessible to all families facing these difficulties.

With the U.S. birthrate declining and IVF contributing to 2 to 3 percent of births, it is crucial to support families seeking to grow.

As a physician, I value every life, and as a mother, I understand the importance of empowering families to expand on their own terms and their own timelines.

This measure will provide a fully refundable tax credit for IVF-related medical expenses up to \$30,000 over a

lifetime. It will cover essential costs, such as transportation, egg retrievals, counseling, and medications.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, making the dream of parenthood more attainable and reaffirming our commitment to helping families.

HORRIFIC ACTS IN GAZA STRIP

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today disgusted by the horrific acts which have taken place in the Gaza Strip. This brutal execution of six hostages taken by the Hamas war criminals is nothing more than the most recent development in a campaign of terror with one goal: the extermination of the Jewish State of Israel.

One of these hostages, an American man by the name of Hersh Goldberg-Polin, was enjoying the Re'im music festival when this band of thugs turned this peaceful day into a living hell. During the attack, Mr. Goldberg-Polin's arm was blown off by a grenade. He spent the next 330 days terrified that he would never see his family again. On August 31, 2024, they executed this badly wounded American music lover.

I recently visited the families of some of the hostages in Israel as well as here in the United States. I saw firsthand the unimaginable hope and strength these families have lived with for the past 11 months.

Hope for Goldberg-Polin's family has run out, but strength remains as they mourn their loss.

The thoughts and prayers of the American people will continue to be with the Israeli people. May God be with them.

HONORING KIDS FOR VETS

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and thank Kids for Vets, which raised over \$10,000 through lemonade stands for veteran causes in the Quad Cities.

As a 24-year Army veteran, it warms my heart to see America's youth so deeply concerned about our servicemembers.

Kids for Vets partners with amazing nonprofit organizations, such as the Quad Cities Outreach Center and SEAL Family Legacy, to provide support to Gold Star families, food banks, job placement, housing assistance, and so much more for America's heroes.

Because of the outstanding work of Kids for Vets and their partners, veterans in the Quad Cities and greater eastern Iowa have a support system that puts their essential needs first.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the amazing work of Kids for Vets, and I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting and thanking this incredible organization.

□ 1215

CONGRATULATING MATT STUTZMAN

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Matt Stutzman of Fairfield, Iowa, for winning the gold medal in archery in the 2024 Paralympics. Matt is a distin-

guished athlete who has overcome the immense obstacle of being born without both arms to set the new Paralympic record of a score of 149 points out of 150 points possible.

In admiration of his father, Matt developed an interest in bow hunting. Upon noticing his interest in hunting, Matt's father bought him his first bow at age 16. From that point on, he was passionately dedicated to enhancing his skills. His first achievement came in the form of an Olympic silver medal in the 2012 Paralympics.

Next, in 2015, he set a new world record by hitting a target from 283 meters away, a record previously held by an able-bodied athlete.

Matt is a testament to the will and determination of Iowa's First District, and we expect further great things from him in the future.

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA'S SPACE TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION AND EDUCATION PROJECT

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the \$1.5 million in Federal funding secured for a space technology innovation and education project at the University of Iowa's department of physics and astronomy. This funding will be used to build state-of-the-art space equipment to help train the next generation of cosmic leaders.

I was happy to visit the university shortly after securing these funds to speak to students and faculty about the impact this will have.

The University of Iowa is already a leading school for researching the skies above, and this critical investment will further the University of Iowa's standing as a leading university in the development of space instruments for NASA and for America's astronauts.

Our country is in dire need of leaders in the astronomical field, which is why I am proud to secure this funding for one of America's leading educational institutions. With that said, I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing the best for the University of Iowa's future astronauts.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY CURT MEEKS

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I extend the warmest birthday greetings to a most amazing man and life partner, my husband Curt Meeks.

JUSTICE FOR DR. SEIF FATEEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to demand justice for Dr. Seif Fateen, an MIT-educated professor who has been unjustly detained in Egypt since 2018.

Dr. Fateen served in Egypt's Ministry of Education before the government was overthrown in a coup in 2013. His home was later raided without a warrant, and he was arrested.

For the last 6 years, he has been held without a trial date despite an Egyptian law that sets a 2-year maximum

for pretrial detention. Dr. Fateen has experienced various forms of mistreatment, torture, and near-total isolation during his detention, and he continues to be denied basic due process.

I thank Dr. Fateen's family, who live in Redmond, Washington, in my district, for bringing his case to my attention.

I recently met with the Egyptian Ambassador to advocate for Dr. Fateen, and I will continue to demand justice so that he can be reunited with his family as soon as possible.

NATIONAL POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. MALLIOTAKIS) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of National POW/MIA Recognition Day, which is commemorated on the third Friday of September every year. This past weekend I joined the Vietnam Veterans of America in my district to bring attention to the more than 80,000 American servicemembers who were prisoners of war and those still missing in action.

My community of Staten Island, New York, recently learned from the Department of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency that the remains of U.S. Army Air Forces Second Lieutenant Francis E. Callahan of New Brighton were identified after 80 years. Lieutenant Callahan and 10 other servicemembers were killed in action during World War II when their plane was shot down by an enemy combatant during a bombing mission to Brunswick, Germany.

At the time, the crash site could not be located by Allied forces or Army investigators. However, in 2015, an independent research group, Missing Allied Air Crew Research Team, contacted the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency historians with new information related to a possible crash site near Wistedt, Germany.

The agency's investigators were able to find the location and recovered various pieces of wreckage between 2021 and 2023.

Following extensive laboratory analysis, anthropological and dental analysis, along with the available circumstantial evidence, an association between the remains and Callahan was established. Now Second Lieutenant Callahan will be buried in Arlington National Cemetery to rest with his brothers.

Sadly, 3 of the 10 members of Callahan's crew still remain unaccounted for. They are among the tens of thousands of other servicemembers who remain missing. As a nation grateful to those who served and those who made the ultimate sacrifice, we must continue to raise awareness of this issue and work toward the repatriation of all our POW/MIA and bring closure to their families and communities.

The identification and repatriation of Lieutenant Callahan, along with Private First Class Raymond Smith of Brooklyn, whose remains returned to New York City in 2021, 71 years after he went missing in action during the Korean war, give us renewed hope that our Nation will fulfill its promise and commitment to return every single American who served our Nation on foreign land.

As the POW/MIA flag states, these heroes are not forgotten, and we will do everything we can to honor their memory and bring them home.

SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address and speak about the Nation's number one antipoverty program for the elderly and the number one antipoverty program for children, and the program that more veterans rely on for disability than the VA. Of course, I am talking about Social Security.

What the public doesn't know, but should, is that Congress hasn't acted to enhance Social Security since 1971. That is 53 years. A lot has transpired and happened over 53 years, and with 10,000 baby boomers a day becoming eligible for Social Security, it is long overdue that Congress acts.

We have a proposal. Our proposal is called Social Security 2100, and this is exactly what it does. It makes sure that no one can retire into poverty. We have over 5 million Americans who have paid into Social Security and get below-poverty-level checks.

Nobody gets wealthy on Social Security. The average is \$18,000 per male and \$14,000 per female. As I said, 5 million of our fellow citizens are getting below-poverty-level checks on a commitment they made to their government to get the insurance.

That is what we are talking about here. It is insurance. Social Security also is one of the most efficient government programs. Its administrative costs are under 1 percent. There is no other agency that does that and services over 70 million people.

I would also like to remind my colleagues on the other side of the aisle that Social Security is important because it impacts your district directly.

Mr. Speaker, for example, you have 134,536 recipients: 95,000-plus are retirees; 15,000 are disabled; 8,756 are widows; and 9,942 are children. That is not the most critical thing though. The critical thing is: How much money comes into your district on a monthly basis?

In California's 23rd District, it is \$213 million a month, and that hasn't been adjusted since 1971.

What do these people do with this money when they get it?

They spend it right back in their district at the local grocery store, at the

local pharmacy, to pay for their heating and cooling, to put gas in their automobiles. It, therefore, is a direct economic development plan for the people in this Nation who need it the most.

For more than 40 percent of Americans, Social Security is the only benefit they have. They don't have benefits like the Federal Government has or like the United States Congress has. All they have is that very simple policy and a commitment from their government that they would make it actuarially sound. Instead, what they get is doubt and fear and the fact that the trust fund will be cut 20 percent now by 2033 if Congress continues to do nothing.

It is long overdue.

Why is it, citizens must ask, that Congress can't come together to take care of the very citizens whom they are sworn to serve on an insurance plan that is the most efficient in government operating under at 1 percent administrative cost.

Mr. Speaker, you can't find another agency in the private sector, and I hail from an insurance capital, to administer insurances anywhere from 15 to 26 percent. In government they do it for under 1.

Act, Congress.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING SERGEANT MAJOR JUAN OGO BLAZ, A PROUD SON OF GUAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Guam (Mr. MOYLAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOYLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and honor Sergeant Major Juan Ogo Blaz, a proud son of Guam who sadly passed away on September 3, 2024.

Sergeant Major Blaz served with the 82nd Airborne Division in Vietnam where he experienced intense combat and served gallantly. During a 1969 incident, Sergeant Major Blaz' platoon came under attack, instantly incapacitating the platoon leader. Sergeant Major Blaz took immediate command of his unit and moved to drag other wounded men into positions of safety.

While evacuating the wounded, Sergeant Major Blaz himself was injured in his right shoulder but refused medevac at that moment. The platoon continued receiving fire from enemy bunkers, and when close air support arrived, they struggled to place rockets on target. Despite his injuries, Sergeant Major Blaz made a series of solo charges at enemy positions marking them with smoke for attack by aircraft. Only once these enemy positions were neutralized did Sergeant Major Blaz accept medical care.

Based on these actions, Sergeant Major Juan Ogo Blaz has earned himself a place among the pantheon of Guam's heroes. His life and military career stand as an example of patriotism and the people of Guam will always be proud of his legacy. Although in his

life Sergeant Major Blaz was only awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions in Vietnam. As honorable as this distinction holds, many would agree that his acts of valor mirrored those throughout the Nation who were recognized with the Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest of honors bestowed to military heroes.

Since the start of my term, I have prioritized ensuring that Sergeant Major Blaz and two other Guam heroes, who also qualify for the Congressional Medal of Honor for their acts of heroism from the Vietnam conflict, are indeed recognized so that a chapter spanning nearly six decades would finally be close to a conclusion.

HONORING CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR
RECIPIENTS

Mr. MOYLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, and I am happy to share that earlier this year an amendment I was able to offer was successfully included in the FY 2025 National Defense Authorization Act, which would award the Congressional Medal of Honor to Sergeant Major Juan Ogo Blaz, Army Command Sergeant Martin Manglona, and the late Army Specialist Joseph Perez. I was even more humbled when I saw the joy in the eyes of Sergeant Major Blaz when I shared the news in person and advised that we are almost there.

Sadly, the Sergeant Major passed away, and while he may not be here with us to accept his much-deserved Congressional Medal of Honor, if language remains in the final version of the NDAA, he will be here in spirit. More importantly, he will be smiling down on the island and Nation which he proudly and faithfully served.

I am committed to getting this job done.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that in these historic Halls, I would like to take this time to ask for a moment of silence to honor the late Sergeant Major Juan Ogo Blaz, a man of family, faith, patriotism, and a true hero of this Nation.

May he rest in peace.

□ 1230

IN HONOR OF IRA SULLIVAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FROST) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, we are nearing 4 years since we lost a jazz great. I rise today to honor the life of one of our jazz legends and icons, Ira Sullivan.

Ira was many things: a jazz great, an educator, a mentor, a father, a husband, and a friend of mine.

I remember first meeting him when I was in about the seventh or eighth grade, as a student of the University of Miami Young Musicians Camp Jazz Honor Program.

I remember walking in very young, and he asked me to play vibraphone to a jazz song, which was kind of weird for

me. I was pretty young in my jazz education career, and I didn't know about jazz vibraphone. It almost felt as if he was asking me to play a timpani to a jazz song. It was very foreign.

The next day, I came in, and he gave me a pair of Gary Burton mallets, and he told me to give it a try. Believe it or not, I was still very confused. Either way, that decision and that gift he gave me changed my life forever.

From then on, I would start practicing jazz vibraphone and became quite obsessed with it. I stopped auditioning on the drum set at my school and started auditioning to be a jazz vibraphonist.

Years passed. Ira would always invite me to go back to perform with him in whatever the new class was at the University of Miami for the summer camp. I got to meet all the young people from across the country who Ira had inspired and whose lives he had changed.

Ira Sullivan achieved technical skills not achieved by many: a multi-instrumentalist in the truest sense of the word, fluidly being able to play trumpet, saxophone, flute, and other instruments.

Ira also had the ability to be a jazz great in the history books but also remain an accessible educator for artists of many different levels. Ira mentored greats such as Jaco Pastorius and Pat Metheny, but he also continued to teach high schoolers and college-aged students at the Young Musicians Camp at the University of Miami, where I met him.

Today, I honor the life of Ira Sullivan because he inspired so many young musicians.

I stopped practicing swing many, many years ago, but I have been telling myself that I ought to get back to it. I am committed to starting back up in his honor.

The last thing I will say, too, is a quick story. I remember going into high school jazz band, and I hadn't practiced very much that day. I got yelled at by the band director, rightfully so.

That night, I went home and felt very defeated. My dad came into my room with the house phone, and he said: Ira Sullivan is on the phone for you. I said: The Ira Sullivan? He said: Yeah, the Ira Sullivan.

I spoke with him for maybe 30 minutes, 45 minutes, told him about my day. I remember hanging up and going to practice all night. God bless my parents.

I went into jazz band that next day. Not only was I able to play the song proficiently, but I did it with so much passion, some of the most passion I had ever played with before. I think it is because, number one, I got up off of my butt and practiced, but also because Ira Sullivan called me.

Long live the memory of Ira Sullivan, jazz great, educator, friend, and mentor.

ACKNOWLEDGING SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize September as Suicide Pre-

vention Month, a time for us to come together, raise awareness, and offer hope to those facing thoughts of suicide and other mental health issues.

This issue hits particularly close to home for our veterans as we lose 17 veterans due to suicide every day. These are our friends, loved ones, neighbors, and people who served our country with courage, but are now struggling in silence. Whether it is safe firearm storage, better and increased access to mental healthcare, or the immediate support of the 988 Suicide Crisis Lifeline, we can all play a part in saving lives.

People in a mental health or suicide crisis deserve and need a compassionate and an effective response. The path toward saving lives starts with a conversation. Talking openly about suicide prevention and mental health can break the silence, and sometimes just one conversation can make all the difference.

We owe it to those who we have lost and those still struggling to listen and to act and to work together toward a future where no one has to fight alone.

IN HONOR OF OMARI JONES

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Omari Jones, an exceptional central Floridian in my district who has made history as a bronze medalist in boxing at the 2024 Olympics.

Omari was just one of eight boxers to bring home a medal, demonstrating his skill, courage, and determination.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 35 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. MALLIOTAKIS) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Eternal God, every good and perfect gift is from You. 237 years ago, Benjamin Franklin prayed to You, Father of lights, to illuminate our understanding of this mantle that You have placed on the people of the United States. For it is by Your generous hand that this Nation was given freedom and liberty, as well as the noble and weighty responsibility to govern with integrity and honor.

Today, as we celebrate the signing of our Constitution on this day in 1787, we pray that we have stewarded Your gifts faithfully, as our Founders intended. We recommit ourselves to forming a

more perfect Union, to establishing justice, to ensuring domestic tranquility, to providing for the common defense, to promoting the general welfare, and to securing the blessings of liberty for ourselves and our posterity.

More importantly, on this day, we renew our dependence on Your guidance as we do our part to uphold our Republic. In our efforts to preserve this democracy, may we continue to seek Your righteousness and to rely on Your gracious guidance. For in You, God of our past, our present, and our future, there is no shadow or change, no failing of Your compassion.

Great is Your faithfulness now and always.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House the approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. EZELL) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. EZELL led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

NATIONAL TRUCK DRIVER APPRECIATION WEEK

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize 3.6 million American truckers during National Truck Driver Appreciation Week.

Truckers keep our Nation moving forward. Every year, across more than 300 billion miles of highways and back roads, these men and women deliver 11.5 billion tons of goods to feed our families, fuel our industries, and sustain our communities.

Whenever you see a truck on the road, Madam Speaker, know that behind the wheel, someone is often miles away from home and family to deliver goods we usually take for granted.

Without these unsung heroes, grocery shelves would be bare, factories would shut down, hospitals would run out of medication, and cars would be stranded without fuel.

I thank all our truck drivers for their hard work in undertaking one of our economy's most demanding and vital jobs.

WORLD SERIES CHAMPIONS

(Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina asked and was given permission to address

the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, fans were on the edge of their seats as the Pitt County Girls Softball League made history by winning the Little League World Series.

With exemplary skill and talent, they defeated Team Louisiana Southwest 1-0. They had a flawless tournament, and no one scored against them. They outscored their opponents by a whopping combined score of 44-0.

I thank the players, coaches, family, fans, and community for rallying in support of this remarkable and amazing team. Eastern North Carolina is proud to celebrate this victory.

The players reflect the best of America, and they should be extremely proud knowing they are the best in the world.

RECOGNIZING BORING BUSINESS SYSTEMS ON THEIR 100TH ANNIVERSARY

(Mr. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Boring Business Systems in my hometown of Lakeland, Florida, on the company's 100th anniversary.

Founded in 1924 as the Lakeland Typewriter and Supply Company, Boring's longevity is a testament to its leaders' vision to anticipate the continually evolving needs of the business community. From its humble beginnings as a retail provider of manual typewriters and adding machines, Boring now provides IT services, cybersecurity, document management, and comprehensive network support.

Less than one-half of 1 percent of businesses still exist after 100 years. Making this milestone even more special is the fact that Boring is now 100 percent employee owned, a result of chairman emeritus Dean Boring's commitment to ensure the company thrives as it enters its second century.

I salute all the member owners of Boring Business Systems on this momentous occasion.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO MARGARET DAVIS

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to an outstanding nurse practitioner who is a dear friend of mine, who passed away a few days ago. Her name is Margaret Davis, and people would often ask if she was a relative, and I would always say: No, but I wish that she was.

She was, indeed, one of the most effective nurses I have ever known during my lifetime. She was also one of

the most intellectual persons I have ever known.

So we simply express condolences to her family and friends and cite her work as president of the Black Nurses Association in the city of Chicago.

Margaret, you have done well. Rest in peace.

NATIONAL PRISONER OF WAR/MISSING IN ACTION RECOGNITION DAY

(Mr. BEAN of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BEAN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise in honor of National Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Recognition Day to remember the more than 500,000 POWs who endured the horrors of enemy captivity. We remember the tens of thousands of our brave patriots who are still missing in action and have yet to return home safely to the warm embrace of their families and loved ones.

In an expression of solidarity, Americans will honor the lives of our greatest heroes, and the POW/MIA flag will fly proudly.

Our brave patriots and their families deserve more than just 1 day. They deserve a place to be honored and mourned all year long. That is why I have introduced legislation to designate the National POW/MIA Memorial & Museum at Cecil Field in northeast Florida as a national landmark.

Madam Speaker, on this day, we the people, with a grateful heart, salute those who endured great dangers in the hands of the enemy and those lost in service to our Nation. We reaffirm our commitment to resolve the accounting of our great American patriots.

May we never forget.

BAY ST. LOUIS, MISSISSIPPI

(Mr. EZELL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EZELL. Madam Speaker, I am excited to share that Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, has recently been named one of the best places to live in 2024.

This charming Mississippi Gulf Coast town, often referred to as part of the secret coast, has gained national attention for its many outdoor activities and strong sense of community.

When I visit, I immediately can feel that the folks of Bay St. Louis take pride in supporting one another and working together to make it a better place for everyone.

Some of the city's main attractions include a resilient seaside downtown area with many historic eateries, monthly art walks, and, of course, the beachside atmosphere. It embodies the small-town feel with big cultural energy.

Also, because of its easy access to many waterways, including the Gulf of Mexico and the Jourdan River, flowing

to the Bay St. Louis bay, this coastal city has been a key participant in the renewal of the Gulf's oyster population.

Bay St. Louis is a place apart, and I am honored to represent this community in Congress, and I encourage all Members to visit.

I congratulate this wonderful community on such a well-deserved recognition.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

FIFA WORLD CUP 2026 COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

Mrs. KIM of California. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7438) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the FIFA World Cup 2026, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7438

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 "FIFA World Cup 2026 Commemorative Coin Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

- (1) The FIFA World Cup 2026—
 - (A) will be held in the United States, Mexico, and Canada;
 - (B) will be the first time the Men's World Cup has been held in the United States in 32 years; and
 - (C) will be the second Men's World Cup hosted by the United States and the largest and most inclusive World Cup ever hosted, with 48 teams in 16 cities across 3 countries.
- (2) Host cities and locations in the United States will include Atlanta, Boston, Dallas, Houston, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Miami, the New York/New Jersey area, the San Francisco Bay area, and Seattle.
- (3) The FIFA World Cup 2026 will be organized under a FIFA-led operating model, which was introduced in the FIFA Women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand in 2023.
- (4) Through the FIFA-led operating model, the FIFA World Cup 2026 is being planned and executed by FWC2026 US, Inc., an organization exempt from taxation pursuant to section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, headquartered in Miami.
- (5) The FIFA-led operating model includes a guaranteed framework for providing a legacy fund to each participating host member: the United States Soccer Federation, Canada Soccer, and the Mexican Football Federation.
- (6) A FIFA World Cup 2026 commemorative coin program has the opportunity to shape a lasting legacy for the sport of soccer in the United States, support underserved communities, and celebrate a unifying global event.

SEC. 3. COIN SPECIFICATIONS.

(a) DENOMINATIONS.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall mint and issue the following coins in commemoration of the FIFA World Cup 2026:

- (1) \$5 GOLD COINS.—Not more than 100,000 \$5 coins, each of which shall—
 - (A) weigh 8.359 grams;
 - (B) have a diameter of 0.850 inches; and
 - (C) contain not less than 90 percent gold.
- (2) \$1 SILVER COINS.—Not more than 500,000 \$1 coins, each of which shall—
 - (A) weigh 26.73 grams;
 - (B) have a diameter of 1.500 inches; and
 - (C) contain not less than 90 percent silver.
- (3) HALF-DOLLAR CLAD COINS.—Not more than 750,000 half-dollar coins, each of which shall—
 - (A) weigh 11.34 grams;
 - (B) have a diameter of 1.205 inches; and
 - (C) be minted to the specifications for half-dollar coins contained in section 5112(b) of title 31, United States Code.

(b) LEGAL TENDER.—The coins minted under this Act shall be legal tender, as provided in section 5103 of title 31, United States Code.

(c) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all coins minted under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

(d) MINTAGE LIMIT EXCEPTION.—If the Secretary determines, based on independent, market-based research conducted by FWC2026 US, Inc., that the mintage levels described in this section are not adequate to meet public demand, the Secretary may increase the mintage levels as the Secretary determines is necessary to meet public demand.

SEC. 4. DESIGN OF COINS.

(a) DESIGN REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The designs of the coins minted under this Act shall be emblematic of the sport of soccer and the FIFA World Cup.

(2) DESIGNATION AND INSCRIPTIONS.—On each coin minted under this Act, there shall be—

- (A) a designation of the value of the coin;
- (B) an inscription of the year "2026"; and
- (C) inscriptions of the words "Liberty", "In God We Trust", "United States of America", and "E Pluribus Unum".

(3) SELECTION.—The designs for the coins minted under this Act shall be—

- (A) selected by the Secretary after consultation with—
 - (i) FWC2026 US, Inc.; and
 - (ii) the Commission of Fine Arts; and
- (B) reviewed by the Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee.

SEC. 5. ISSUANCE OF COINS.

(a) QUALITY OF COINS.—The Secretary may issue coins minted under this Act in uncirculated and proof qualities.

(b) PERIOD OF ISSUANCE.—The Secretary may issue coins under this Act only during the calendar year beginning on January 1, 2026.

SEC. 6. SALE OF COINS.

(a) SALE PRICE.—The coins issued under this Act shall be sold by the Secretary at a price equal to the sum of—

- (1) the face value of the coins;
- (2) the surcharge provided in section 7(a) with respect to such coins; and
- (3) the cost of designing and issuing the coins (including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, overhead expenses, marketing, and shipping).

(b) BULK SALES.—The Secretary shall make bulk sales of the coins issued under this Act at a reasonable discount.

(c) PREPAID ORDERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall accept prepaid orders for the coins minted

under this Act before the issuance of such coins.

(2) DISCOUNT.—Sale prices with respect to prepaid orders under paragraph (1) shall be at a reasonable discount.

SEC. 7. SURCHARGES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—All sales of coins issued under this Act shall include a surcharge of—

- (1) \$35 per coin for the \$5 coin;
- (2) \$10 per coin for the \$1 coin; and
- (3) \$5 per coin for the half-dollar coin.

(b) DISTRIBUTION.—Subject to section 5134(f) of title 31, United States Code, all surcharges received by the Secretary from the sale of coins issued under this Act shall be paid to FWC2026 US, Inc., for the purpose of aiding or executing United States-based soccer programs and activities, including the promotion of—

(1) FIFA's legacy programs in the United States; and

(2) efforts to grow the sport of soccer throughout the United States, with a focus on youth, inner cities, and underserved communities.

(c) AUDITS.—FWC2026 US, Inc., shall be subject to the audit requirements of section 5134(f)(2) of title 31, United States Code, with regard to the amounts received under subsection (b).

(d) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), no surcharge may be included with respect to the issuance under this Act of any coin during a calendar year if, as of the time of such issuance, the issuance of such coin would result in the number of commemorative coin programs issued during such year to exceed the annual 2 commemorative coin program issuance limitation under section 5112(m)(1) of title 31, United States Code (as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act). The Secretary may issue guidance to carry out this subsection.

SEC. 8. FINANCIAL ASSURANCES.

The Secretary shall take such actions as may be necessary to ensure that—

(1) minting and issuing coins under this Act will not result in any net cost to the United States Government; and

(2) no funds, including applicable surcharges, are disbursed to any recipient designated in section 7(b) until the total cost of designing and issuing all of the coins authorized by this Act (including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, winning design compensation, overhead expenses, and shipping) is recovered by the United States Treasury, consistent with sections 5112(m) and 5134(f) of title 31, United States Code.

SEC. 9. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) FIFA.—The term "FIFA" means the Fédération Internationale de Football Association.

(2) FIFA WORLD CUP 2026.—The term "FIFA World Cup 2026" means the FIFA Men's World Cup held in 2026.

(3) FWC2026 US, INC.—The term "FWC2026 US, Inc." means the FIFA subsidiary incorporated in the United States for the purpose of operating the FIFA World Cup 2026 and related programs.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. KIM of California. Madam 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 bill.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. KIM of California. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7438, the FIFA 2026 World Cup Commemorative Coin Act. This is a bill that will direct the Department of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the upcoming 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Madam Speaker, as you drive around almost any American town on a Saturday morning in the fall or spring, there is a good chance you will drive past a youth soccer match in action. Young boys and girls are giving it their all, dreaming of becoming the next Christian Pulisic or Alex Morgan.

The popularity of the sport of soccer has been on the rise in the United States since the 1960s. The biggest boom came after our country hosted the FIFA World Cup for the first time in 1994.

The excitement of that tournament led to the creation of Major League Soccer, which has grown from 10 teams in 2005 to its current 29 teams.

□ 1415

One can only imagine the excitement that will be generated by hosting our second World Cup tournament. The 23rd FIFA World Cup in 2026 will be the first time that 48 teams will participate. That is up from 32.

Along with 5 cities from our neighbors in Canada and Mexico, 11 U.S. cities will have the chance to showcase to the world the brilliance and diversity of our great Nation.

The United States will host matches in Dallas, Kansas City, Houston, Atlanta, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Seattle, San Francisco, Boston, Miami, and, in what is sure to be a thrilling final match at MetLife Stadium, in East Rutherford, New Jersey, on July 19, 2026.

Little boys and girls all over the country will have the opportunity to watch these international superstars compete, a memory that will be sure to last a lifetime.

This bill will allow the United States Mint to produce a commemorative coin, which will provide Americans a physical keepsake. An added benefit of the Mint's Commemorative Coin Program is that there is a surcharge within the cost of the coin that helps raise money for important causes. In this case, the cause for this coin benefits soccer programs and activities around the United States. This will inspire the next generation of soccer stars in our country.

Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD), my good friend, and his over 290 cosponsors for introducing this worthy legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7438.

Go Team USA.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7438, the FIFA World Cup 2026 Commemorative Coin Act, sponsored by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD).

Madam Speaker, I am thrilled to have this opportunity to celebrate the FIFA World Cup 2026 through this commemorative coin bill, as it will be the first time the men's World Cup has been held in the United States in 32 years.

I am also proud this event will be held in part of Los Angeles. Not only that, but it will be the largest and most inclusive World Cup ever hosted. Host cities are spread throughout the United States, Mexico, and Canada, with 48 teams competing in 16 different cities, including my hometown of Los Angeles and 10 other American cities.

This commemorative coin will provide a unique opportunity to inspire love of soccer in the United States while also celebrating this unifying global event. It is estimated that 16 million fans will attend the matches in the United States alone.

This World Cup 2026 is organized by FWC26, a 501(c)(4) nonprofit in the United States, which is designed to continue after the event has ended, emphasizing the organization's long-term commitment to soccer in the United States.

Specifically, this commemorative coin is designed to encourage United States-based soccer programs, as the proceeds from the sale of these coins will be used to grow the sport of soccer throughout the United States with a focus on youth in underserved communities.

Madam Speaker, I applaud the sponsors of this bill, and I urge my colleagues to support passage of this measure.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. KIM of California. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD).

Mr. LAHOOD. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM) for yielding me the time. I echo the comments of both of my colleagues who spoke today.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of our bill, H.R. 7438, the FIFA World Cup 2026 Commemorative Coin Act. FIFA stands for Federation of International Football Association. As the co-chair of the Congressional Soccer Caucus, I am proud to lead the coin bill effort with my co-chairs of the Soccer Caucus, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. LARSEN), the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON), and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR).

I am also very honored that the U.S. Soccer Federation, which operates the

men's and women's team, is based in my home State of Illinois. Also, in my district, I have seven colleges and universities that have men's and women's soccer.

The FIFA World Cup 2026 will be the largest sporting event in the history of the world. It will be hosted jointly by the United States, Mexico, and Canada, the first time that three countries have hosted the World Cup.

We expect nearly 6 million fans to attend the matches in the United States alone. Half will be traveling to the United States from other countries. As has been noted, this is the first World Cup in 100 years where we expand it to 48 teams from the current 32 teams.

Hosting the tournament, which includes 104 matches in 16 cities, 11 of those cities in the United States, will bring generational opportunities to elevate soccer and build greater economic benefits in the States, cities, and local communities throughout the country.

Soccer is a global sport, one that continues to rapidly grow in the United States, and provides healthy outlets and opportunities for youth of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

The FIFA World Cup 2026 Commemorative Coin Act will help support legacy programs for youth in underserved and rural communities across the Nation, ensuring kids engage in physical activity and sport.

The proceeds of the coin will support the growth of soccer throughout the United States with a focus on youth in rural areas, inner cities, and underserved communities. It is an exciting time for soccer in the United States.

The Soccer Caucus was proud to pass a resolution in 2017 supporting the United States' bid to host the 2026 World Cup, and I am proud to bring this bill to support the legacy of the World Cup to the floor here today.

Madam Speaker, I thank all of my colleagues who signed onto this bill, 290 Republicans and Democrats, who are supportive of our 2026 World Cup in the United States, along with Mexico and Canada.

The Soccer Caucus will continue to work with our partners across the Federal Government and in the soccer community to ensure a safe, smooth, and exciting World Cup here in the United States in 2026.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance my time to close.

Madam Speaker, this bill would direct the U.S. Mint to create a commemorative coin to honor the FIFA World Cup 2026, which will be the first time a World Cup is hosted by three nations. I hope this event and the coin that we are creating today will bring together millions of people from different countries to celebrate soccer.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. KIM of California. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7438, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7438.

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.

DUSTOFF CREWS OF THE VIETNAM WAR CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT

Mrs. KIM of California. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2825) to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the United States Army Dustoff crews of the Vietnam War, collectively, in recognition of their extraordinary heroism and life-saving actions in Vietnam.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2825

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 "Dustoff Crews of the Vietnam War Congressional Gold Medal Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds that—

(1) a United States Army Dustoff crewman, including a pilot, crew chief, and medic, is a helicopter crew member who served honorably during the Vietnam War aboard helicopter air ambulances, which were both non-division and division assets under the radio call signs "Dustoff" and "Medevac";

(2) Dustoff crews performed aeromedical evacuation for United States, Vietnamese, and allied forces in Southeast Asia from May 1962 through March 1973;

(3) nearing the end of World War II, the United States Army began using helicopters for medical evacuation and years later, during the Korean War, these helicopter air ambulances were responsible for transporting 17,700 United States casualties;

(4) during the Vietnam War, with the use of helicopter air ambulances, United States Army Dustoff crews pioneered the concept of dedicated and rapid medical evacuation and transported almost 900,000 United States, South Vietnamese, and other allied sick and wounded, as well as wounded enemy forces;

(5) helicopters proved to be a revolutionary tool to assist those injured on the battlefield;

(6) highly skilled and intrepid, Dustoff crews were able to operate the helicopters and land them on almost any terrain in nearly any weather to pick up wounded, after which the Dustoff crews could provide care to these patients while transporting them to ready medical facilities;

(7) the vital work of the Dustoff crews required consistent combat exposure and often proved to be the difference between life and death for wounded personnel;

(8) the revolutionary concept of a dedicated combat life-saving system was cultivated and refined by United States Army Dustoff crews during 11 years of intense con-

flict in and above the jungles of Southeast Asia;

(9) innovative and resourceful Dustoff crews in Vietnam were responsible for taking the new concept of helicopter medical evacuation, born just a few years earlier, and revolutionizing it to meet and surpass the previously unattainable goal of delivering a battlefield casualty to an operating table within the vaunted "golden hour";

(10) some Dustoff units in Vietnam operated so efficiently that they were able to deliver a patient to a waiting medical facility on an average of 50 minutes from the receipt of the mission, which saved the lives of countless personnel in Vietnam, and this legacy continues for modern-day Dustoff crews;

(11) the inherent danger of being a member of a Dustoff crew in Vietnam meant that there was a 1 in 3 chance of being wounded or killed;

(12) many battles during the Vietnam War raged at night, and members of the Dustoff crews often found themselves searching for a landing zone in complete darkness, in bad weather, over mountainous terrain, and all while being the target of intense enemy fire as they attempted to rescue the wounded, which caused Dustoff crews to suffer a rate of aircraft loss that was more than 3 times that of all other types of combat helicopter missions in Vietnam;

(13) the 54th Medical Detachment typified the constant heroism displayed by Dustoff crews in Vietnam, over the span of a 10-month tour, with only 3 flyable helicopters and 40 soldiers in the unit, evacuating 21,435 patients in 8,644 missions while being airborne for 4,832 hours;

(14) collectively, the members of the 54th Medical Detachment earned 78 awards for valor, including 1 Medal of Honor, 1 Distinguished Service Cross, 14 Silver Star Medals, 26 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 2 Bronze Star Medals for valor, 4 Air Medals for valor, 4 Soldier's Medals, and 26 Purple Heart Medals;

(15) the 54th Medical Detachment displayed heroism on a daily basis and set the standard for all Dustoff crews in Vietnam;

(16) 6 members of the 54th Medical Detachment are in the Dustoff Hall of Fame, 3 are in the Army Aviation Hall of Fame, and 1 is the only United States Army aviator in the National Aviation Hall of Fame;

(17) Dustoff crew members are among the most highly decorated soldiers in United States military history;

(18) in early 1964, Major Charles L. Kelly was the Commanding Officer of the 57th Medical Detachment (Helicopter Ambulance), Provisional, in Soc Trang, South Vietnam;

(19) Major Kelly helped to forge the Dustoff call sign into history as one of the most welcomed phrases to be heard over the radio by wounded soldiers in perilous and dire situations;

(20) in 1964, Major Kelly was killed in action as he gallantly maneuvered his aircraft to save a wounded United States soldier and several Vietnamese soldiers and boldly replied, after being warned to stay away from the landing zone due to the ferocity of enemy fire, "When I have your wounded.";

(21) General William Westmoreland, Commander of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam from 1964 to 1968, singled out Major Kelly as an example of "the greatness of the human spirit" and highlighted his famous reply as an inspiration to all in combat;

(22) General Creighton Abrams, successor to General Westmoreland from 1968 to 1972, and former Chief of Staff of the United States Army, highlighted the heroism of Dustoff crews, "A special word about the Dustoffs . . . Courage above and beyond the call of duty was sort of routine to them. It

was a daily thing, part of the way they lived. That's the great part, and it meant so much to every last man who served there. Whether he ever got hurt or not, he knew Dustoff was there.";

(23) Dustoff crews possessed unique skills and traits that made them highly successful in aeromedical evacuation in Vietnam, including indomitable courage, extraordinary aviation skill and sound judgment under fire, high-level medical expertise, and an unequalled dedication to the preservation of human life;

(24) members of the United States Armed Forces on the ground in Vietnam had their confidence and battlefield prowess reinforced knowing that there were heroic Dustoff crews just a few minutes from the fight, which was instrumental to their well-being, willingness to fight, and morale;

(25) military families in the United States knew that their loved ones would receive the quickest and best possible care in the event of a war-time injury, thanks to the Dustoff crews;

(26) the willingness of Dustoff crews to also risk their lives to save helpless civilians left an immeasurably positive impression on the people of Vietnam and exemplified the finest United States ideals of compassion and humanity; and

(27) Dustoff crews from the Vietnam War hailed from every State in the United States and represented numerous ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds.

SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

(a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the presentation, on behalf of Congress, of a single gold medal of appropriate design in honor of the Dustoff crews of the Vietnam War, collectively, in recognition of their heroic military service, which saved countless lives and contributed directly to the defense of the United States.

(b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury (referred to in this Act as the "Secretary") shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense.

(c) U.S. ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT MUSEUM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the gold medal in honor of the Dustoff Crews of the Vietnam War, the gold medal shall be given to the U.S. Army Medical Department Museum, where it will be available for display as appropriate and available for research.

(2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the U.S. Army Medical Department Museum should make the gold medal awarded pursuant to this Act available for display elsewhere, particularly at appropriate locations associated with the Vietnam War, and that preference should be given to locations affiliated with the U.S. Army Medical Department Museum.

SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck under section 3, at a price sufficient to cover the costs thereof, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.

(a) NATIONAL MEDAL.—Medals struck pursuant to this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

(b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United

States Code, all medals struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

SEC. 6. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF SALE.

(a) **AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.**—There is authorized to be charged against the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be necessary to pay for the costs of the medals struck under this Act.

(b) **PROCEEDS OF SALE.**—Amounts received from the sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under section 4 shall be deposited into the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. **KIM**) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. **WATERS**) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. **KIM**).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. **KIM** of California. Madam 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 bill.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Mrs. **KIM** of California. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of S. 2825, the Dustoff Crews of the Vietnam War Congressional Gold Medal Act, the Senate version of H.R. 1015, led by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. **KILMER**), the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. **RODGERS**), the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. **MILLER-MEEKS**), and the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. **MANN**).

Madam Speaker, we lost too many American soldiers during the Vietnam war. That number would be dramatically higher if it were not for the bravery shown by the pilots of the Dustoff crews.

During the Vietnam war, American helicopter rescue crews, known as the Operation Dustoff crews, evacuated some 900,000 people to safety, the equivalent of the populations of Pittsburgh, St. Louis, and Orlando combined.

They did so under extremely perilous conditions. The Dustoff missions left the crews unarmed, often flown completely at night, frequently under enemy fire, and even after having to fight for permission to fly because of the dangers.

Madam Speaker, the United States needed the Dustoff crews during the Vietnam war because of the battle landscape. The stealthy, dispersed enemy occupying the dense jungles of Vietnam meant American soldiers had to push far from stationed medical support. Without a speedy exit from combat, a wound during the Vietnam war meant almost certain death.

The brave men of the Dustoff crews rescued American soldiers, civilians,

and Vietnamese soldiers. When a call came in for Dustoff to pick up wounded day and night, they went.

The Dustoff crews flew over 495,000 missions from 1962 to 1973. Sadly, of the 1,400 pilots, 90 were killed, and roughly 380 were wounded. These evacuation flights were some of the Army's most dangerous missions.

The heroism, valor, and tenacity displayed by these young air crews provided a gift of life that few consider or even think about today. For each person saved by a medical evacuation air crew, whether it be a man, woman, or child, those individuals went on to enjoy their life beyond the strains of war. These young men voluntarily put their lives on the line every day to save another human being.

Madam Speaker, I will leave my colleagues with the pledge of the Dustoff crews: "No hesitation. No reservation. No compromise. You get the wounded out."

This pledge speaks volumes. The pilots of the Dustoff crews deserve to be honored by this Congress with a Congressional Gold Medal.

Madam Speaker, I thank the bill's sponsors for bringing forward this important legislation. I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. **WATERS**. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of S. 2825, the Dustoff Crews of the Vietnam War Congressional Gold Medal Act, sponsored by Senator **CORNYN**.

Madam Speaker, we are honoring the United States Army Dustoff crews of the Vietnam war, who came from every State in the United States, with the Congressional Gold Medal in recognition of their extraordinary heroism and lifesaving actions in Vietnam.

The Dustoff crewmen served aboard helicopter air ambulances and performed medical evacuations for almost 900,000 Americans, South Vietnamese, and other individuals from allied forces for more than 10 years.

In these efforts, they often proved to be the difference between life and death for wounded personnel. The Dustoff crews in Vietnam were innovative and resourceful. They took the new concept of helicopter medical evacuation and revolutionized it to meet the goal of quickly delivering a battlefield casualty to a hospital's operating table.

Being a member of the Dustoff crew meant that there was an inherent danger to their work and a high likelihood of being wounded or killed.

□ 1430

Additionally, many of the evacuations took place at night, and Dustoff crews would find themselves searching for a landing zone in complete darkness, bad weather, and mountainous terrain, all while being the target of intense enemy fire as they rescued the wounded.

Collectively, the members of the Dustoff crews earned 78 awards for their valor. The crews displayed heroism on a daily basis and were among the most highly decorated soldiers in United States history.

Today, we will vote to present them with our highest honor, the Congressional Gold Medal.

Madam Speaker, I thank the sponsors of this bill, including Mr. **KILMER**.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. **KILMER**), who is also the sponsor of the House companion of this bill.

Mr. **KILMER**. Madam Speaker, every now and then, Democrats and Republicans come together to do something that matters for our veterans, and today is one of those days as we honor Vietnam veterans for their service and sacrifice, especially Dustoff crews.

Madam Speaker, between 1956 and 1975, 2.7 million Americans served in some of the most severe conditions in the history of American warfare. Unfortunately, when our servicemembers came home, they often didn't get the gratitude that they earned.

The legislation in front of us today is a small step in the effort to correct that.

Today is an opportunity for our Congress and our country to say to Vietnam veterans and specifically to Dustoff crewmembers that we are grateful for their service and sacrifice for this country. They stepped up and offered their bodies and lives to protect our way of life.

Despite everything Vietnam veterans went through, many never stopped serving our country or looking out for people who wear the uniform. As a Representative, that means a lot to me. As a dad, knowing my kids are growing up in a country that is stronger and freer because of those who served means a lot to me, as well.

That gratitude needs to come with more than words of thanks. It needs to come with a commitment that future generations know of their sacrifice and service to our country. It means backing up words with action. It means the men and women who fight for our country shouldn't have to fight for a job when they come home. It means that in the land of the free and the home of the brave, every brave servicemember should have a home. It means ensuring that veterans get the care, benefits, and recognition that they have earned.

Today, Congress can take another step forward in recognizing the valiant efforts of our Vietnam veterans by passing this bipartisan legislation, led by myself and **CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS**, called the Dustoff Crews of the Vietnam War Congressional Gold Medal Act.

This legislation has a simple but important mission: to award Dustoff crews of the Vietnam war with the Congressional Gold Medal.

Dustoff crewmembers—helicopter air ambulance pilots, crew chiefs, and

medics—performed aeromedical evacuations of over 900,000 U.S., Vietnamese, and allied forces from May 1962 to March 1973. Dustoff crews often faced foul weather, mountainous terrain, and intense enemy fire, with crewmembers facing a one-in-three chance of being wounded or killed.

These were heroes who saved lives.

One Dustoff unit, the 54th Medical Detachment, typified the heroism of Dustoff crews. Over 10 months, 40 soldiers equipped with only three helicopters evacuated over 21,000 patients on 8,600 missions over nearly 5,000 hours, earning 78 valor awards.

Awarding the Congressional Gold Medal to the Dustoff crews of the Vietnam war is an important step toward recognizing the pivotal role that these servicemembers played in saving the lives of so many and serving our country so proudly.

Since the American Revolution, Congress has commissioned gold medals as its highest expression of national appreciation for distinguished achievements and contributions.

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

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. KILMER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Congress has never awarded the Congressional Gold Medal to any group of Vietnam veterans. Today, we can change that by passing this legislation. I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote to do just that.

Madam Speaker, I thank Representative MCMORRIS RODGERS and Senators CORNYN and WARREN for their partnership and leadership on this effort. I also thank our veterans and every family member or friend who has supported a veteran.

Madam Speaker, we honor the service of our Vietnam veterans. Today, we move forward in ensuring that the Dustoff crews are recognized with the Congressional Gold Medal, and I thank them for their service.

May God bless them and this country.

Mrs. KIM of California. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time. I am so pleased and proud to be on this floor today in recognition of Vietnam-era veterans and their service to this country.

As a matter of fact, I have always felt very bad when I encountered Vietnam-era veterans and always apologized to them for the fact that they were not received back to their country in a manner that they should have been and received the resources that they deserved, having served our country.

This is a very important bill that will honor the U.S. Army Dustoff crews of the Vietnam war collectively in recognition of their extraordinary her-

oism, their lifesaving actions in Vietnam, and their direct contribution to the defense of the United States.

I thank Mr. KILMER and all the other sponsors of this bill. Further, I asked my staff as we were sitting here: Were the Dustoff crews a special unit that we are honoring today? Should we be looking at other Vietnam-era veterans? It is a question I am raising as I make this presentation today.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. KILMER so very much for his comments. I urge all of my colleagues to vote “yes,” and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. KIM of California. Mr. Speaker, I, too, echo all the comments that were said about honoring the Vietnam war-era veterans. I take the challenge that our ranking member has spoken about, identifying and recognizing other Vietnam war veterans, and that is why I have done this.

As I am sure many of my colleagues do, too, in their respective districts, we take the time to identify the Vietnam-era war veterans, and every time we have a community event, we invite them and present them with a token of a lapel pin to show our appreciation. It is a small token of saying thank you. We can never say enough about how we are happy that they are home, so we welcome everybody home, especially from the Vietnam war.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support S. 2825, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CARL). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 2825.

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.

BILLIE JEAN KING CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT

Mrs. KIM of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2861) to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Billie Jean King, an American icon, in recognition of a remarkable life devoted to championing equal rights for all, in sports and in society.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2861

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 “Billie Jean King Congressional Gold Medal Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Billie Jean King, born Billie Jean Moffitt on November 22, 1943, in Long Beach, California, demonstrated athletic prowess from a young age. She was introduced to tennis at the age of 11, and soon after, Billie Jean purchased her first tennis racket using money she earned working various jobs in her neighborhood.

(2) Billie Jean broke numerous barriers to become a number one professional tennis player. She dominated women’s tennis with 39 Grand Slam singles, doubles, and mixed doubles titles, including a record 20 championships at Wimbledon. She also was a member of 3 World Team Tennis championship teams.

(3) After growing in prominence, Billie Jean used her platform as a celebrity to fight for equal rights and opportunities for equality for all in sports, and society, in the United States.

(4) Billie Jean played an instrumental role in the passage of title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.), a law that mandates equal funding for women’s and men’s sports programs in schools and colleges. This legislation has unlocked a world of opportunities for girls and women in education and sports.

(5) During Billie Jean’s career, the pay difference between prize money for men and women in tennis continued to expand. By the early 1970s, the pay gap in prize money reached ratios of as much as 12 to 1. Fewer and fewer tournaments were hosting women’s events. Billie Jean harnessed the energy of the women’s rights movement to create a women’s tennis tour that would elevate women’s tennis and establish pay equity within the sport. Along with 8 other women tennis players, she formed an independent women’s professional tennis circuit, the Virginia Slims Series.

(6) In 1973, Billie Jean founded the Women’s Tennis Association, today’s principal governing body for women’s professional tennis.

(7) Billie Jean helped found womenSports magazine and founded the Women’s Sports Foundation. Both have been at the forefront of advancing women’s voice in sports.

(8) Billie Jean successfully lobbied for equal prize money for men and women at the 1973 US Open Tennis Championships. It would take another 34 years for the other 3 major tournaments to all offer equal prize money.

(9) In 1973, Billie Jean played a tennis match against Bobby Riggs, a former World Number 1 player who sought to undermine the credibility and prominence of women in sports. Billie Jean defeated Riggs in what became a firm declaration of women’s role in sports and society.

(10) Billie Jean King was the first tennis player and woman to be named Sports Illustrated’s Sportsperson of the Year, one of the “100 Most Important Americans of the 20th Century” by LIFE magazine, was the recipient of the 1999 Arthur Ashe Award for Courage, and has been admitted to the International Women’s Sports Hall of Fame, the International Tennis Hall of Fame, and the National Women’s Hall of Fame.

(11) In 2006, the United States Tennis Association recognized Billie Jean’s immeasurable impact on the sport of tennis by renaming the site of the US Open in her honor as the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center, which is located in Flushing Meadows Corona Park in Queens, New York. This was the first time a major sporting complex was named after a woman.

(12) In 2009, Billie Jean was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the United States, by President Barack Obama for her impactful work advocating for the rights of women. She was the first female athlete to receive this honor.

(13) In 2014, Billie Jean King founded the Billie Jean King Leadership Initiative to empower companies and individuals to create inclusive work environments that celebrate and promote diversity and equality in the workplace.

(14) In 2020, Fed Cup, the world cup of women's tennis, was renamed the Billie Jean King Cup, making it the first global team competition to be named after a woman.

(15) Billie Jean King's extraordinary courage, leadership, and activism helped propel the women's movement forward, and open doors for countless people in the United States. On and off the court, Billie Jean has served as an inspiration to millions of people the world over. Few women and men have had a greater impact on their sport and on our society than Billie Jean King.

SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

(a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the presentation, on behalf of Congress, of a gold medal of appropriate design to Billie Jean King, in recognition of her contribution to the United States and her courageous and groundbreaking leadership advancing equal rights for women in athletics, education, and our society.

(b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the presentation described in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury (referred to in this Act as the "Secretary") shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions to be determined by the Secretary. The design shall bear an image of, and inscription of the name of, Billie Jean King.

SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck pursuant to section 3 at a price sufficient to cover the costs of the medals, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.

(a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—Medals struck under this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

(b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of section 5134 and section 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

SEC. 6. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF SALE.

(a) AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.—There is authorized to be charged against the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be necessary to pay for the costs of the medals struck under this Act.

(b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under section 4 shall be deposited into the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. KIM of California. 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 bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Mrs. KIM of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 2861, a bill that would award the Congressional Gold Medal to an American sports icon and champion of women's rights, Billie Jean King.

I will start by thanking Representatives BRIAN FITZPATRICK and MIKIE SHERRILL for leading the House version of this bill, H.R. 1831.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to be here today to celebrate the historic accomplishments of Ms. Billie Jean King.

Billie Jean is a tennis legend. She was introduced to tennis at 11 years old and dominated the game until her retirement from competition in 1983. She reached number one in the world with 39 Grand Slam singles, doubles, and mixed doubles titles.

We are in awe of her athletic achievements and impact on the game. However, we are not here today just to talk about her accomplishments on the court.

Mr. Speaker, Billie Jean used her notoriety and platform to fight for equal rights and equal opportunities for all, not just in sports, but in American society, as well. She became an advocate for female athletes at a time when female accomplishments were not celebrated or rewarded in the same way as her male counterparts.

Billie Jean had an instrumental hand in shaping the opportunities in education and sports for girls and women. Without her efforts and dedication to the passage of Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, America would look very different today.

After that legislative win, Billie Jean focused her efforts on lobbying for equal prize money for both men and women at the 1973 U.S. Open Tennis Championships. Although it would take another 34 years for the other three major tennis tournaments to offer equal prize money, she started a conversation that continued to push through barriers with her actions.

That same year, Billie Jean did something unprecedented and played a tennis match against former world number one player, male tennis star, Bobby Riggs. She defeated Riggs, and this match became a firm declaration of women's roles in sports.

Through her leadership, bravery, and activism, we owe her a huge debt of gratitude. I can think of no person more deserving to earn this distinguished honor.

S. 2861 would recognize Billie Jean King's tireless efforts to make the world a better and more equitable place. It is only fitting that she be the first female athlete to receive a Congressional Gold Medal for those efforts. It is my hope that her courage will continue to inspire Americans today and every day.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 2861, the Billie Jean King Congressional Gold Medal Act, sponsored by Senator GILLIBRAND.

Today, we will vote to honor Billie Jean King's remarkable work in sports and society with the Congressional Gold Medal.

Billie Jean King broke numerous barriers to become a number one tennis player, and after growing in prominence, she used her platform as a celebrity to fight for equal rights and equal opportunities for women in American sports and society.

Notably, Billie Jean King played an instrumental role in the passage of Title IX, the law that mandates equal funding for women's and men's sports in American schools. Title IX unlocked opportunities for girls and women in education and sports.

I cannot help but mention Representative Mink, who served in this body. She authored Title IX, the Early Childhood Education Act, and the Women's Educational Equity Act.

□ 1445

During Billie Jean King's career, the pay difference between men and women for prize money continued to expand. Fewer and fewer tournaments were hosting women's events.

Billie Jean King led many efforts to elevate women's sports. Along with eight other women tennis players, she formed an independent women's professional tennis circuit called the Virginia Slims Series.

She also founded the Women's Tennis Association, which still exists today, the womenSports magazine, and the Women's Sports Foundation. All of these organizations have been instrumental in advancing women's voices in sports.

At the 1973 U.S. Open Tennis Championships, Billie Jean King successfully lobbied for equal prize money between men and women.

Billie Jean King was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2009, the highest civilian honor in the United States, by President Barack Obama. The honor recognized her impactful work throughout the years in advocating for the rights of women. She was the first female athlete to receive the honor.

In 2014, Billie Jean King founded the Billie Jean King Leadership Initiative to empower companies and individuals to create inclusive work environments. These inclusive work environments celebrate and promote diversity and equality.

The Fed Cup, the world cup of women's tennis, was renamed to the Billie Jean King Cup in 2020, making it the first global competition to be named after a woman.

Billie Jean King has clearly been recognized for her extraordinary courage, leadership, and activism that helped propel the women's movement forward. Today, Congress will vote to bestow its highest honor as well. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I want you to know before I close, Billie Jean King attended my alma mater, Cal State University in Los Angeles, and she was there from 1961 to

1964, and we honored her a long time ago.

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

Mrs. KIM of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK).

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of S. 2861, the bipartisan, bicameral legislation to award the incomparable and indomitable Billie Jean King, a legendary athlete, ardent advocate, and a trailblazing icon, the Congressional Gold Medal.

Mr. Speaker, last March, I proudly introduced this legislation, which has received overwhelming bipartisan support, standing at just under 300 cosponsors, a remarkable feat in and of itself.

At just 11 years old, Billie Jean set her sights on becoming the greatest tennis player the world has ever seen. Mr. Speaker, she did just that and more.

Billie Jean became a force on the tennis court and a transformative champion for equality, charting new paths for all athletes and spearheading the fight for gender equality in sports and beyond.

Beyond her extraordinary collection of trophies and 39 Grand Slam titles, Billie Jean King leveraged her remarkable achievements and prominent platform to catalyze a seismic shift in the women's movement.

Mr. Speaker, she didn't simply raise the profile of women's tennis—she redefined its very foundation. Through her fearless defiance of the status quo, her staunch advocacy for Title IX and pay equality, and her visionary efforts to expand opportunities for girls and women in sports, Billie Jean's impact has been transformative, and her legacy of advocacy stands unmatched.

Mr. Speaker, this Friday will mark the 51st anniversary of the historic iconic Battle of the Sexes match where Billie Jean triumphantly defeated Bobby Riggs in front of tens of millions of people across America and across the globe, including my own mom who was pregnant with me at the time.

Billie Jean shattered the false narrative of women's inequality, proving that women can not only compete at the highest level, they can dominate at the highest level.

That iconic victory ignited a seismic shift in women's sports, sparking a revolution that empowered generations of women to demand their rights and seek equality in every sphere of life.

Now, five decades later, Billie Jean stands once more at the brink of yet another groundbreaking and trailblazing accomplishment.

Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Gold Medal is the highest civilian honor this legislative body, the United States Congress, can bestow. It is awarded to those who have profoundly impacted our Nation's history. Past recipients

include influential athletes like Roberto Clemente and Arnold Palmer.

Mr. Speaker, with the passage today of S. 2861, the indomitable Billie Jean will become the first female athlete ever in United States' history to receive this prestigious and well-deserved honor.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to my partners in the Senate, Senators GILLIBRAND and CAPITO, and our House colleagues as well, Representatives SHERRILL and MALLIOTAKIS, for their incredible work, doing the hard work of garnering cosponsors on this floor day in and day out for many months.

I thank the U.S. Tennis Association for their support and tireless dedication to preserving and celebrating Billie Jean King's legacy.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to enshrine Billie Jean King's legacy as not only a champion of tennis but a champion of equality whose impact will continue to inspire women and girls and people across America and across the world.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to support this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) wish to reclaim her time?

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to reclaim the time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) is recognized.

There was no objection.

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

Mrs. KIM of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from New York, (Ms. MALLIOTAKIS).

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Mr. Speaker, this week marks the 51st anniversary of the Battle of the Sexes, the female versus male tennis match between Billie Jean King and Bobby Riggs, played on September 20, 1973.

Mr. Speaker, 90 million people in the world tuned in to watch as King made history and defeated Riggs at the Houston Astrodome in three straight sets: 6-4, 6-3, and 6-3.

It was a first, it was groundbreaking, and it forever changed the sport of tennis and brought the issue of women's equality to the forefront of our Nation.

Billie Jean King has inspired generations of American women. She lived the dream for her generation and the women who came before her, who lived during a time when they were restricted from reaching their full potential.

She has empowered young women with the road she paved and the ceiling that she broke. My generation was the first to really benefit from the positive changes made because of her.

I can say that she certainly inspired me to challenge and defeat a man for this seat in the House of Representatives.

To really put in perspective just how courageous and trailblazing Billie Jean

King's actions were, one needs to know what women endured at the time.

In 1973: Women could not get their own credit card or open a bank account without their husband or a male co-signer.

They could not attend a U.S. military service academy.

In some States, they couldn't even serve on a jury.

There were no protections against sexual harassment in the workplace. They could get fired just for being pregnant, and there was no access to birth control.

Women were paid 50 percent less than men, and the sport of tennis was no different. In fact, it was worse. In 1970, Billie Jean and eight other female players created their own tennis circuit to protest men receiving 12 to 1 prize money at an upcoming tournament.

In 1972, when Billie Jean won the U.S. Open singles title and received \$10,000 in prize money while the male winner was awarded \$25,000, she used her platform to further champion the issue of equal prize money and threatened to boycott the U.S. Open unless the disparity was addressed.

She founded the Women's Tennis Association, and she put her reputation, her tennis career, and her title on the line for gender equality, and she never wavered.

Her courage, resolve, and determination pushed the U.S. Tennis Association to make the 1973 U.S. Open the first sporting event to offer equal prize money to female and male competitors.

Billie Jean is also no stranger to the Halls of Congress. She came to Washington to advocate for and testify in support of Title IX, signed by President Nixon in 1972, that prohibited sex discrimination in all federally funded school activities.

Her achievements, both on and off the court, earned Billie Jean King accolades and honors. She became the first female athlete to be named a Sports Person of the Year by Sports Illustrated.

In 1975, Seventeen Magazine readers named Billie Jean the most admired woman in the world. In 1976, she was Time Magazine's Woman of the Year. In 1990, Life magazine named her one of the 100 Most Important Americans of the 20th century.

She was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame in 1987. In 2006, the U.S. Tennis Association Tennis Center in my city, New York City, home of the U.S. Open, was renamed in her honor.

In 2009, she was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom. She even has her own song by Elton John in tribute to her 1974 tennis team, Philadelphia Freedoms.

As a Representative of Staten Island, New York, where the sport of tennis was first brought and played by Mary Ewing Outerbridge 150 years ago and where the first national tennis tournament was played in 1880, it gives me

great pride to stand before you and to join Representative FITZPATRICK and my colleagues in honoring the woman who advanced the sport and achieved equal prize money for herself and all the women who followed.

Mr. Speaker, while Congress has awarded a Congressional Gold Medal to prolific male athletes in the past, this body has never awarded a female athlete the highest civilian honor.

Today, we seek to change that and award it to the one woman who advocated, fought, and blazed the trail for equality in sports and won 129 singles titles and 39 Grand Slam titles along the way, Billie Jean King.

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

Mr. Speaker, this important bill will award a Congressional Gold Medal to Billie Jean King in recognition of her remarkable work devoted to championing women's rights in sports and in society. She used her platform to fight for equal rights and opportunities for equality in sports and society.

I am very thankful to Senator GILLIBRAND for her work on this important bill. I cannot help but share with you today, Billie Jean King helped to inspire and also helped to ensure equal opportunities for future tennis players.

Coming from my district, where they were reared and trained to be the champions that they became, Venus and Serena Williams are beneficiaries of all of that work that Billie Jean King did to change the way prize money was equalized and to make sure that women in tennis and women in all aspects of our society have equal opportunities. I thank Billie Jean King.

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

Mrs. KIM of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I thank all my colleagues who spoke in support of this legislation. I believe this was a wonderful time where we got to understand much more than what we knew from the news articles about Billie Jean and her accomplishments, and her legacy will continue on. She will continue to be an inspiration to all of us, especially to girls and women and future athletes.

I urge my colleagues to support S. 2861, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 2861.

The question was taken.

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

Mrs. KIM of California. 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.

□ 1500

BUILDING ON REEMPLOYMENT IMPROVEMENTS TO DELIVER GOOD EMPLOYMENT FOR WORKERS ACT

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5861) to extend reemployment services and eligibility assessments to all claimants for unemployment benefits, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5861

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 "Building on Reemployment Improvements to Deliver Good Employment for Workers Act" or the "BRIDGE for Workers Act".

SEC. 2. ELIGIBILITY FOR REEMPLOYMENT SERVICES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 306(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 506(a)) is amended—

(1) by striking "individuals referred to reemployment services as described in section 303(j)" and inserting "claimants for regular compensation, including claimants referred to reemployment services as described in section 303(j)."; and

(2) by striking "such individuals" and inserting "such claimants".

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the BRIDGE for Workers Act to help more Americans who are out of work find employment faster.

Currently, only those deemed most likely to exhaust their unemployment benefits are eligible for job placement services provided through the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments program. That unfairly limits its resources to a small subset of UI recipients, when thousands of others could be back in the workforce sooner with this assistance. This bill levels the playing field and extends these services to every American on unemployment benefits.

These services are critical for helping Americans find work compatible with their experience and skills to help

them get back to earning a paycheck again.

Members of Congress have heard over and over again about a labor shortage and "help wanted" signs dotting storefronts across the country. This legislation will help address this shortage by helping more unemployed Americans get back into the workforce sooner.

After fraudsters and criminals stole over \$100 billion of unemployment benefits during COVID, the bill before us will also strengthen program integrity by ensuring claimants are complying with eligibility rules. Claimants must be able to work, available to work, and actively seeking work.

This legislation was a bipartisan effort sponsored by the chairman and ranking member of the Ways and Means Work and Welfare Subcommittee, Representatives LaHood and Davis. I thank them both for their leadership in helping the unemployment insurance program fulfill its mission of supporting unemployed Americans who are seeking stable work.

The BRIDGE for Workers Act passed out of committee with every single Republican and Democrat voting for it. I hope we can have a repeat performance of strong bipartisan support in favor of this legislation today.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5861, the BRIDGE for Workers Act. I am glad to see that the House is moving forward to ensure that State reemployment service programs serve the workers who can benefit from most of them, as we intended in our original bipartisan legislation.

The Ways and Means Committee reported out this bill nearly a year ago, and I hope we can work together to finally enact it this year. As you know, this important technical clarification first passed our committee, and then the full House on an overwhelming, bipartisan vote in 2019, and Senate Republicans prevented it from becoming law.

Our economic recovery has been historically strong, both in comparison to past recessions and compared to our peer countries. The right policies in the Biden-Harris American Rescue Plan Act resulted in strong GDP growth. Americans are back at work and earning higher wages than they were before. Inflation, which was always lower than in our peer countries, appears to be leveling off.

American workers are the heart of our strong economy, and the best way to preserve and grow it is to ensure that they can get and keep good jobs while also caring for their families. Research shows one way we can help people go back to work faster is to ensure that they get simple services like job market information or resume help.

This bipartisan legislation, which I was proud to work with the gentleman

from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) to introduce and move ahead, is key to ensuring that the right workers get these job-finding supports. Even a week or two of getting a paycheck instead of an unemployment benefit makes a difference for a household budget.

I hope this bill is just the first effort to provide commonsense help so that Americans can work and support their families. A good next step would be to enact universal paid family and medical leave and guaranteed childcare. It is an embarrassment that some continue to block enactment of these essential supports that all other developed countries provide.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with my colleagues to support workers and enact this bipartisan bill before the end of the year. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD), the chairman of our Work and Welfare Subcommittee.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman SMITH for his leadership on this bill.

I rise today in strong support of our bill, H.R. 5861, the BRIDGE for Workers Act. This bipartisan bill demonstrates our joint commitment in Congress to supporting American workers.

Unemployment insurance is meant to help people without a job get through a rough patch and find new opportunity to support themselves and their families.

Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment grants allow States to provide services to recipients of unemployment benefits who are identified as those who could return to work more quickly. These grants are used for job skills training, resume preparation, English as a second language classes, and career exploration to connect unemployed workers to in-demand jobs.

Reemployment services have been demonstrated to improve employment outcomes and reduce the number of weeks that participants receive unemployment benefits. In addition, the program strengthens program integrity by ensuring claimants are complying with eligibility rules.

The bill before us today would make a technical correction to clarify that reemployment services provided through these Federal grants can be provided to all unemployment insurance claimants, not just those most likely to exhaust their benefits, as has been interpreted by the Department of Labor.

I thank my bill's co-lead and fellow Illinoisan and friend, DANNY DAVIS, the ranking member of the Work and Welfare Subcommittee, for his work on this bill, which passed out of the Committee on Ways and Means with unanimous bipartisan support.

This legislation provides the permanent flexibility States need to make reemployment services a successful

tool for those who have lost their job through no fault of their own. This really is a bridge to help workers. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

This bipartisan legislation will help more Americans in a rough patch get back on their feet quickly and back into the workforce.

Communities across the country are currently in the middle of a multiple-year labor shortage. We know this from the companies of all sizes and in all industries that have warned what the lack of available workers is doing to their business. Some are cutting hours of operation or increasing customer wait times, while businesses forfeit opportunities to expand and grow because of the lack of labor.

This shortage makes business less productive, slows down our economy, and adds to our national debt. Ultimately, families pay the highest price when able-bodied workers can't or don't find new employment.

This bill takes steps to tackle the labor shortage by expanding needed job placement services to individuals receiving unemployment. This bipartisan bill is an easy, commonsense win for America's workers and small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to vote to advance this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5861, 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.

TAXPAYER DATA PROTECTION ACT

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 8292) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase penalties for unauthorized disclosure of taxpayer information, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8292

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 "Taxpayer Data Protection Act".

SEC. 2. INCREASE IN PENALTIES FOR UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURES OF TAXPAYER INFORMATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraphs (1), (2), (3), (4), and (5) of section 7213(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 are each amended by striking "\$5,000, or imprisonment of not more than 5

years" and inserting "\$250,000, or imprisonment of not more than 10 years".

(b) DISCLOSURES OF RETURN INFORMATION OF MULTIPLE TAXPAYERS TREATED AS MULTIPLE VIOLATIONS.—Section 7213(a) of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(6) DISCLOSURES OF RETURN INFORMATION OF MULTIPLE TAXPAYERS TREATED AS MULTIPLE VIOLATIONS.—For purposes of paragraphs (1), (2), (3), (4), and (5), a separate violation occurs with respect to each taxpayer whose return or return information is disclosed in violation of any such paragraph."

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to disclosures made after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SANCHEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. 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 the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1515

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in favor of the Taxpayer Data Protection Act. When Americans file their taxes, they expect their personal data and tax information are confidential.

Between 2017 and 2021, Charles Littlejohn, who worked as a contractor for the IRS, stole taxpayer information, and he stole a lot of it. He gave it to The New York Times and ProPublica, who published articles containing that confidential tax information about President Trump and other notable figures. Mr. Littlejohn then destroyed evidence and obstructed law enforcement investigations.

Despite his efforts to cover up his crimes, Mr. Littlejohn admitted that he was "aware of the potential consequences" and, in fact, made his decision "with the full knowledge that [he] would likely end up in a courtroom."

Current law failed to deter Mr. Littlejohn from stealing and leaking private and sensitive taxpayer information. Moreover, the Department of Justice only charged Mr. Littlejohn with a single count of unauthorized disclosure of private tax information.

Given this lackluster charge, Republicans wrote the judge urging the court to sentence Mr. Littlejohn to the maximum sentence for the crimes he committed, particularly given the number of taxpayers impacted by his actions.

Mr. Littlejohn ultimately received the maximum sentence available, but the court was limited to the single count that the Department of Justice brought charges on.

This bipartisan bill ensures that the punishment fits the crime. Current law states that any violation shall be a felony punishable by a fine in any amount not to exceed \$5,000 or imprisonment of not more than 5 years or both.

This bill increases the maximum penalty for the unauthorized disclosure of returns and return information to include a fine of up to \$250,000 or imprisonment of not more than 10 years or both. It also ensures that prosecutors can consider each taxpayer impacted by a disclosure to support a separate and distinct violation of the law.

Increasing the punishment for this crime will result in better deterrence for potential criminals and fewer crimes of this sort being committed.

I urge all my colleagues to support this legislation and send a very clear message that Congress will not tolerate the theft and leak of taxpayer information.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 8292, the Taxpayer Data Protection Act. I am proud to vote for this bill that will enhance criminal penalties for the unlawful disclosure of taxpayer information.

Under Section 6103 of the tax code, tax returns and return information are confidential and may only be disclosed by the Internal Revenue Service and its employees, agents, or contractors if an exception applies.

Any unauthorized disclosure of tax information is a felony punishable by a maximum fine of \$5,000 or imprisonment up to 5 years or both.

This bill significantly increases the maximum penalty to \$250,000 and imprisonment of up to 10 years. It also makes clear that each taxpayer disclosed is treated as a separate violation subject to the maximum penalty.

This bill responds to one of the largest leaks of taxpayer information in the history of the IRS. While working at the IRS, a former contractor, Charles Littlejohn, unlawfully accessed and stole confidential tax information of the former President and thousands of wealthy taxpayers and disclosed it to two news organizations, including ProPublica. These news organizations then published a series of articles using the confidential tax information they were provided.

Earlier this year, Mr. Littlejohn was sentenced to 5 years in Federal prison for unlawfully accessing and disclosing tax information, which is the maximum sentence under current law.

This bill would have provided the judge with the discretion to increase the sentence, given the massive leak of information.

As required by law, the IRS has notified nearly 70,000 taxpayers who were impacted by this unauthorized disclosure. We must do all that we can to prevent this from happening again. This bill will provide taxpayers addi-

tional confidence in the IRS that their information is safe and protected.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. YAKYM).

Mr. YAKYM. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Missouri and the chairman for his time as well as his leadership on this bill.

I rise in strong support of the Taxpayer Data Protection Act, which will increase penalties for the unauthorized disclosure of personal information.

Americans want certain things kept private. For example, the secret ballot protects the sanctity of the voting booth. HIPAA keeps medical history between you and your doctor. Section 6103 is supposed to safeguard the sensitive information of our tax returns.

Beginning in 2017, an IRS contractor illegally downloaded tax returns for thousands of Americans and began sharing them with reporters. When the investigators caught on, he tried to destroy the evidence of his crime. Yet the Biden-Harris administration let off the perpetrator of this egregious breach of trust with only a single count of unauthorized disclosure.

We cannot let partisan actors with delusions of white knighthood think they can get away with sacrificing institutional trust in furtherance of their personal political vendettas.

I thank Chairman SMITH for keeping the spotlight on this case, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for closing.

Taxpayers must have full confidence that the IRS will safeguard their data. As Members of Congress, we must strengthen our laws to ensure that every American's tax information is protected.

This bill increases the maximum penalty for unauthorized disclosure and will serve as a big deterrent for folks who may think about breaking the law.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" in support of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Every taxpayer deserves to have their data protected from theft and illegal disclosure. Our voluntary tax filing system depends on trust, a trust that was betrayed by a criminal with political motives who calculated that the crime would be worth the current punishment.

Simply put, he knew the crime he was committing, he knew the likelihood he would end up in prison for just a few months or years, and he decided the risks were clearly worth his reward.

We have an opportunity to deter similar actions from happening again in the future by making the punishment match the crime.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for the Taxpayer Data Protection Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BUCSHON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8292, 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.

IMPROVING SOCIAL SECURITY'S SERVICE TO VICTIMS OF IDENTITY THEFT ACT

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3784) to amend title VII of the Social Security Act to provide for a single point of contact at the Social Security Administration for individuals who are victims of identity theft, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3784

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 "Improving Social Security's Service to Victims of Identity Theft Act".

SEC. 2. SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT FOR IDENTITY THEFT VICTIMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title VII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 901 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 714. SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT FOR IDENTITY THEFT VICTIMS.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner of Social Security shall establish and implement procedures to ensure that any individual whose social security account number has been misused (such as to fraudulently obtain benefits under title II, VIII, or XVI of this Act, or in a manner that affects an individual's records at the Social Security Administration, or in a manner that prompts the individual to request a new social security account number) or whose social security card has been lost in the course of transmission to the individual has a single point of contact at the Social Security Administration throughout the resolution of the individual's case. The single point of contact shall track the individual's case to completion and coordinate with other units to resolve issues as quickly as possible.

"(b) SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of subsection (a), the single point of contact shall consist of a team or subset of specially trained employees who—

"(A) have the ability to coordinate with other units to resolve the issues involved in the individual's case, and

"(B) shall be accountable for the case until its resolution.

"(2) TEAM OR SUBSET.—The employees included within the team or subset described in paragraph (1) may change as required to meet the needs of the Social Security Administration, provided that procedures have been established to—

"(A) ensure continuity of records and case history, and

"(B) notify the individual when appropriate."

(b) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3784, the Improving Social Security's Service to Victims of Identity Theft Act.

In 2022 alone, there were over a thousand data breaches which exposed the private data, such as names, dates of birth, and Social Security numbers of millions of Americans, putting their identities and financial well-being at risk.

We all know someone who has been a victim of identity theft, and we have seen how difficult and time consuming it is for those individuals to take back control of their credit and financial well-being.

The longer it takes to resolve an issue like the loss or theft of a Social Security number, the longer fraudsters have to compromise or exploit an individual's identity.

This Congress, the Ways and Means Committee held a hearing that underlined exactly why this bill is needed. We heard from Margaret, a new mother, who testified about her 9-month-old daughter's Social Security number being compromised and the stress associated with such a situation. She testified that having a single point of contact at the Social Security Administration to talk to about her case would have made a world of difference. That is exactly what this bill does.

H.R. 3784 will streamline the process of addressing concerns with lost or stolen Social Security numbers by reducing the burdens on victims and ensuring a more efficient resolution of their issues.

I thank my colleagues, Social Security Subcommittee Chairman DREW FERGUSON and Ranking Member JOHN LARSON for their bipartisan work on this bill.

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

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I also extend my congratulations to Mr. FERGUSON, and I thank Mr. SMITH

for his comments on this very important piece of legislation. I think the public is always glad to see bipartisanship at work, and there is nobody who exemplifies that more than the chairman of the subcommittee, Mr. FERGUSON himself.

Americans are increasingly vulnerable to identity theft, as we all know. In 2023, the Federal Trade Commission received over a million reports of identity theft.

Addressing identity theft can be complex and time consuming. Currently, a victim could run into incredible red tape when you try to go through the current system and get a resolution to what, obviously, is a very disturbing incident that has just happened to you.

We must do everything we can to improve the process for victims. That is why we initiated this legislation that will allow that one-stop provision and allow the individuals to make sure that they have a point of contact and work this way through instead of working their way through an entanglement of bureaucracy.

We must also ensure that the SSA has the necessary funding, however, and the resources to carry out its mission. There have been years of underfunding. The American public should understand this.

Social Security manages over 70 million people. What other Federal agency do you know of that administers that bureaucracy for under 1 percent?

That is a shameful cut. We need to make sure that Social Security is funded appropriately and make sure they have all of the latest technology to deal with the more than 70 million people now that are receiving Social Security.

Again, I think the Nation is astounded. I come from the insurance capital of the world. On average, they administer their insurance programs for around 20 percent.

I think we ought to take a hard look, and I think everybody has to take a look into their heart. If we expect to provide people with the kind of service they should get from the number one antipoverty program for the elderly and the number one antipoverty program for children, then we have to make sure that that is appropriately funded.

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

□ 1530

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. FERGUSON), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Social Security.

Mr. FERGUSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his support, and I thank Mr. LARSON for his engagement on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3784, a bill I introduced called the Improving Social Security's Service to Victims of Identity Theft Act.

In 2021, roughly 1.5 million children were the victims of identity fraud.

That is 1 in nearly 50 children. The numbers are staggering.

Now, I as chairman, along with Ranking Member LARSON, held a subcommittee hearing to discuss ways the Social Security Administration could responsibly do more to protect America's Social Security numbers from identity theft.

The hearing also highlighted the government's failure to help individuals whose Social Security numbers had been compromised.

During the hearing, we heard from Mrs. Hayward, who testified her family had been forced to navigate the Social Security Administration's bureaucratic maze to protect her daughter's financial future.

Mr. Speaker, she told the subcommittee that after giving birth to her third child, she promptly submitted the proper paperwork for a new birth certificate and a Social Security card. While the birth certificate arrived without issue, the Social Security card did not.

By the time her daughter was 7 weeks old, and having not received the card, she grew concerned and contacted the Social Security Administration about the fact that the website said that it had been sent and received when, in fact, it had not.

She initially assumed the card might have been misplaced, but after thoroughly checking her mail and contacting the Social Security Administration, she learned that the card had been issued but not received. The Social Security Administration advised patience, but concerns about identity theft were dismissed.

When she requested information about whether the card had been received or issued, she was simply told she could apply for a replacement card, but not a new number, nor could she get the old number directly.

Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Hayward eventually went to the Social Security office. She stated that other employees provided inconsistent information, dismissed the need for a new number, and even suggested that a remedy was contacting the post office to locate the missing card. It was only after she sought help from her U.S. Senator that they were able to request a new card. When a replacement card finally arrived, the original card was still unaccounted for and potentially compromised.

The process to monitor and protect her daughter's identity was really much too cumbersome and stressful, and having to re-explain the situation to multiple Social Security Administration employees about navigating this complex system and the issues that she had faced is simply unacceptable.

Preventing identity theft must be a top priority, yet Mrs. Hayward's family and countless others across the Nation have faced serious bureaucratic obstacles that extend the time that fraudsters have to misuse the personal information of their victims.

This underscores the need for a system that proactively prevents identity theft and provides clear, consistent support for American families.

Mr. Speaker, my bill addresses this by streamlining the process to a single point of contact at the Social Security Administration so that they can get their issues resolved more efficiently. I am proud to offer this bill along with my colleague, Mr. LARSON, and ask that Members support this bill.

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

Mr. Speaker, let me compliment the chairman, Mr. FERGUSON, and thank him for his incredible work in this area. I also thank Commissioner O'Malley, who doesn't get the credit I believe he richly deserves, especially dealing with less resources and a larger and growing problem. Imagine, if you will, for I think most viewers don't know, that 10,000 baby boomers a day become eligible for Social Security, and it is growing rapidly.

I am glad that Republicans support this bill to improve customer service for victims of identity theft, but they must also support giving SSA the resources it needs to implement it. I think that is pretty clear and straightforward.

Mr. Speaker, I also believe that, as was pointed out by Mr. SMITH and also by Mr. FERGUSON, the unfortunate experience people go through is a crime, identity theft, and even more of a crime when you can't get service.

Yet, what is really criminal about Social Security is that Congress has not taken on the responsibility of enhancing a program that was last improved when Richard Nixon was President of the United States—53 years. Every single district, every single individual, everyone who is retiring is stuck at the same benefit level they were in 1971.

There are 5 million Americans who get below-poverty-level checks because Congress hasn't acted. For over 40 percent of Social Security recipients, which is 28 million people, all they have is Social Security. The only body that can resolve that problem for them is the United States Congress.

We took a baby step here as it relates to making sure about identity theft. We need to take a major step and vote for enhancements for people who richly deserve them. They are counting on us. It is the Nation's insurance program, and we have not done our job as a Congress.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, a Social Security number is the gateway to taking control of an American's identity and finances. Congress owes it to the American people to do everything that we can to ensure their identities are protected and that the process for taking back control of their identity when their Social

Security number is compromised is streamlined and easy. We especially owe it to the almost 1 million children who were victims of identity fraud in 2022 through no fault of their own.

H.R. 3784 is a long-overdue step forward in streamlining the Social Security Administration's process and alleviating the burden on victims.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3784, 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.

FIND AND PROTECT FOSTER YOUTH ACT

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1146) to amend part E of title IV of the Social Security Act to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to identify obstacles to identifying and responding to reports of children missing from foster care and other vulnerable foster youth, to provide technical assistance relating to the removal of such obstacles, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1146

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 "Find and Protect Foster Youth Act".

SEC. 2. ELIMINATING OBSTACLES TO IDENTIFYING AND RESPONDING TO REPORTS OF CHILDREN MISSING FROM FOSTER CARE AND OTHER VULNERABLE FOSTER YOUTH.

Section 476 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 676) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(f) EVALUATION OF PROTOCOLS RELATING TO CHILDREN MISSING FROM FOSTER CARE AND OTHER VULNERABLE YOUTH; TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall conduct an evaluation of the protocols established by States in accordance with the requirements of section 471(a)(35) and, to the extent applicable, by Indian tribes or tribal organizations (as defined in section 479B(a)) or tribal consortia with a plan approved under section 471 in accordance with section 479B.

"(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The evaluation shall include the following:

"(A) A review of relevant aspects of reports submitted by States, Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and tribal consortia under this part and part B, and data and other information reported pursuant to the system established under section 479.

"(B) Analysis of the extent to which States, Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and tribal consortia comply with, and enforce, the protocols required by section 471(a)(35).

"(C) Analysis of the effectiveness of such protocols.

"(D) Identification of obstacles for States, Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and tribal consortia to identifying and responding to reports of children missing from foster care and other vulnerable foster youth.

"(E) Identification of best practices for identifying such children and youth and intervening with effective services.

"(3) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall provide States, Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and tribal consortia with information, advice, educational materials, and technical assistance relating to eliminating identified obstacles to identifying and responding to reports of children missing from foster care and other vulnerable foster youth and providing such children and youth with effective services. Such assistance may include dissemination of—

"(A) processes and tools to identify and examine risk factors and potential trends related to children who go missing from foster care and other vulnerable youth;

"(B) best practices for runaway tracking and recovery; and

"(C) guidelines for intervention, including with respect to services, types of providers, and placement settings.

"(4) REPORT.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall submit a report to Congress on the results of the evaluation conducted under this subsection and the technical assistance provided in accordance with paragraph (3)."

SEC. 3. IMPROVING SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN RETURNED TO FOSTER CARE AFTER GOING MISSING TO DETERMINE WHETHER THEY WERE, OR ARE AT RISK OF BECOMING, VICTIMS OF SEX TRAFFICKING.

Section 476 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 676), as amended by section 2, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

"(g) IMPROVING IDENTIFICATION OF, AND SERVICES FOR, CHILDREN WHO RETURN TO FOSTER CARE AFTER RUNNING AWAY OR OTHERWISE BEING ABSENT FROM FOSTER CARE AND WHO ARE, OR ARE AT RISK OF BEING, VICTIMS OF SEX TRAFFICKING.—

"(1) ASSISTANCE.—

"(A) SCREENING AFTER A RETURN TO FOSTER CARE.—The Secretary shall provide States, Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and tribal consortia, with information, advice, educational materials, and technical assistance to improve compliance with section 471(a)(35)(A)(iii).

"(B) IMPROVING OTHER REQUIREMENTS.—The information, advice, educational materials, and technical assistance provided may include information, advice, educational materials, and technical assistance to improve or modify policies and procedures (including relevant training for caseworkers) developed by States, Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and tribal consortia under section 471(a)(9)(C), including the following:

"(i) Identifying, through screening, whether the State has reasonable cause to believe the child or youth is, or is at risk of being, a victim of sex trafficking.

"(ii) Documenting the results of such screening in agency records.

"(iii) Determining appropriate services for a child or youth for whom the State determines there is reasonable cause to identify the child or youth as a victim of sex trafficking, or as at risk of being a victim of sex trafficking.

"(iv) Documenting in agency records the determination of appropriate services for a child or youth described in clause (iii).

"(2) FORMS OF ASSISTANCE.—The assistance provided under this subsection shall include the following:

“(A) Assisting States, Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and tribal consortia, with developing oversight mechanisms to assess their compliance with section 471(a)(35)(A)(iii).

“(B) Assisting States, Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and tribal consortia in developing—

“(i) assessments for screening children who return to foster care after running away or otherwise being absent from foster care for risk of becoming victims of sex trafficking; and

“(ii) effective and robust policies relating to the use of the assessments.

“(C) Working with States, Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and tribal consortia to improve or modify policies and procedures developed under section 471(a)(9)(C).

“(D) Providing technical assistance on how States, Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and tribal consortia may best use data collected pursuant to section 479 for oversight of, and to ensure compliance with, the requirements of paragraphs (9)(C) and (35)(A)(iii) of section 471(a).

“(3) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall, to the extent practicable, consult with internal and external offices with expertise on sex trafficking, including the Office on Trafficking in Persons of the Administration for Children and Families, on the development and dissemination to States, Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and tribal consortia of the assistance required under this subsection.”.

SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary such sums as are necessary to carry out this Act for fiscal year 2024 through fiscal year 2027.

SEC. 5. IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING CONDITIONS THAT LEAD TO YOUTH RUNNING AWAY FROM FOSTER CARE.

The Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Congress a written report that—

(1) contains a rigorous analysis of administrative data to determine the characteristics of youth who run away from foster care and other relevant information about foster care runaway episodes;

(2) includes information from interviews with recent foster youth runaways regarding their reasons for running away and what happened after they ran away, including any screening or other protocol followed by the State;

(3) includes a systematic review of research and evidence related to foster youth runaways;

(4) sets forth best practices for making foster care safe for youth and reducing the number of foster youth runaways; and

(5) makes recommendations to advance child welfare practices, after convening and consulting with a group of child welfare practitioners and professionals to inform the recommendations.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. 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 the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, every year, thousands of families open their hearts and welcome into their homes children who have suffered abuse, neglect, and abandonment. Right now, there are nearly 400,000 children in foster care.

Youth in the foster care system often have experienced serious trauma and are at high risk of going missing or running away from their foster care placements, which increases their likelihood of experiencing homelessness, human trafficking, and other exploitation.

Over the past year, the Committee on Ways and Means has been hard at work reforming aspects of our child welfare programs. The Find and Protect Foster Youth Act, introduced by Senator JOHN CORNYN and Representative TONY GONZALES, will bring us one step closer to realizing that goal.

This legislation requires the Department of Health and Human Services and States to improve tracking for children in the foster care system who have run away or gone missing at some point, including screening youth for signs of human trafficking or other trauma.

Under Federal law, States are required to report missing foster children within 24 hours to law enforcement, yet some States still struggle to implement those protocols. This means that in some cases, kids missing from foster care are not being tracked or reported as missing in a timely manner.

This legislation also requires HHS to evaluate State protocols for shortcomings and share that information with Congress so we can implement the changes to better track and protect youth in our foster care system.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 1146, the Find and Protect Foster Youth Act, as amended.

This bill builds on existing HHS guidance to ensure that States understand their grave responsibilities when youth go missing from foster care. It would require HHS to determine whether States are in full compliance with the law and guidance and also to identify best practices and provide technical support to States so that they can do better by our youth.

Our committee worked closely with HHS to update the original guidance and then advanced, last year, the bipartisan House companion bill, H.R. 2426.

Taking a child into foster care is a last resort, something that we should do only if a child cannot live safely at home even with services or support. Once a State takes custody of a child, they must keep that child safe and act

in the child's best interest. There is no higher obligation than keeping a child safe in our care.

We know that children who run away from foster care are not safe. They are disproportionately likely to be homeless or to fall prey to sex traffickers and other predators. They often struggle with mental health challenges or substance abuse.

To our shame, many youth who run away from foster care also were not safe before they ran away. They ran away because they were placed in an unsafe home or separated from siblings and other family members.

This amended version of S. 1146 addresses that issue by requiring HHS to study and learn more about how to prevent the situation that causes youth to flee.

In crafting this bipartisan additional study requirement, I was fortunate to consult Bryan Samuels and the able team at Chapin Hall in my city of Chicago. Their deep expertise and prior work on this topic informed our thinking.

I take great pride in our committee's bipartisan work to strengthen families and protect vulnerable foster youth over the years, including the landmark Family First Prevention Services Act and the strong bill to reauthorize and invest in child welfare services that we are also considering today.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support the Find and Protect Foster Youth Act and continue to work together to advance thoughtful legislation to help our most vulnerable youth and families.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she might consume to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. BROWN).

□ 1545

Ms. BROWN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Find and Protect Foster Youth Act.

Every day 55 foster youth in the United States go missing. Their average age is 15. Missing means we don't know where they are or if they are safe, and all too often they are not safe.

Right now, the system is failing foster youth. So often, people say: They fell through the cracks. It is our job to find where those cracks are and to fill them.

That is what this bill does. It requires the Federal Government to coordinate with States to find the gaps and fill them so that we can keep foster youth safe.

Mr. Speaker, 55 new foster youth missing each day is 55 too many, and I urge my colleagues to pass this bill for foster youth in Ohio and across the country.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

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

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman SMITH and Chairman LAHOOD for their work and their assistance in moving this bill that would require HHS to determine whether States are in full compliance with the law when youth go missing from foster care, and also to identify best practices and provide technical support to States so that they can better serve these young people in our care and need our help.

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

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, our foster care system is a lifeline for thousands of children who have been displaced, abused, and neglected. Many of these children are at risk for going missing or running away from their foster homes, which puts them at risk of experiencing homelessness and human trafficking.

As Members of Congress, our responsibility to protect foster youth doesn't end once they are placed in a home. We must ensure that States have the tools and guidance to locate these children when they go missing in a timely manner and work to make sure every child has a safe and loving home.

This legislation will strengthen communication between States and the Federal Government to help them find and protect missing foster youth who are in crisis.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support 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 Missouri (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1146, 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. SMITH of Missouri. 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.

SUPPORTING AMERICA'S CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ACT

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 9076) to reauthorize and modernize part B of title IV of the Social Security Act to strengthen child welfare services, expand the availability of prevention services to better meet the needs of vulnerable families, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 9076

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 "Supporting America's Children and Families Act".

TITLE I—CHILD WELFARE REAUTHORIZATION AND MODERNIZATION

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE; REFERENCES.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This title may be cited as the "Protecting America's Children by Strengthening Families Act".

(b) REFERENCES.—Except as otherwise expressly provided, wherever in this title an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to that section or other provision of the Social Security Act.

SEC. 102. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents of this title is as follows:

- Sec. 101. Short title; references.
- Sec. 102. Table of contents.
- Sec. 103. Reauthorization of child welfare programs.
- Sec. 104. Enhancements to the court improvement program.
- Sec. 105. Expanding regional partnership grants to address parental substance use disorder as cause of child removal.
- Sec. 106. Modernization; reducing administrative burden.
- Sec. 107. Streamlining funding for Indian tribes.
- Sec. 108. Accelerating access to Family First prevention services.
- Sec. 109. Strengthening support for youth aging out of foster care.
- Sec. 110. Recognizing the importance of relative and kinship caregivers.
- Sec. 111. Avoiding neglect by addressing poverty.
- Sec. 112. Strengthening support for case-workers.
- Sec. 113. Demonstration projects for improving relationships between incarcerated parents and children in foster care.
- Sec. 114. Guidance to States on improving data collection and reporting for youth in residential treatment programs.
- Sec. 115. Streamlining research, training, and technical assistance funding.
- Sec. 116. Report on post adoption and subsidized guardianship services.
- Sec. 117. Effective date.

SEC. 103. REAUTHORIZATION OF CHILD WELFARE PROGRAMS.

(a) REAUTHORIZATION OF SUBPART 1; DISCRETIONARY FUNDING.—Section 425 (42 U.S.C. 625) is amended by striking "2017 through 2023" and inserting "2025 through 2029".

(b) REAUTHORIZATION OF SUBPART 2; ENHANCED SUPPORT.—Section 436(a) (42 U.S.C. 629f(a)) is amended by striking "each of fiscal years 2017 through 2023" and inserting "fiscal year 2025 and \$420,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2029".

(c) REAUTHORIZATION OF SUBPART 2; DISCRETIONARY FUNDING.—Section 437(a) (42 U.S.C. 629g(a)) is amended by striking "2017 through 2023" and inserting "2025 through 2029".

(d) FUNDING LIMITATION.—Section 423(a)(2)(A) (42 U.S.C. 623(a)(2)(A)) is amended by inserting ", not to exceed \$10,000,000" before the semicolon.

SEC. 104. ENHANCEMENTS TO THE COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) INCREASE IN RESERVATION OF FUNDS.—Section 436(b)(2) (42 U.S.C. 629f(b)(2)) is amended by inserting "for fiscal year 2025 and \$40,000,000 for fiscal year 2026 and each succeeding fiscal year" before "for grants".

(b) EXTENSION OF STATE MATCH REQUIREMENT.—Section 438(d) (42 U.S.C. 629h(d)) is amended by striking "2017 through 2023" and inserting "2025 through 2029".

(c) PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS.—Section 438(a) (42 U.S.C. 629h(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by adding at the end the following:

"(F) that determine the appropriateness and best practices for use of technology to conduct remote hearings, subject to participant consent, including to ensure maximum participation of individuals involved in proceedings and to enable courts to maintain operations in times of public health or other emergencies;"

(2) in paragraph (2)(C), by striking "personnel." and inserting "personnel and supporting optimal use of remote hearing technology; and"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(3) to ensure continuity of needed court services, prevent disruption of the services, and enable their recovery from threats such as public health crises, natural disasters or cyberattacks, including through—

"(A) support for technology that allows court proceedings to occur remotely subject to participant consent, including hearings and legal representation;

"(B) the development of guidance and protocols for responding to the occurrences and coordinating with other agencies; and

"(C) other activities carried out to ensure backup systems are in place.".

(d) IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE ON SHARING BEST PRACTICES FOR TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES NEEDED FOR REMOTE COURT PROCEEDINGS FOR FOSTER CARE OR ADOPTION.—Section 438 (42 U.S.C. 629h) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(e) GUIDANCE.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Every 5 years, the Secretary shall issue implementation guidance for sharing information on best practices for—

"(A) technological changes needed for court proceedings for foster care, guardianship, or adoption to be conducted remotely in a way that maximizes engagement and protects the privacy of participants; and

"(B) the manner in which the proceedings should be conducted.

"(2) INITIAL ISSUANCE.—The Secretary shall issue initial guidance required by paragraph (1) with preliminary information on best practices not later than October 1, 2025.

"(3) ADDITIONAL CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall consult with Indian tribes on the development of appropriate guidelines for State court proceedings involving Indian children to maximize engagement of Indian tribes and provide appropriate guidelines on conducting State court proceedings subject to the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 1901 et seq.)."

SEC. 105. EXPANDING REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP GRANTS TO ADDRESS PARENTAL SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER AS CAUSE OF CHILD REMOVAL.

(a) INCREASE IN RESERVATION OF FUNDS.—Section 436(b)(5) (42 U.S.C. 629f(b)(5)) is amended by striking "each of fiscal years 2017 through 2023" and inserting "fiscal year 2025 and \$30,000,000 for fiscal year 2026 and each succeeding fiscal year".

(b) REAUTHORIZATION.—Section 437(f) (42 U.S.C. 629g(f)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3)(A)—

(A) by striking "In addition to amounts authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section, the" and inserting "The"; and

(B) by striking "2017 through 2023" and inserting "2025 through 2029"; and

(2) in paragraph (10), by striking "for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2023".

(c) AUTHORITY TO WAIVE PLANNING PHASE.—Section 437(f)(3)(B)(iii) (42 U.S.C. 629g(f)(3)(B)(iii)) is amended—

(1) by striking all that precedes "grant awarded" and inserting the following:

"(iii) SUFFICIENT PLANNING.—

"(I) IN GENERAL.—A"; and

(2) by striking "may not exceed \$250,000, and"; and

(3) by adding after and below the end the following:

“(II) EXCEPTION.—The Secretary, on a case-by-case basis, may waive the planning phase for a partnership that demonstrates that the partnership has engaged in sufficient planning before submitting an application for a grant under this subsection.”

(d) EXPANDING AVAILABILITY OF EVIDENCE-BASED SERVICES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 437(f)(1) (42 U.S.C. 629g(f)(1)) is amended by inserting “, and expand the scope of the evidence-based services that may be approved by the clearinghouse established under section 476(d)” before the period.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS FOR AWARDING GRANTS.—Section 437(f)(7) (42 U.S.C. 629g(f)(7)) is amended—

(A) by striking “and” at the end of subparagraph (D);

(B) by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (E) and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following: “(F) have submitted information pursuant to paragraph (4)(F) that demonstrates the capability to participate in rigorous evaluation of program effectiveness.”

(e) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ON USING REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP GRANT FUNDS IN COORDINATION WITH OTHER FEDERAL FUNDS TO BETTER SERVE FAMILIES AFFECTED BY A SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER.—Section 435(d) (42 U.S.C. 629e(d)) is amended—

(1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph (4);

(2) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (5) and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following: “(6) use grants under section 437(f) in coordination with other Federal funds to better serve families in the child welfare system that are affected by a substance use disorder.”

(f) PERFORMANCE INDICATORS.—Section 437(f)(8)(A) (42 U.S.C. 629g(f)(8)(A)) is amended in the 1st sentence—

(1) by striking “this subsection” the 1st place it appears and inserting “the Protecting America’s Children by Strengthening Families Act”;

(2) by inserting “child permanency, reunification, re-entry into care,” before “parental recovery”; and

(3) by inserting “, and access to services for families with substance use disorder, including those with children who are over-represented in foster care, difficult to place, or have disproportionately low permanency rates” before the period.

(g) PERFORMANCE INDICATOR CONSULTATION REQUIRED.—Section 437(f)(8)(B) (42 U.S.C. 629g(f)(8)(B)) is amended by redesignating clause (iii) as clause (iv) and inserting after clause (ii) the following:

“(iii) The Administrator of the National Institute on Drug Abuse.”

(h) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Section 437(f)(9)(B) (42 U.S.C. 629g(f)(9)(B)) is amended—

(1) by striking “and” at the end of clause (ii);

(2) by striking the period at the end of clause (iii) and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following: “(iv) whether any programs funded by the grants were submitted to the clearinghouse established under section 476(d) for review and the results of any such review.”

(i) PRIORITY FOR STATEWIDE SERVICE GROWTH.—Section 437(f)(7) (42 U.S.C. 629g(f)(7)), as amended by subsection (d)(2) of this section, is amended—

(1) by striking “and” at the end of subparagraph (E);

(2) by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (F) and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(G) are a State or public agency, or outline a plan to increase the availability of services funded under the grant statewide.”

(j) ADDITION OF JUVENILE COURT AS REQUIRED PARTNER.—Section 437(f)(2)(A) (42 U.S.C. 629g(f)(2)(A)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(iii) The most appropriate administrative office of the juvenile court or State court overseeing court proceedings involving families who come to the attention of the court due to child abuse or neglect.”

(k) ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL PARTNER.—Section 437(f)(2)(C) (42 U.S.C. 629g(f)(2)(C)) is amended by redesignating clause (ix) as clause (x) and inserting after clause (viii) the following:

“(ix) State or local agencies that administer Federal health care, housing, family support, or other related programs.”

(l) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 437(f)(2)(D) (42 U.S.C. 629g(f)(2)(D)) is amended—

(A) by adding “and” at the end of clause (i);

(B) by striking “; and” at the end of clause (ii) and inserting a period; and

(C) by striking clause (iii).

(2) Section 437(f)(2) (42 U.S.C. 629g(f)(2)) is amended by striking subparagraph (B) and redesignating subparagraphs (C) and (D) as subparagraphs (B) and (C), respectively

SEC. 106. MODERNIZATION; REDUCING ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 431 (42 U.S.C. 629a) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(c) USE OF TECHNOLOGY.—

“(1) USE OF PORTAL.—The services referred to in subsection (a) may include the means of access to and use of an electronic or digital portal to facilitate the provision of community support to care for and meet specific needs of families and children.

“(2) LIMITATION.—Such a portal shall not retain or share personally identifiable information about a beneficiary without consent or for any purpose other than referral.”

(b) ALLOWING SUPPORT FOR FAMILY RESOURCE CENTERS.—Section 431(a) (42 U.S.C. 629a(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(A), by inserting “, including services provided by family resource centers,” before “designed”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(10) FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘family resource center’ means a community or school-based hub of support services for families that—

“(i) utilizes an approach that is multi-generational, strengths-based, and family-centered;

“(ii) reflects, and is responsive to, community needs and interests;

“(iii) provides support at no or low cost for participants; and

“(iv) builds communities of peer support for families, including kinship families, to develop social connections that reduce isolation and stress.

“(B) SPECIAL RULE.—For purposes of this subpart, an expenditure for a service provided by a family resource center may be treated as an expenditure for any 1 or more of family support services, family preservation services, family reunification services, or adoption promotion and support services as long as the expenditure is related to serving the children and families in the specified category and consistent with the overall purpose of the category.”

(c) UPDATING STATE PLAN REQUIREMENT.—Section 422(b)(1) (42 U.S.C. 622(b)(1)) is amended to read as follows:

“(1) provide that a State agency will administer or supervise the administration of the plan under this subpart;”

(d) ACCESS TO LEGAL REPRESENTATION.—Section 422(b)(4) (42 U.S.C. 622(b)(4)) is amended—

(1) by striking “and” at the end of subparagraph (A);

(2) by adding “and” at the end of subparagraph (B); and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) the steps that the State will take to ensure that, with respect to any judicial proceeding involving a child and in which there is an allegation of child abuse or neglect, including a proceeding on dependency, adoption, guardianship, or termination of parental rights, information about available independent legal representation is provided to—

“(i) the child, as appropriate; and

“(ii) any individual who is a parent or guardian, or has legal custody, of the child;”

(e) SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE.—Section 422(b)(15)(A) (42 U.S.C. 622(b)(15)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding clause (i)—

(A) by inserting “and, if applicable, the State agency responsible for mental health services,” before “and in consultation”; and

(B) by inserting “mental health providers,” before “other experts”;

(2) in clause (ii), by inserting “a list of services provided to support the physical and” before “emotional”; and

(3) in clause (iv), by inserting “and mental health” before “services”; and

(4) in clause (v), by inserting “, informed consent of youth, and compliance with professional practice guidelines” before the semicolon; and

(5) in clause (vi), by inserting “, licensed mental health providers,” before “or other”.

(f) REDUCTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subpart 3 of part B of title IV (42 U.S.C. 629m) is amended by redesignating section 440 as section 443 and inserting before such section the following:

“SEC. 441. REDUCTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall reduce the burden of administering this part imposed on the recipients of funds under this part, by—

“(1) reviewing and revising administrative data collection instruments and forms to eliminate duplication and streamline reporting requirements for the recipients while collecting all data required under this part;

“(2) in coordination with activities required under the Paperwork Reduction Act, conducting an analysis of the total number of hours reported by the recipients to comply with paperwork requirements and exploring, in consultation with the recipients, how to reduce the number of hours required for the compliance by at least 15 percent;

“(3) collecting input from the recipients with respect to fiscal and oversight requirements and making changes to ensure consistency with standards and guidelines for other Federal formula grant programs based on the input; and

“(4) respecting the sovereignty of Indian tribes when complying with this subsection.

“(b) LIMITATION ON APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (a) of this section shall not apply to any reporting or data collection otherwise required by law that would affect the ability of the Secretary to monitor and ensure compliance with State plans approved under this part or ensure that funds are expended consistent with this part.

“SEC. 442. PUBLIC ACCESS TO STATE PLANS.

“The Secretary shall—

“(1) create a standardized format for State plans required under sections 422 and 432 used to monitor compliance with those sections;

“(2) produce comparisons and analyses of trends in State plans to inform future technical assistance and policy development;

“(3) make the State plans available on a public website; and

“(4) include on the website aggregated national summaries of State submissions as the Secretary deems appropriate.”.

(2) IMPLEMENTATION.—Within 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall—

(A) comply with section 441 of the Social Security Act, as added by the amendment made by paragraph (1); and

(B) notify each recipient of funds under part B of title IV of the Social Security Act of any change made by the Secretary pursuant to such section affecting the recipient.

(3) REPORT.—Within 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate a report describing the efforts of the Secretary to comply with section 441 of the Social Security Act, as added by the amendment made by paragraph (1), including the specific actions to comply with each paragraph of such section.

(g) PRIMARY PREVENTION PARTNERS.—Section 435(a)(2)(B) (42 U.S.C. 429e(a)(2)(B)) is amended by inserting “including community-based partners with expertise in preventing unnecessary child welfare system involvement” before the semicolon.

SEC. 107. STREAMLINING FUNDING FOR INDIAN TRIBES.

(a) SUBPART 1.—

(1) TRIBAL SET-ASIDE; DIRECT PAYMENTS TO TRIBES; EXEMPTIVE AUTHORITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Section 428 (42 U.S.C. 628) is amended by striking subsections (a) and (b) and inserting the following:

“(a) RESERVATION OF FUNDS; DIRECT PAYMENTS.—Out of any amount appropriated pursuant to section 425 for a fiscal year, the Secretary shall reserve 3 percent for grants to Indian tribes and tribal organizations, which shall be paid directly to Indian tribes and tribal organizations with a plan approved under this subpart, in accordance with section 433(a).”.

(B) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 423(a) (42 U.S.C. 623(a)) is amended by striking “the sum appropriated pursuant to section 425 for each fiscal year” and inserting “for each fiscal year, the sum appropriated pursuant to section 425 remaining after applying section 428(a)”.

(C) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 428(c) (42 U.S.C. 628(c)) is amended by striking “450b” and inserting “5304”.

(2) IMPROVING COMPLIANCE WITH THE INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT.—

(A) STATE PLAN REQUIREMENT.—Section 422(b)(9) (42 U.S.C. 622(b)(9)) is amended by striking “Act;” and inserting “Act of 1978, including how the State will ensure timely notice to Indian tribes of State custody proceedings involving Indian children, foster care or adoptive placements of Indian children, and case recordkeeping as such matters relate to transfers of jurisdiction, termination of parental rights, and active efforts;”.

(B) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—Subpart 1 of part B of title IV (42 U.S.C. 621 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 429B. EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT OF 1978.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than October 1, 2025, the Secretary, in consultation with Indian tribal organizations and States, shall develop a plan and provide technical assistance supporting effective implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, includ-

ing specific measures identified in State plans as required by section 422(b)(9) of this Act. The technical assistance plan shall be based on data sufficient to assess State strengths and areas for improvement in implementing Federal standards established under the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, including, at a minimum, the following:

“(1) Timely identification of Indian children and extended family members.

“(2) Timely tribal notice of State child custody proceedings involving an Indian child.

“(3) Reports of cases in which a transfer of jurisdiction (as defined under the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978) was granted or was not granted, and reasons specified for denial in cases where transfer was denied.

“(4) In cases in which a State court orders a foster care placement of an Indian child, whether requirements for active efforts to prevent the breakup of the Indian family, testimony of a qualified expert witness, and evidentiary standards were met.

“(5) Whether an Indian child was placed in a placement that is required to be preferred under the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, and if not, the reasons specified.

“(6) In cases in which a State court orders the termination of parental rights to an Indian child, whether requirements for active efforts to prevent the breakup of the Indian family, testimony of a qualified expert witness, and evidentiary standards were met.

“(b) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.—On request of the Secretary, the Secretary of the Interior shall provide the Secretary with such guidance and assistance as may be necessary to facilitate informing States and public child welfare agencies on how to comply with the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, including specific measures identified in State plans as required by section 422(b)(9) of this Act.

“(c) BIENNIAL REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall biennially submit to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate a written report on how—

“(1) the States are complying with the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 and section 422(b)(9) of this Act, as informed by data collected under this section; and

“(2) the Secretary is assisting States and Indian tribes to improve implementation of Federal standards established under the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978.”.

(3) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS; ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Section 428 (42 U.S.C. 628) is amended by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d) and inserting before such subsection the following:

“(b) AUTHORITY TO STREAMLINE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall, in consultation with the affected Indian tribes, modify any reporting requirement imposed by or under this part on an Indian tribe, tribal organization, or tribal consortium if the total of the amounts allotted to the Indian tribe, tribal organization, or tribal consortium under this part for the fiscal year is not more than \$50,000, and in a manner that limits the administrative burden on any tribe to which not more than \$50,000 is allotted under this subpart for the fiscal year.

“(c) TRIBAL AUTHORITY TO SUBSTITUTE THE FEDERAL NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS CAP.—For purposes of sections 422(b)(14) and 424(e), an Indian tribal organization may elect to have the weighted average of the indirect cost rates in effect under part 220 of title 2, Code of Federal Regulations with respect to the administrative costs of the Indian tribal organization apply in lieu of the percentage specified in each such section.”.

(B) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 431(a) (42 U.S.C. 629a(a)) is amended in each of paragraphs (5) and (6) by striking “428(c)” and inserting “428(d)”.

(b) SUBPART 2.—

(1) TRIBAL PLAN EXEMPTION.—Section 432(b)(2)(B) (42 U.S.C. 629b(b)(2)(B)) is amended—

(A) by striking “section 433(a)” the 1st place it appears and inserting “sections 433(a) and 437(c)(1) combined”; and

(B) by striking “section 433(a)” the 2nd place it appears and inserting “such sections”.

(2) APPLICATION OF TRIBAL SET-ASIDE BEFORE OTHER SET-ASIDES.—Section 436(b)(3) (42 U.S.C. 429f(b)(3)) is amended by striking “After applying paragraphs (4) and (5) (but before applying paragraphs (1) or (2)), the” and inserting “The”.

(3) INCREASE IN FUNDING FOR TRIBAL COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.—Section 438(c)(3) (42 U.S.C. 629h(c)(3)) is amended by inserting “for fiscal year 2025, and \$2,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2029,” before “for grants”.

SEC. 108. ACCELERATING ACCESS TO FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 435 (42 U.S.C. 629e) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(f) PREVENTION SERVICES EVALUATION PARTNERSHIPS.—

“(1) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this subsection is to authorize the Secretary to make competitive grants to support the timely evaluation of—

“(A) services and programs described in section 471(e); or

“(B) kinship navigator programs described in section 474(a)(7).

“(2) GRANTS.—In accordance with applications approved under this subsection, the Secretary may make grants, on a competitive basis, to eligible entities to carry out projects designed to evaluate a service or program provided by the eligible entity, or an entity in partnership with the eligible entity, with respect to the requirements for a promising practice, supported practice, or well-supported practice described in section 471(e)(4)(C).

“(3) APPLICATIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity may apply to the Secretary for a grant under this subsection to carry out a project that meets the following requirements:

“(i) The project is designed in accordance with paragraph (2).

“(ii) The project is to be carried out by the applicant in partnership with—

“(I) a State agency that administers, or supervises the administration of, the State plan approved under part E, or an agency administering the plan under the supervision of the State agency; and

“(II) if the applicant is unable or unwilling to do so, at least 1 external evaluator to carry out the evaluation of the service or program provided by the applicant.

“(B) CONTENTS.—The application shall contain the following:

“(i) A description of the project, including—

“(I) a statement explaining why a grant is necessary to carry out the project; and

“(II) the amount of grant funds that would be disbursed to each entity described in subparagraph (A)(i) in partnership with the applicant.

“(ii) A certification from each entity described in subparagraph (A)(i) that provides assurances that the individual or entity is in partnership with the applicant and will fulfill the responsibilities of the entity specified in the description provided pursuant to clause (i) of this subparagraph.

“(iii) A certification from the applicant that provides assurances that the applicant intends to comply with subparagraph (A)(ii)(II), if applicable.

“(iv) At the option of the eligible entity, a certification from the applicant that the applicant requires an external evaluator secured by the Secretary pursuant to paragraph (5), if applicable.

“(4) PRIORITIES.—In approving applications under this subsection, the Secretary shall prioritize the following:

“(A) Addressing, with respect to the clearinghouse of practices described in section 476(d)(2), deficiencies or gaps identified by the Secretary in consultation with—

“(i) States, political subdivisions of a State, and tribal communities carrying out, or receiving the benefits of, a service or program; and

“(ii) child welfare experts, including individuals with lived experience.

“(B) Maximizing the number of evidence-based services or programs to be included in the clearinghouse of practices described in section 476(d)(2).

“(C) Timely completion of evaluations and the production of evidence.

“(D) Supporting services or programs that are based on, or are adaptations to new population settings of, a service or program with reliable evidence about the benefits and risks of the service or program.

“(5) AVAILABILITY OF EXTERNAL EVALUATORS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Before accepting applications under this subsection, the Secretary shall make reasonable efforts to identify at least 1 entity to serve as an external evaluator for any eligible entity that includes a certification under paragraph (3)(B)(iv) with an application under this subsection.

“(B) NO EFFECT ON CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATION.—The Secretary may not consider whether an eligible entity is in partnership with an external evaluator described in paragraph (A) in approving an application under this subsection submitted by the eligible entity.

“(6) REPORTS.—

“(A) BY GRANT RECIPIENTS.—Within 1 year after receiving a grant under this subsection, and every year thereafter for the next 5 years, the grant recipient shall submit to the Secretary a written report on—

“(i) the use of grant funds;

“(ii) whether the program or service evaluated by the project meets a requirement specified in section 471(e)(4)(C), including information about—

“(I) how the program or service is being carried out in accordance with standards specified in the requirement;

“(II) any outcomes of the program or service; and

“(III) any outcome with respect to which the service or program compares favorably to a comparison practice; and

“(iii) whether the Secretary has included the program or service in an update to the clearinghouse of practices described in section 476(d)(2).

“(B) BY THE SECRETARY.—The Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and to the Committee on Finance of the Senate an annual written report on—

“(i) the grants awarded under this subsection;

“(ii) the programs funded by the grants;

“(iii) any technical assistance provided by the Secretary in carrying out this subsection, including with respect to the efforts to secure external evaluators pursuant to paragraph (5); and

“(iv) any efforts by the Secretary to support program evaluation and review pursuant to section 471(e) and inclusion of pro-

grams in the pre-approved list of services and programs described in section 471(e)(4)(D) or the clearinghouse of practices described in section 476(d)(2).

“(7) FUNDING.—

“(A) LIMITATIONS.—Of the amounts available to carry out this subsection, the Secretary may use not more than 5 percent to provide technical assistance.

“(B) CARRYOVER.—Amounts made available to carry out this subsection shall remain available until expended.

“(8) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible entity’ means any of the following providing a service or program or, in the sole determination of the Secretary, able to provide a service or program if awarded a grant under this subsection:

“(i) A State, a political subdivision of a State, or an agency or department of a State or political subdivision of a State.

“(ii) An entity described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of section 426(a)(1).

“(iii) An Indian tribe or tribal organization.

“(B) EXTERNAL EVALUATOR.—The term ‘external evaluator’ means an entity with the ability and willingness to evaluate a service or program pursuant to paragraph (2) that is not provided by the entity.

“(C) SERVICE OR PROGRAM.—The term ‘service or program’—

“(i) means a service or program described in section 471(e); and

“(ii) includes a kinship navigator program described in section 474(a)(7).”

(b) FUNDING.—Section 437(b) (42 U.S.C. 629g(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(5) PREVENTIVE SERVICES EVALUATION PARTNERSHIPS.—The Secretary shall reserve \$5,000,000 for grants under section 435(f) for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2029.”

SEC. 109. STRENGTHENING SUPPORT FOR YOUTH AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE.

(a) CASEWORKER VISITS.—Section 422(b)(17) (42 U.S.C. 622(b)(17)) is amended by inserting “, and include a description of how the State may offer virtual caseworker visits to youth in care who have attained the age of 18 years and provided informed consent for virtual visits” before the semicolon.

(b) YOUTH AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM PLANNING.—Section 432(b)(1) (42 U.S.C. 629b(b)(1)) is amended to read as follows:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall approve a plan that meets the requirements of subsection (a) only if—

“(A) the plan was developed jointly by the Secretary and the State, and the State, in developing the plan, consulted with—

“(i) appropriate public and nonprofit private agencies;

“(ii) community-based organizations involved in providing services for children and families in the areas of family preservation, family support, family reunification, foster care, kinship, and adoption promotion and support;

“(iii) parents with child welfare experience, foster parents, adoptive parents, and kinship caregivers; and

“(iv) children, youth, and young adults with experience in the child welfare system, including State boards and councils comprised of youth with lived experience who represent the diversity of children in the State to whom the plan would apply; and

“(B) the State has made publicly accessible on a website of the State agency a report that outlines how the State has implemented the suggestions of the children and youth referred to in subparagraph (A)(iv).”

SEC. 110. RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF RELATIVE AND KINSHIP CAREGIVERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 431(a) (42 U.S.C. 629a(a)), as amended by section 106(b)(2) of this Act, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A)—

(i) by striking “children” and inserting “children, youth.”; and

(ii) by striking “adoptive and extended” and inserting “kinship and adoptive”;

(B) in subparagraph (D), by striking “parents and other caregivers (including foster parents)” and inserting “parents, kinship caregivers, and foster parents”;

(C) by striking “and” at the end of subparagraph (E);

(D) by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (F) and inserting “; and”; and

(E) by adding at the end the following:

“(G)(i) peer-to-peer mentoring and support programs with demonstrated experience fostering constructive relationships between children and families and mentors with relevant lived experience or interactions with the child welfare system; and

“(ii) for purposes of this subpart, an expenditure for a service described in clause (i) may be treated as an expenditure for any 1 or more of family support services, family preservation services, family reunification services, or adoption promotion and support services, as long as the expenditure is related to serving the children and families in the specified category and consistent with the overall purpose of the category.”;

(2) in paragraph (2)(B)—

(A) in clause (i), by striking “children” and inserting “children, youth.”; and

(B) in clause (ii), by striking “extended” and inserting “kinship”;

(3) in paragraph (7)(A), by inserting “with kinship caregivers or” before “in a foster family home”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(1) YOUTH.—The term ‘youth’ means an individual who has not attained 26 years of age.”

(b) KINSHIP NAVIGATORS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 427 (42 U.S.C. 627) is amended—

(A) in the section heading, by striking “FAMILY CONNECTION GRANTS” and inserting “KINSHIP NAVIGATORS”;

(B) in subsection (a)—

(i) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “helping” and inserting “administering programs to help”;

(ii) by striking “of—” and all that follows through “a kinship” and inserting “of a kinship”;

(iii) in paragraph (1)(C)—

(I) by striking “and” at the end of clause (iii);

(II) by adding “and” at the end of clause (iv); and

(III) by adding at the end the following:

“(v) connections to individualized assistance, as needed.”;

(iv) by striking paragraphs (2) through (4);

(v) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) through (G) of paragraph (1) as paragraphs (1) through (7), respectively;

(vi) by redesignating clauses (i) through (iv) and clause (v) (as added by clause (iii)(III) of this subparagraph) as subparagraphs (A) through (E), respectively;

(vii) by moving each provision so redesignated 2 ems to the left; and

(viii) by striking “caregiving.” and inserting “caregiving.”;

(C) in subsection (b)—

(i) in paragraph (1), by striking “1 or more of”;

(ii) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (4) and (5), respectively, and inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3) a description of how the entity will directly fund, or provide data to the Secretary for, an evaluation which will publish and submit information to the clearinghouse described in section 476(d)(2) and which is designed to meet the requirements of section 471(e)(4)(C), or a description of how the funds will be used to help the State transition to a program for which the State will seek reimbursement under section 474(a)(7);”;

(iii) in paragraph (4) (as so redesignated), by striking “and” at the end;

(iv) in paragraph (5) (as so redesignated), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(v) by adding at the end the following:

“(6) if the entity is a State, local or tribal child welfare agency—

“(A) documentation of support from a relevant community-based organization with experience serving kinship families when applicable; or

“(B) a description of how the organization plans to coordinate its services and activities with those offered by the relevant community-based organizations.”;

(D) by striking subsection (d) and inserting the following:

“(d) FEDERAL SHARE.—An entity to which a grant is made under this section may use the grant to pay not more than 75 percent of the cost of the activities to be carried out by the entity pursuant to this section.”;

(E) in subsection (g)—

(i) by striking all that precedes “2 percent” and inserting the following:

“(g) RESERVATION OF FUNDS FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may reserve”; and

(ii) by striking “subsection (h)” the 2nd place it appears and inserting “section 437(b)(6)”; and

(F) by striking subsection (h).

(2) RESERVATION OF DISCRETIONARY FUNDS.—Section 437(b) (42 U.S.C. 629g(b)), as amended by section 108(b) of this Act, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(6) KINSHIP NAVIGATORS.—The Secretary shall reserve \$10,000,000 for grants under section 427 for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2029.”.

(3) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 474(a)(7) (42 U.S.C. 674(a)(7)) is amended by striking “427(a)(1)” and inserting “427(a)”.

SEC. 111. AVOIDING NEGLECT BY ADDRESSING POVERTY.

(a) FAMILY PRESERVATION SERVICES.—Section 431(a)(1) (42 U.S.C. 629a(a)(1)), as amended by section 110(a)(1) of this Act, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (F), by striking “and” after the semicolon;

(2) in subparagraph (G), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(H)(i) services providing nonrecurring short term benefits (including supports related to housing instability, utilities, transportation, and food assistance, among other basic needs) that address immediate needs related to a specific crisis, situation, or event affecting the ability of a child to remain in a home established for the child that is not intended to meet an ongoing need; and

“(ii) for purposes of this subpart, an expenditure for a service described in clause (i) may be treated as an expenditure for any 1 or more of family support services, family preservation services, family reunification services, or adoption promotion and support services as long as the expenditure is related to serving the children and families in the specified category and consistent with the overall purpose of the category.”.

(b) STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS.—Section 432(a) (42 U.S.C. 629b(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (9), by striking “and” after the semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (10), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(11) provides a description of policies in place, including training for employees, to address child welfare reports and investigations of neglect concerning the living arrangements or subsistence needs of a child with the goal to prevent the separation of a child from a parent of the child solely due to poverty, to ensure access to services described in section 431(a)(1)(H).”.

SEC. 112. STRENGTHENING SUPPORT FOR CASEWORKERS.

(a) REAUTHORIZATION OF, AND INCREASE IN FUNDING FOR, CASEWORKER VISITS.—Section 436(b)(4)(A) (42 U.S.C. 629f(b)(4)(A)) is amended by striking “each of fiscal years 2017 through 2023” and inserting “fiscal year 2025 and \$26,000,000 for fiscal year 2026 and each succeeding fiscal year”.

(b) MINIMUM GRANT AMOUNT.—Section 433(e) (42 U.S.C. 629c(e)) is amended by striking paragraphs (1) and (2) and inserting the following:

“(1) BASE ALLOTMENT.—From the amount reserved pursuant to section 436(b)(4)(A) for any fiscal year, the Secretary shall first allot to each State (other than an Indian tribe) that has provided to the Secretary such documentation as may be necessary to verify that the jurisdiction has complied with section 436(b)(4)(B)(ii) during the fiscal year, a base allotment of \$100,000, and shall then allot to each of those States an amount determined in paragraph (2) or (3) of this subsection, as applicable.

“(2) TERRITORIES.—From the amount reserved pursuant to section 436(b)(4)(A) for any fiscal year that remains after applying paragraph (1) of this subsection for the fiscal year, the Secretary shall allot to each jurisdiction specified in subsection (b) of this section to which a base allotment is made under such paragraph (1) an amount determined in the same manner as the allotment to each of such jurisdictions is determined under section 423 (without regard to the initial allotment of \$70,000 to each State).

“(3) OTHER STATES.—From the amount reserved pursuant to section 436(b)(4)(A) for any fiscal year that remains after applying paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection for the fiscal year, the Secretary shall allot to each State (other than an Indian tribe) not specified in subsection (b) of this section to which a base allotment was made under paragraph (1) of this subsection an amount equal to such remaining amount multiplied by the supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits percentage of the State (as defined in subsection (c)(2) of this section) for the fiscal year, except that in applying subsection (c)(2)(A) of this section, ‘subsection (e)(3)’ shall be substituted for ‘such paragraph (1)’.”.

(c) REQUIREMENT TO USE FUNDS TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF CASEWORKER VISITS WITH FOSTER CHILDREN.—Section 436(b)(4)(B)(i) (42 U.S.C. 629f(b)(4)(B)(i)) is amended to read as follows:

“(i) IN GENERAL.—A State to which an amount is paid from amounts reserved under subparagraph (A) shall use the amount to improve the quality of monthly caseworker visits with children who are in foster care under the responsibility of the State, with an emphasis on—

“(I) reducing caseload ratios and the administrative burden on caseworkers, to improve caseworker decision making on the safety, permanency, and well-being of foster children and on activities designed to increase retention, recruitment, and training of caseworkers;

“(II) implementing technology solutions to streamline caseworker duties and modernize systems, ensuring improved efficiency and effectiveness in child welfare services;

“(III) improving caseworker safety;

“(IV) mental health resources to support caseworker well-being, including peer-to-peer support programs; and

“(V) recruitment campaigns aimed at attracting qualified caseworker candidates.”.

(d) ELIMINATION OF COST-SHARE PENALTY TIED TO MONTHLY CASEWORKER VISIT STANDARD.—Section 424(f) (42 U.S.C. 624(f)) is amended—

(1) by striking “(1)(A)”; and

(2) by striking paragraphs (1)(B) and (2).

SEC. 113. DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS FOR IMPROVING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN INCARCERATED PARENTS AND CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 439 (42 U.S.C. 629i) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 439. STATE PARTNERSHIP PLANNING AND DEMONSTRATION GRANTS TO SUPPORT MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN FOSTER CHILDREN AND THE INCARCERATED PARENTS OF THE CHILDREN.

“(a) AUTHORITY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make demonstration grants to eligible State partnerships to develop, implement, and provide support for programs that enable and sustain meaningful relationships between covered foster children and the incarcerated parents of the children.

“(2) PAYMENT OF ANNUAL INSTALLMENTS.—The Secretary shall pay each demonstration grant in 5 annual installments.

“(3) 1-YEAR PLANNING GRANTS.—The Secretary may make a planning grant to a recipient of a demonstration grant, to be paid to the recipient 1 year before payment of the 1st annual installment of the demonstration grant and in an amount not greater than any installment of the demonstration grant, if—

“(A) the recipient includes a request for a planning grant in the application under subsection (c); and

“(B) the Secretary determines that a planning grant would assist the recipient and improve the effectiveness of the demonstration grant.

“(b) ELIGIBLE STATE PARTNERSHIP DEFINED.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In this section, the term ‘eligible State partnership’ means an agreement entered into by, at a minimum, the following:

“(A) The State child welfare agency responsible for the administration of the State plans under this part.

“(B) The State agency responsible for adult corrections.

“(2) ADDITIONAL PARTNERS.—For purposes of this section, an eligible State partnership may include any entity with experience in serving incarcerated parents and their children.

“(3) PARTNERSHIPS ENTERED INTO BY INDIAN TRIBES OR TRIBAL CONSORTIA.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), if an Indian tribe or tribal consortium enters into a partnership pursuant to this section that does not consist solely of tribal child welfare agencies (or a consortium of the agencies), the partnership shall be considered an eligible State partnership for purposes of this section.

“(c) APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS.—An eligible State partnership seeking a demonstration grant under this section to carry out a program described in subsection (a)(1) shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require. The application shall include the following:

“(1) A summary of the program, including how the program will support a meaningful

relationship between a covered foster child and an incarcerated parent of the child.

“(2) A description of the activities to be carried out by the program, which must include all of the activities described in subsection (d) that are in the best interest of the covered foster child.

“(3) A framework for identifying—

“(A) each covered foster child eligible for services under the program, including, to the extent practicable, coordination of data between relevant State child welfare agencies and court systems; and

“(B) the roles and responsibilities of the entities in the partnership.

“(4) Documentation that the applicant is an eligible State partnership.

“(5) Assurances that the applicant will participate fully in the evaluation described in subsection (f)(2) and shall maintain records for the program, including demographic information disaggregated by relevant characteristics with respect to covered foster children and incarcerated parents who participate in the program.

“(d) PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.—To the extent that the activities are in the best interest of the covered foster child, the activities referred to in subsection (c)(2) shall include the following:

“(1) REVISION OF POLICIES.—Through consultation with incarcerated parents and their families, grantees shall promote organizational policies of participating child welfare entities and collaborating correctional facilities to promote meaningful relationships through regular and developmentally appropriate communication and visitation between covered foster children and the incarcerated parents, including, when appropriate, the following:

“(A) For child welfare entities—

“(i) inclusion of parents in case planning and decision making for children;

“(ii) regular sharing of information and responses to requests for information between caseworkers and incarcerated parents with respect to the case information of a child, any changes to a case, permanency plans, requirements to maintain parental rights, and any efforts to terminate parental rights;

“(iii) appropriate opportunities for incarcerated parents to demonstrate their relationship with a covered foster child given their incarceration, including training and courses required for a service plan; and

“(iv) the enhanced visitation described in paragraph (2).

“(B) For correctional facilities, fostering visitation and communication that is developmentally appropriate in terms of—

“(i) the nature of communication and visitation, including—

“(I) the ability to physically touch parents;

“(II) engaging with parents in locations that are appropriate for the age and development of the child;

“(III) exchanging items that are appropriate to the age and development of the child, include expectations that are appropriate for the age and development of the child related to behavior, attire, and wait times; and

“(IV) allowing appropriate adults to bring children if legal guardians are not available to promote regular contact;

“(ii) reasonable inclusion of all children of the parent;

“(iii) communication and visitation at times when the children are available;

“(iv) security procedures to comfort children and be minimally invasive; and

“(v) promoting parent-child relationships regardless of the sentence imposed on the parent.

“(2) ENHANCED VISITATION.—

“(A) Grantees shall facilitate weekly communication and, for at least 9 days each year, in-person visitation between a covered foster child and any incarcerated parent of the child.

“(B) Electronic visitation (such as live video visits, phone calls, and recorded books) may be used but shall not be the sole method to promote a meaningful relationship for purposes of the grant.

“(C) Enhanced visitation programs shall—

“(i) integrate best practices for visitation programs with incarcerated parents and their children;

“(ii) adopt developmentally appropriate visitation policies and procedures such as those described in paragraph (1)(B);

“(iii) reduce or eliminate the cost of developmentally appropriate communication and visitation for the covered foster child, which may include the purchase of communication technology, covering transportation, insurance, and lodging costs, costs related to providing appropriate visitation spaces and activities, and other relevant costs;

“(iv) to the extent practicable, integrate appropriate parenting education to help prepare and process visits; and

“(v) avoid restricting visitation and communication as a punishment for the incarcerated parents.

“(3) TRAINING.—Grantees shall incorporate ongoing training for child welfare workers, correctional facility staff, and other program providers to understand the importance of promoting meaningful relationships between children and incarcerated parents.

“(4) CASE MANAGEMENT.—Grantees shall provide case management services for the incarcerated parents of a covered foster child to promote the relationship, access to services, and coordination with the caseworkers of the covered foster child to strengthen the relationship.

“(5) LEGAL ASSISTANCE.—Grantees shall facilitate access to necessary legal services and may use grant funds for services that are not reimbursable under other Federal programs.

“(e) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost of any activity carried out using a grant made under this section shall be not greater than 75 percent.

“(f) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, EVALUATIONS, AND REPORTS.—

“(1) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall provide technical assistance with respect to grants under this section, including by—

“(A) assisting grantees in understanding best practices in promoting meaningful relationships between incarcerated parents and their children as well as consulting with appropriate stakeholders when developing their programs;

“(B) assisting grantees with establishing and analyzing implementation and performance indicators; and

“(C) conducting an annual technical assistance and training meeting and an annual grantee meeting so that grantees can learn from the experiences of other grantees.

“(2) EVALUATIONS.—The Secretary shall conduct an evaluation of program outcomes, including with respect to parent and child well-being, parent-child interactions, parental involvement, awareness of child development and parenting practices, placement stability, and termination of parental rights with respect to covered foster children and incarcerated parents, to measure program effectiveness, as determined by the Secretary, and identify opportunities for improved program practices and implementation.

“(3) REPORTS TO THE CONGRESS.—

“(A) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary shall submit to the

Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate a report that includes—

“(i) the number of applications for grants under this section;

“(ii) the number of grants awarded, and the amounts for each grant; and

“(iii) information on the grants, including—

“(I) interim results of the evaluation described in paragraph (2);

“(II) disaggregated data on covered foster children and incarcerated parents;

“(III) information on the composition of eligible State partnerships;

“(IV) best practices for facilitating meaningful relationships between covered foster children and incarcerated parents; and

“(V) barriers to implementation or expansion of programs funded under this section.

“(B) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 6 years after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate a report that includes—

“(i) the final results of the evaluation described in paragraph (2); and

“(ii) recommendations for refinements to grant requirements to improve program outcomes.

“(g) AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY WITH RESPECT TO INDIAN TRIBES AND TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS.—

“(1) WAIVER OR MODIFICATION OF REQUIREMENTS.—In making a grant to an Indian tribe or tribal organization under this section, the Secretary may waive the matching requirement of subsection (e) or modify an application requirement imposed by or under subsection (c) if the Secretary determines that the waiver or modification is appropriate to the needs, culture, and circumstances of the Indian tribe or tribal organization.

“(2) EVALUATION.—The Secretary shall use tribally relevant data in carrying out the evaluation under subsection (f)(2) with respect to an Indian tribe or tribal organization.

“(h) LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary not more than \$35,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2029 to carry out this section.

“(i) DEFINITION OF COVERED FOSTER CHILD.—In this section, the term ‘covered foster child’ means a child that—

“(1) is in foster care; and

“(2) has at least 1 parent incarcerated in a Federal, State, or local correctional facility.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 431(a)(2)(B)(vii) (42 U.S.C. 629a(a)(2)(B)(vii)) is amended by striking “(as defined in section 439(b)(2)).”

(2) Section 431(a) (42 U.S.C. 629a(a)), as amended by sections 106(b)(2) and 110(a)(4) of this Act, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(12) MENTORING.—The term ‘mentoring’ means a structured, managed program in which children are appropriately matched with screened and trained adult volunteers for one-on-one relationships, involving meetings and activities on a regular basis, intended to meet, in part, the child’s need for involvement with a caring and supportive adult who provides a positive role model.”

SEC. 114. GUIDANCE TO STATES ON IMPROVING DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING FOR YOUTH IN RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT PROGRAMS.

Within 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Department of Education, the Administration for Children and Families, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the

Administration for Community Living, the Department of Justice, and other relevant policy experts, as determined by the Secretary, shall issue and disseminate, or update and revise, as applicable, guidance to State agencies in administering State plans approved under parts B and E of title IV of the Social Security Act on the following:

(1) Best practices for Federal and State agencies to collect data and share information related to the well-being of youth residing in residential treatment facilities, including those facilities operating in multiple States or serving out-of-state youth.

(2) Best practices on improving State collection and sharing of data related to incidences of maltreatment of youth residing in residential treatment facilities, including with respect to meeting the requirement of section 471(a)(9)(A) of such Act for such youth in foster care.

(3) Best practices on improving oversight of youth residential programs receiving Federal funding, and research-based strategies for risk assessment related to the health, safety, and well-being of youth in the facilities.

SEC. 115. STREAMLINING RESEARCH, TRAINING, AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FUNDING.

(a) REPURPOSING DISCRETIONARY RESEARCH SET-ASIDE.—Section 435(c) (42 U.S.C. 629e(c)) is amended to read as follows:

“(c) EVALUATION, RESEARCH, AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WITH RESPECT TO TARGETED PROGRAM RESOURCES.—Of the amount reserved under section 437(b)(1) for a fiscal year, the Secretary shall use not less than—

“(1) \$1,000,000 for technical assistance to grantees under section 437(f) and to support design of local site evaluations with the goal of publishing and submitting evaluation findings to the clearinghouse established under section 476(d), or to award grants to allow current or former grantees under section 437(f) to analyze, publish, and submit to the clearinghouse data collected during past grants; and

“(2) \$1,000,000 for technical assistance required under section 429B of this Act to support effective implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 and to support development of associated State plan measures described pursuant to section 422(b)(9) of this Act.”

(b) ELIMINATION OF RESEARCH SET-ASIDE FROM MANDATORY FUNDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 436(b) (42 U.S.C. 629f(b)), as amended by the preceding provisions of this Act, is amended by striking paragraph (1) and redesignating paragraphs (2) through (5) as paragraphs (1) through (4), respectively.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) Section 433(a) (42 U.S.C. 629c(a)) is amended by striking “436(b)(3)” and inserting “436(b)(2)”.

(B) Section 433(e) (42 U.S.C. 629c(e)), as amended by section 112(b) of this Act, is amended by striking “436(b)(4)(A)” and inserting “436(b)(3)(A)” each place it appears.

(C) Section 434(a)(2)(A) (42 U.S.C. 629d(a)(2)(A)) is amended by striking “436(b)(4)(B)” and inserting “436(b)(3)(B)”.

(D) Section 437(b)(1) (42 U.S.C. 629g(b)(1)) is amended by striking “436(b)(1)” and inserting “435”.

(E) Section 437(f)(3) (42 U.S.C. 629g(f)(3)) is amended by striking “436(b)(5)” and inserting “436(b)(4)”.

(F) Section 438(c) (42 U.S.C. 629g(c)) is amended in each of paragraphs (1) through (3) is amended by striking “436(b)(2)” and inserting “436(b)(1)”.

SEC. 116. REPORT ON POST ADOPTION AND SUBSIDIZED GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Within 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-

retary of Health and Human Services shall prepare and submit to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate a report on children who enter into foster care under the supervision of a State administering a plan approved under part B or E of title IV of the Social Security Act after finalization of an adoption or legal guardianship.

(b) INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall include in the report information, to the extent available through the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System and other data sources, regarding the incidence of adoption disruption and dissolution affecting children described in subsection (a) and factors associated with such circumstances, including—

(1) whether affected individuals received pre- or post-legal adoption services; and

(2) other relevant information, such as the age of the child involved.

(c) POST-ADOPTION SERVICES AND GUARDIANSHIP.—The Secretary shall include in the report—

(1) a summary of post-adoption services and guardianship in each State that are available to families that adopted children from foster care and the extent to which the services are evidence-based or evidence-informed.

(2) a summary of funding and funding sources for the services in each State, including set-asides under the Promoting Safe and Stable Families program.

SEC. 117. EFFECTIVE DATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by this title shall take effect on October 1, 2025, and shall apply to payments under part B of title IV of the Social Security Act for calendar quarters beginning on or after such date.

(b) DELAY PERMITTED IF STATE LEGISLATION REQUIRED.—If the Secretary of Health and Human Services determines that State legislation (other than legislation appropriating funds) is required in order for a State plan developed pursuant to part B of title IV of the Social Security Act to meet the additional requirements imposed by the amendments made by this title, the plan shall not be regarded as failing to meet any of the additional requirements before the 1st day of the 1st calendar quarter beginning after the first regular session of the State legislature that begins after the date of the enactment of this Act. For purposes of the preceding sentence, if the State has a 2-year legislative session, each year of the session is deemed to be a separate regular session of the State legislature.

(c) APPLICATION TO PROGRAMS OPERATED BY INDIAN TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS.—In the case of an Indian tribe, tribal organization, or tribal consortium that the Secretary of Health and Human Services determines requires time to take action necessary to comply with the additional requirements imposed by the amendments made by this Act (whether the tribe, organization, or tribal consortium has a plan under section 479B of the Social Security Act or a cooperative agreement or contract entered into with a State), the Secretary shall provide the tribe, organization, or tribal consortium with such additional time as the Secretary determines is necessary for the tribe, organization, or tribal consortium to take the action to comply with the additional requirements before being regarded as failing to comply with the requirements.

TITLE II—STRENGTHENING STATE AND TRIBAL CHILD SUPPORT

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Strengthening State and Tribal Child Support Enforcement Act”.

SEC. 202. IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRIBAL CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES.

(a) IMPROVING THE COLLECTION OF PAST-DUE CHILD SUPPORT THROUGH STATE AND TRIBAL PARITY IN THE ALLOWABLE USE OF TAX INFORMATION.—

(1) AMENDMENT TO THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT.—Section 464 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 664) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) APPLICABILITY TO INDIAN TRIBES AND TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVING A GRANT UNDER THIS PART.—This section, except for the requirement to distribute amounts in accordance with section 457, shall apply to an Indian tribe or tribal organization receiving a grant under section 455(f) in the same manner in which this section applies to a State with a plan approved under this part.”

(2) AMENDMENTS TO THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE.—

(A) Section 6103(a)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “any local child support enforcement agency” and inserting “any tribal or local child support enforcement agency”.

(B) Section 6103(a)(3) of such Code is amended by inserting “, (8)” after “(6)”.

(C) Section 6103(l) of such Code is amended—

(i) in paragraph (6)—

(I) by striking “or local” in subparagraph (A) and inserting “tribal, or local”;

(II) by striking “AND LOCAL” in the heading thereof and inserting “TRIBAL, AND LOCAL”;

(III) by striking “The following” in subparagraph (B) and inserting “The”;

(IV) by striking the colon and all that follows in subparagraph (B) and inserting a period; and

(V) by adding at the end the following:

“(D) STATE, TRIBAL, OR LOCAL CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT AGENCY.—For purposes of this paragraph, the following shall be treated as a State, tribal, or local child support enforcement agency:

“(i) Any agency of a State or political subdivision thereof operating pursuant to a plan described in section 454 of the Social Security Act which has been approved by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under part D of title IV of such Act.

“(ii) Any child support enforcement agency of an Indian tribe or tribal organization receiving a grant under section 455(f) of the Social Security Act.”

(ii) in paragraph (8)—

(I) in subparagraph (A), by striking “or State or local” and inserting “, State, tribal, or local”;

(II) in subparagraph (B), by striking “enforced pursuant to a plan described” and all that follows through “of such Act” and inserting “enforced pursuant to the provisions of part D of title IV of the Social Security Act”;

(III) by adding at the end of subparagraph (B) the following: “The information disclosed to any child support enforcement agency under subparagraph (A) with respect to any individual with respect to whom child support obligations are sought to be established or enforced may be disclosed by such agency to any agent of such agency which is under contract with such agency for purposes of, and to the extent necessary in, establishing and collecting child support obligations from, and locating, individuals owing such obligations.”;

(IV) by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

“(C) STATE, TRIBAL, OR LOCAL CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT AGENCY.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term ‘State, tribal, or local child support enforcement agency’ has the same meaning as when used in paragraph (6)(D).”; and

(V) by striking “AND LOCAL” in the heading thereof and inserting “TRIBAL, AND LOCAL”; and

(iii) in paragraph (10)(B), by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(iii) The information disclosed to any child support enforcement agency under subparagraph (A) with respect to any individual with respect to whom child support obligations are sought to be established or enforced may be disclosed by such agency to any agent of such agency which is under contract with such agency for purposes of, and to the extent necessary in, establishing and collecting child support obligations from, and locating, individuals owing such obligations.”

(D) Section 6103(p)(4) of such Code is amended—

(i) by striking “subsection (1)(10), (13)(A), (13)(B), (13)(C), (13)(D)(i), (16), (18), (19), or (20), or any entity” in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) and inserting “subsection (1)(6), (8), (10), (13)(A), (13)(B), (13)(C), (13)(D)(i), (16), (18), (19), or (20), or any Indian tribe or tribal organization receiving a grant under section 455(f) of the Social Security Act, or any entity”;

(ii) by striking “subsection (1)(10)” in subparagraph (F)(i) and inserting “subsection (1)(6), (8), (10)”;

(iii) by striking “subsection (1)(10), (13)(A), (13)(B), (13)(C), (13)(D)(i), (16), (18), (19), or (20) or any entity” each place it appears in the matter following subparagraph (F)(iii) and inserting “subsection (1)(6), (8), (10), (13)(A), (13)(B), (13)(C), (13)(D)(i), (16), (18), (19), or (20), or any Indian tribe or tribal organization receiving a grant under section 455(f) of the Social Security Act, or any entity”; and

(iv) by inserting “, (8)” after “paragraph (6)(A)” in the matter following subparagraph (F)(iii).

(E) Section 6103(p)(9) of such Code is amended by striking “or local” and inserting “tribal, or local”.

(F) Section 6402(c) of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following: “For purposes of this subsection, any reference to a State shall include a reference to any Indian tribe or tribal organization receiving a grant under section 455(f) of the Social Security Act.”

(b) REIMBURSEMENT FOR REPORTS.—Section 453(g) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 653(g)) is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading, by striking “STATE”; and

(2) by striking “and State” and inserting “, State, and tribal”.

(c) TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.—Paragraphs (7) and (33) of section 454 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 654) are each amended by striking “450b” and inserting “5304”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, title IV-B of the Social Security Act provides critical resources to protect the safety and well-being of children in foster care and gives States, Tribes, and territories flexibility to invest in prevention services to keep vulnerable families together whenever possible.

Unfortunately, this program’s authorization expired in 2021, and the program has remained largely unchanged since 2008. We have a responsibility to make sure programs are meeting the current needs of families and children who need it most. This reauthorization modernizes title IV-B child welfare and increases accountability.

Right now, there are nearly 400,000 children in foster care and over 20,000 who age out of foster care each year.

The Ways and Means Committee has worked over the last year to conduct a top-to-bottom review of America’s child welfare system. We have held four hearings and numerous meetings with stakeholders to better understand where there are gaps and how to bring this program up to date to better serve America’s children.

I represent one of the poorest congressional districts in the country, and before I came to Congress, I practiced family law and saw firsthand how our child welfare system can put undue strain on families.

That is why I particularly appreciate the opportunity to have worked with Representative GWEN MOORE in introducing legislation, included in this bill, that prevents child services from taking children away from their families simply because they live in poverty. I think about the families separated in Missouri over the years not because of abuse or neglect, but because they could not afford to pay a bill or new clothes for their kids. It is not right, and this bill corrects that.

The bipartisan legislation before us today is the result of those efforts. It will not only help address the needs of children in foster care but also support early intervention to help families stay together. The Protecting America’s Children by Strengthening Families Act, introduced by the chair and ranking member of our Work and Welfare Subcommittee, DARIN LAHOOD and DANNY DAVIS, reauthorizes title IV-B for 5 years and makes significant reforms to modernize the program.

Specifically, this bill reduces the administrative burden by dialing back paperwork and reporting requirements that are hamstringing caseworkers.

It streamlines funding to improve access for Indian Tribes.

It helps to prevent abuse and neglect and ensures that children are not separated from their parents solely on the basis of poverty.

It addresses the caseworker crisis by improving access to training.

It strengthens the support systems for the 2.5 million grandparents and relatives who provide kinship care to children who might otherwise enter foster care.

It also improves outcomes for youth transitioning from foster care into adulthood.

This bill also includes important legislation from Representative HERN of Oklahoma that would strengthen the tools available to States and Tribes to ensure millions of families receive the child support that they are owed. That bill would prevent the IRS from blocking State child support agencies from using contractors to administrator their child support enforcement program.

Representative HERN’s bill, the Strengthening State and Tribal Child Support Enforcement Act, will harmonize Federal laws so States can continue carrying out necessary child support payment collections and allow Tribal child support agencies to direct access to the same tools. This bill avoids additional significant costs that would be incurred by both States and Tribes should the IRS policy go into place as it is scheduled to do on October 1.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this critical legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Supporting America’s Children and Families Act which now includes two bipartisan bills reported out of the Ways and Means Committee. The first bill would improve and invest in the child welfare services funded under title IV-B of the Social Security Act. The second bill would ensure that State and Tribal child support agencies can continue their work collecting child support obligations.

I thank Chairman LAHOOD and Chairman SMITH for their hard work and willingness to work with all of us to reauthorize and improve title IV-B of the Social Security Act. I am delighted that today we advance this important bipartisan step forward for our most vulnerable children and families.

This bill would increase guaranteed funding for the MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program for the first time since 2006, providing meaningful new resources to make sure that all children are in safe, loving, and permanent homes.

The bill includes good ideas from Members on both sides of the aisle and from the experts who work with us to prioritize child well-being in our work. Indeed, 228 national, State, and local organizations support this bill.

The bill provides modest but critical funding for services all along the child welfare continuum. In addition to providing essential new funding for both State and Tribal child welfare agencies to support families, this bill includes numerous, significant investments and policy updates that improve child safety and well-being.

For example, it invests in aiding kinship caregivers in finding needed resources and in evidence-based programs that successfully help parents

overcome substance abuse disorders to safely care for their children.

It increases funding for Tribal child welfare programs while respecting Tribal sovereignty and monitoring State engagement with the Indian Child Welfare Act. It updates our policies to help ensure that parents and children have access to independent legal representation in child welfare court proceedings, a key factor to address racial disparities in child welfare.

This bill also provides for a new demonstration project to promote meaningful relationships between foster youth and their incarcerated parents. I have personally witnessed the power of these relationships to change lives for both children and parents, and I thank Chairman LAHOOD and my colleagues for working with me to help these families.

In addition, the bill amends section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code to bring parity to Tribal and State child support services agencies and to ensure that State agencies can continue their work.

I recognize the leadership of Representatives GWEN MOORE, SUZAN DELBENE, and KEVIN HERN on these provisions. I know that agencies across the country and in my home State of Illinois are eager for us to enact this provision quickly to resolve a long-standing discrepancy in interpretation about the use and definition of contractors assisting child support agencies. The bill strengthens the ability of State, Tribal, and local child support agencies to serve families.

Both the substance of this bill and the true collaboration in both policy areas, child welfare and child support, represent a great step forward.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support its passage, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1600

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Work and Welfare.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) for his leadership and guidance in bringing this bill through the Committee on Ways and Means and to the floor here today.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill, Supporting America's Children and Families Act. As chairman of the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Work and Welfare, I am proud that this important legislation demonstrates our bipartisan commitment to supporting vulnerable children and parents.

H.R. 9076 includes two pieces of legislation. Title I contains the Protecting America's Children by Strengthening Families Act, which I am proud to have introduced alongside the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS), my fellow Illinoisan, ranking member, and friend, to reauthorize and improve the title

IV-B program. The bill authorizes and reforms this critical child welfare program to support the safety and well-being of children in foster care.

The second bill, introduced by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. HERN), my friend, will ensure States and Tribes have the tools necessary to continue to collect child support on behalf of millions of families across the country.

This combined legislation is the result of a yearlong investigation and five committee hearings to learn from stakeholders, parents, States, and Tribes.

Based on that work, we have been able to include bipartisan reforms that will improve child welfare and strengthen child support enforcement across the country, all with the net result of a reduction in direct Federal spending of \$136 million over 10 years.

I repeat: a reduction in direct Federal spending of \$136 million over 10 years.

I take seriously the Subcommittee on Work and Welfare's responsibility to ensure we have a strong safety net for the nearly 400,000 children in foster care who have experienced the trauma and hardships of abuse and neglect. This 5-year reauthorization modernizes the program and expands what we know is working.

In government, we often add to programs over time in our quest for improvement. Regrettably, though, this approach often results in fragmented and complex systems that burden administrators and hinder families from receiving the support they desperately need.

This legislation before us tackles that issue and represents the most significant reform and investment in child welfare since 1993. Bills which were the foundation of what we are voting on here today were introduced by 19 Members from both sides of the aisle.

This bill will specifically save taxpayer dollars through early intervention to keep families together, whenever possible, and reduce the need for foster care. It removes ineffective requirements and ensures States are accountable for matching Federal funds. It frees up more time for States and caseworkers to focus on families by requiring HHS to reduce administrative burdens by 15 percent. It expands access for Tribal communities by streamlining funding. It builds support systems for the 2.5 million grandparents and relatives serving as kinship caregivers, and strengthens post-adoption services to ensure children waiting for adoption find stable, loving homes.

This child welfare reauthorization has been endorsed by more than 200 organizations, including our county, State, and Tribal partners, as well as organizations representing former foster youth with lived experience.

Title II of the legislation before us includes the Strengthening State and Tribal Child Support Enforcement Act,

which I am proud to have cosponsored with the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. HERN), the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT), the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SMUCKER), the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE), and the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE).

A key tool used to collect past-due child support is the Treasury Offset Program. This program allows States to collect past-due obligations by intercepting Federal tax refunds from noncustodial parents.

Last year, 5 percent, or \$1.5 billion, was collected for families through this program. Unfortunately, a statutory conflict threatens to cut off access to this important child support enforcement tool for 42 States.

Absent a legislative change by October 1 of 2024, States and the Federal Government face hundreds of millions in new costs, and millions of families could lose vital child support payments.

The legislation before us today will formally authorize State use of contractors while maintaining protections on the privacy of Federal taxpayer information.

Further, this bill authorizes Tribal access, providing much-needed parity for Tribal enforcement agencies.

I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. HERN) for his leadership on this bill. This legislation has garnered endorsements from State and Tribal organizations across the country, including 26 sitting Governors.

The well-being and safety of America's children and struggling families is an area of common interest for both Republicans and Democrats. This legislation demonstrates what we can achieve when we work together. I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) for his continued partnership and leadership on these issues.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I acknowledge all of the members of the Subcommittee on Work and Welfare and the full Committee on Ways and Means for their valuable contribution and input on this important legislation.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Social Security.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) for yielding me time, and I congratulate the gentleman on this outstanding piece of legislation.

In my youth, I had the opportunity as then-president of the senate in the State of Connecticut to work with Dr. Edward Zigler, commonly referred to as the "father of Head Start" and really the person who came up with the concept and idea of family resource centers.

He looked out around the country and saw schoolhouses, and he saw them in communities where everybody attended and worked and said: Wouldn't that be a great idea?

What he understood most, of course, is that childcare is family care. That is something that the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) has exemplified in my time with him on the Ways and Means Committee, and I am proud to be associated with the gentleman, this bill, and the work and effort of Dr. Edward Zigler of Yale University.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. HERN).

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in favor of H.R. 9076. I am very pleased that this legislation is coming to the House floor today.

The Supporting America's Children and Families Act includes two pieces of legislation that are important, not just to me, but to my home State of Oklahoma.

The first is the Strengthening State and Tribal Child Support Enforcement Act. This policy finally allows Tribes who run their own child support enforcement programs to access Treasury offset programs. There are 38 federally recognized Tribes in my home State of Oklahoma, 10 of which run their own child support enforcement agencies.

I would highlight this policy has the support of the National Tribal Child Support Association and the National Association of Tribal Child Support Directors.

Not only does this policy help Tribes efficiently run their child support enforcement programs, but States will be allowed to continue to use the third-party contractors to help run their child support enforcement programs. Child support enforcement is not a partisan issue. It is the right thing for Congress to do. Without this fix, we risk States having to bring all child support enforcement services in-house, costing hundreds of millions of dollars, along with the immediate pause of child support programs to millions of families, an absolutely devastating outcome. We cannot let this happen to our families.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this piece of legislation to help the children that are growing up to be this country's next generation because it truly is about the children.

This legislation also includes the Tribal Welfare Support Act, which allows child welfare funds from title IV-B to be paid directly to Tribes, reducing the regulatory burden for both States and Tribes.

Right now, child welfare payments are made to Tribes through two different funding allocations, one of which goes through States rather than directly to Tribal guarantees, an outdated and fragmented system that needs to be updated.

The Tribal Child Welfare Support Act modernizes this process so that title IV-B recipients can spend more time helping their children and families, and less time wading through the red tape.

The Supporting America's Children and Families Act passed unanimously out of the Committee on Ways and Means and contains priorities that will help families and children all over this country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this piece of legislation today.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE), one of the most serious antipoverty advocates that I know.

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I associate myself with all of the comments that have been made today in describing the importance of these bills and getting us one step closer to a really healthy, robust title IV-B reauthorization and putting that into law.

I especially thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Work and Welfare, and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Work and Welfare, for bringing us here today.

As the chairwoman of the bipartisan Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth, I am so grateful that so many of our priorities of the bipartisan caucus were addressed in this package, including ensuring that poverty is not synonymous with neglect; including enhancing peer-to-peer mentoring; listening to the voices of those with experience in the welfare system; supporting youth as they transition out of foster care; giving a larger, broader platform to considering kinship caregiving as opposed to removing children from homes; improving our child support collection mechanisms; and strengthening the Indian Child Welfare Act.

This package includes a much-needed, albeit small, increase in title IV-B dollars. Whatever way it is sliced, we can't make the system better or work the way we want without making investments.

One of my main priorities in Congress has been to make sure that poverty is not synonymous with neglect, and I was so very proud to work with the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) during the reauthorization effort to include this provision in the bill before us.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. VALADAO). The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin.

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me additional time.

Mr. Speaker, I was proud to work with the gentleman to require that States receiving these Federal dollars to identify and implement policies that would prevent family separation solely based on poverty.

I am so proud to have worked on the provision to make sure that those with

lived experience in the foster youth system are included in the development of State plans.

It is also critically important that we are passing the part of this legislation, the Strengthening State and Tribal Support Act, that piece of the legislation championed by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. HERN). I have joined him in cosponsoring this bill to improve a key mechanism for enforcing child support orders, and that is intercepting State tax refunds.

Mr. Speaker, child support payments are vital to child well-being and development, and they help fight child poverty and keeping both parents engaged in supporting their child.

Tribes are currently unable to directly request that tax refunds be garnished for child support, and States have problems, as well, with these hindrances. This is also a direct affront to Tribal sovereignty not to be able to provide these services directly. I am so glad that these provisions have been included.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from those 27 Governors, including Wisconsin's own Tony Evers, in support of the provisions which they argue will support the ability of State, Tribal, and local child support agencies to adequately service families.

Hon. CHARLES E. SCHUMER,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. HAKEEM JEFFRIES,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER SCHUMER, MINORITY LEADER MCCONNELL, SPEAKER JOHNSON, AND MINORITY LEADER JEFFRIES: As governors from across the nation, we urge you to pass the bipartisan Strengthening State and Tribal Child Support Act (H.R. 7906), which will help support the ability of state, Tribal, and local child support agencies to serve families in each of our states.

Maintaining states' and Tribes' ability to perform child support enforcement via federal tax offset is vital to ensuring the well-being of over 12 million children currently receiving the services of the child support program. It is critical that states and Tribes do not lose the ability to perform this essential action.

BACKGROUND

Federal law requires child support agencies to access federal tax information (FTI) for establishment and enforcement purposes, including the federal tax refund offset program. Child support agencies across the country contract with private partners for this and a variety of critical services, including management of state disbursement units, which are responsible for disbursement of all child support funds collected in a state, as well as technology services related to the maintenance and development of child support case management systems.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has determined that direct access to FTI by Tribal child support programs is prohibited under current law and that contractor access to FTI is limited. Until last year, IRS audits of

child support programs held those federal tax information findings in abeyance while waiting for a legislative solution.

The IRS and the federal Office of Child Support Services (OCSS) had agreed for decades to allow contractor access to FTI for the sole purpose of establishing and enforcing child support obligations as long as contractors adhered to stringent measures to ensure that confidential information remained protected. Importantly, contractors have never breached the extensive confidentiality requirements. A legislative solution to this issue is long overdue.

LEGISLATIVE SOLUTION

Introduced by Representative Kevin Hern (R-Oklahoma) and lead cosponsors Representatives Gwen Moore (D-Wisconsin) and Suzan DelBene (D-Washington), H.R. 7906 resolves a long-standing discrepancy in interpretation under the Internal Revenue Code of the use and definition of contractors, who are integral to assisting child support agencies in establishing and enforcing child support obligations. The companion to H.R. 7906, S. 3154, was introduced in the Senate by Senator John Thune (R-South Dakota) and Senator Ron Wyden (D-Oregon).

The federal tax refund offset program collects tens of millions in current and past due child support every year. These vital funds for children across the nation are in jeopardy if resolution to this discrepancy is not addressed.

Based on preliminary cost estimates obtained from child support program directors across the country, absent this legislative solution, compliance with IRS requirements would total over \$1 billion nationally in additional costs for child support programs each year. These are the additional administrative costs associated with bringing current vendor-provided services in-house. The legislation would also provide Tribes with direct access to federal tax information to offset federal tax refunds from parents owing support to their children and allow them to obtain vital information to establish and enforce child support for children served by tribal child support agencies.

BIPARTISAN, BICAMERAL, STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

After many months of review and negotiation, this important effort and bill as introduced has earned bipartisan support and a nearly identical bill is pending in the Senate. Additionally, the IRS and the Office of Child Support Services were meaningfully engaged and involved throughout the process and supported the provisions. The four national associations representing state and Tribal child support agencies also support the bill.

This legislative fix clarifying the use of contractors provides administrative certainty for all agencies and provides Tribes with direct access to tax refund offsets, giving them another tool to support children and families. We support the passage of H.R. 7906 to avoid disruption in these essential services.

Sincerely,

Governor Tony Evers, Wisconsin.
Governor Mike DeWine, Ohio.
Governor Kay Ivey, Alabama.
Governor Gavin Newsom, California.
Governor Ned Lamont, Connecticut.
Governor Josh Green, M.D., Hawaii.
Governor Laura Kelly, Kansas.
Governor Wes Moore, Maryland.
Governor Gretchen Whitmer, Michigan.
Governor Katie Hobbs, Arizona.
Governor Jared Polis, Colorado.
Governor John Carney, Delaware.
Governor J.B. Pritzker, Illinois.
Governor Janet Mills, Maine.
Governor Maura Healey, Massachusetts.

Governor Mike Parson, Missouri.
Governor Phil Murphy, New Jersey.
Governor Doug Burgum, North Dakota.
Governor Josh Shapiro, Pennsylvania.
Governor Kristi Noem, South Dakota.
Governor Phil Scott, Vermont.
Governor Mark Gordon, Wyoming.
Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham, New Mexico.
Governor Tina Kotek, Oregon.
Governor Dan McKee, Rhode Island.
Governor Spencer Cox, Utah.
Governor Jay Inslee, Washington.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SMUCKER).

Mr. SMUCKER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) for yielding and his work on this very important piece of legislation. I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Work and Welfare, as well as the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Work and Welfare, for their work on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 9076, the Supporting America's Children and Families Act.

□ 1615

One pillar of this bill reauthorizes the title IV-B program, which underpins much of the child welfare system and provides funding to States for community-based and prevention-oriented programs and services. At the time we are reauthorizing, we take that opportunity to learn how we can improve. The improvements that are included today in that reauthorization will make a difference in the lives of many children and families throughout the country.

I am very pleased that included in this package are four bills that I introduced after receiving input from providers and others in my community and district. After hearing from individuals and witnesses in hearings about this package, it will include policies to allow IV-B dollars to support kinship families, reduce the administrative burden on State and Tribal child welfare agencies, support caseworkers, and gather data on the effectiveness of post-adoptive services.

The other pillar of this bill would ensure that States can utilize contractors to support their child welfare programs, which is a vital flexibility that the two counties that I represent, Lancaster and York Counties in Pennsylvania, take advantage of to ensure steady child support payments.

H.R. 9076 aims to provide vital resources to families in need with the goal of preventing them from needing the foster care system in the first place and helping to maintain healthy families, which are the cornerstone of our society.

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this bill.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. YAKYM).

Mr. YAKYM. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Supporting America's Children and Families Act, which updates key child welfare programs for the first time since 2008. That includes reducing the paperwork burden for States and caseworkers, improving training and technology available to caseworkers, strengthening support systems for grandparents and other relatives who become primary caregivers, and providing better services for those aging out of foster care.

When I was board chair for the Boys and Girls Clubs of St. Joseph County, I saw firsthand the difference programs of all types make in putting at-risk youth on a path to success and keeping them on it. That involves treating each child as an individual, not just another number, and assessing their unique circumstances and needs. This takes more work, but it ensures the best result for the child, their family, and their communities.

I thank Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. DAVIS, Chairman SMITH, and Ranking Member NEAL for their bipartisan work on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes."

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I thank Chairman SMITH and Chairman LAHOOD for their partnership on this important bill that would improve and invest in child welfare services under title IV-B and ensure that State and Tribal support agencies can continue their work. I think all of our committee can be seriously proud of this bipartisan work. It has been a pleasure working with the chair and Mr. LAHOOD.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this very important legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, it is not often that you find this many Republicans and Democrats voting together on a bill, but when it comes to supporting children and families, we are in strong agreement.

Reauthorizing title IV-B is a first-in-a-generation win that will refocus the child welfare system on keeping families together and preventing abuse and neglect.

Don't take our word for it. The title IV-B coalition, made up of 22 different national, State, and county organizations, has endorsed this legislation. The National Foster Youth Institute, the Child Welfare League of America, and the National Indian Child Welfare Association have all come out in support of this legislation.

I also give a special thanks to Paris Hilton for personally coming to Capitol Hill and testifying about her lived experience and in support of reforms to this program.

The legislation from Representative HERN that is also included in this bill will fix the disconnect between Federal laws that are currently setting up State and Tribal child support agencies for failure.

The child support enforcement program is one of the most highly successful, cost-effective Federal programs that millions of families across the country rely upon each month. The program produces \$5 in benefits for every \$1 spent on administration. Nearly 13 million children, representing 18 percent of all children, are affected by this program.

Twenty-six States from the National Governors Association have endorsed this legislation, along with the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Association of Counties, and the National Association of Tribal Child Support Directors.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join them in supporting this important legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SMUCKER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 9076, as amended.

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. SMITH of Missouri. 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.

NO FOREIGN ELECTION INTERFERENCE ACT

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 8314) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to impose penalties with respect to contributions to political committees from certain tax exempt organizations that receive contributions from foreign nationals, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8314

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 "No Foreign Election Interference Act".

SEC. 2. PENALTIES WITH RESPECT TO CONTRIBUTIONS TO POLITICAL COMMITTEES FROM CERTAIN TAX EXEMPT ORGANIZATIONS THAT ACCEPT CONTRIBUTIONS FROM FOREIGN NATIONALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Part I of subchapter B of chapter 68 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"SEC. 6720D. CONTRIBUTIONS TO POLITICAL COMMITTEES FROM CERTAIN TAX EXEMPT ORGANIZATIONS THAT ACCEPT CONTRIBUTIONS FROM FOREIGN NATIONALS.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—Any specified tax exempt organization that makes any disqualified polit-

ical committee contribution shall pay a penalty equal to twice the amount of such contribution.

"(b) DISQUALIFIED POLITICAL COMMITTEE CONTRIBUTION.—For purposes of this section—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The term 'disqualified political committee contribution' means, with respect to any organization described in section 501(c), any contribution made by such organization to a political committee (as defined in section 301 of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (52 U.S.C. 30101)) if such organization received, during any testing period, any contribution or gift (within the meaning of section 6033(b)(5)) from a foreign national (as defined in section 319(b) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (52 U.S.C. 30121(b))).

"(2) TESTING PERIOD.—The term 'testing period' means, with respect to any contribution by an organization described in section 501(c), the 8-year period ending on the date of such contribution, except that such period shall not include any period before the date of the enactment of this section.

"(c) SPECIFIED TAX EXEMPT ORGANIZATION.—For purposes of this section—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The term 'specified tax exempt organization' means, with respect to any taxable year, any organization described in section 501(c) and exempt from tax under section 501(a) if—

"(A) the gross receipts of such organization for such taxable year equal or exceed \$200,000, or

"(B) the assets of such organization (determined as of the close of such taxable year) equal or exceed \$500,000.

"(2) COORDINATION WITH REVOCATION OF TAX EXEMPT STATUS BY REASON OF MAKING DISQUALIFIED POLITICAL COMMITTEE CONTRIBUTIONS.—An organization which is not exempt from tax under section 501(a) solely by reason of section 501(s) shall be treated for purposes of paragraph (1) of this subsection as exempt from tax under section 501(a) with respect to the application of this section to the first 3 disqualified political committee contributions of such organization."

(b) REVOCATION OF EXEMPT STATUS UPON THIRD DISQUALIFIED POLITICAL COMMITTEE CONTRIBUTION.—Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(s) REVOCATION OF EXEMPT STATUS OF CERTAIN ORGANIZATIONS THAT ACCEPT CONTRIBUTIONS FROM FOREIGN NATIONALS AND MAKE CONTRIBUTIONS TO POLITICAL COMMITTEES.—Any organization described in subsection (c) which makes more than 2 disqualified political committee contributions (as defined in section 6720D(b)) shall not be exempt from taxation under subsection (a) for any taxable year ending on or after the date of the third such contribution."

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for part I of subchapter B of chapter 68 of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

"Sec. 6720D. Contributions to political committees from certain tax exempt organizations that accept contributions from foreign nationals."

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to contributions made on or after January 1, 2025, by organizations described in section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Ms. SANCHEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in

which to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as the world's leading democracy, America is an example for other nations to follow. Unfortunately, we are also a target for foreign actors seeking to influence and undermine our elections.

Over the last year, as the Ways and Means Committee has been investigating concerns about the dangerous influence of foreign money in our elections, it has become clear that loopholes exist in our tax code that foreign donors are able to take advantage of so they can influence the American electoral process.

Under current law, foreign nationals are prohibited from making contributions directly to election campaigns, but there is nothing that prohibits overseas cash flowing from foreign nationals, including from adversaries of the United States such as China, through tax-exempt organizations and then into the hands of super-PACs.

The committee's investigation discovered a particularly disturbing example: A foreign national from Switzerland has given over \$100 million through his tax-exempt organization to the Sixteen Thirty Fund, a 501(c)(4), which subsequently distributed \$63 million to super-PACs to try to persuade the American voter. According to The New York Times, the Sixteen Thirty Fund is a leading vehicle for dark money on the left.

The American people shouldn't be subjected to TV and digital ads financed by the Chinese Communist Party or other nations seeking to influence the vote or undermine our elections. I think we can all agree that our election should be free of foreign interference.

For my colleagues on the left who spent years talking about foreign election interference, this should be a no-brainer. If they care about our electoral process and making sure it is open and fair, then we need to make sure foreign money can't drown out the voices of American voters.

The legislation before us today, sponsored by Representative MALLIOTAKIS, the No Foreign Election Interference Act, was approved in May by the Ways and Means Committee 39-1. Her bill closes this loophole in the tax code by restricting tax-exempt organizations from donating to super-PACs after receiving foreign gifts or contributions, and it revokes the tax-exempt status for organizations that repeatedly violate this law.

This bill is not aimed at program service revenue or member dues but clearly focuses on contributions and gifts made to tax-exempt organizations that then make donations to super-PACs.

When it comes to our elections, the American people, not wealthy foreign donors, should decide the future direction of our country.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Representative MALLIOTAKIS for her leadership on this issue, and I encourage all of my colleagues to vote “yes” on this bill so that we can maintain the integrity of our election system.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 8314, the No Foreign Election Interference Act.

While the title and the intent of the bill sound reasonable, in its current form, the bill ultimately fails in its goal to defend democracy. Instead, this bill would unfairly hurt American workers and the unions that represent them.

This bill has many unintended and harmful consequences. Although the intent and the spirit of the bill are good, in the current form, it falls very short of its intention.

It imposes penalties on organizations that make contributions to political committees and receive contributions or gifts from foreign nationals during an 8-year lookback period. However, it does not define a contribution or gift for this purpose or contain any reasonable cause exception. The penalty equals twice the amount of the contribution made to the political committee. If a tax-exempt organization makes more than two political contributions described in this bill, the organization loses its exempt status as of the third contribution.

I am particularly concerned about the severe penalties the bill would impose on organizations that have international members and make political contributions. This bill is opposed by unions, including the AFL-CIO, which represents 60 affiliate unions and 12.5 million workers.

□ 1630

Labor unions are obligated to represent all workers in a bargaining unit, but they have no role in who is hired.

An employer may hire a citizen, a permanent resident who holds a legal green card, or an immigrant holding a temporary visa.

Accordingly, if union dues are considered a contribution or gift and the dues are received from a foreign national, that is, a noncitizen, this would restrict the union’s right to give to a political committee.

It is imperative that they be able to advocate on behalf of workers and fully engage in the political process. Since this bill only applies to nonprofits, for-profit corporations don’t face this same danger.

Finally, the bill is also redundant because foreign nationals are already prohibited from donating to political candidates in any Federal, State, or local election under the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971.

If Republicans were serious about removing dark money from politics, the bill under consideration today would be the DISCLOSE Act.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote “no” on this antiworker bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Wow, Mr. Speaker. This is about as swampy as you can get in Washington. This bill passed out of the House Ways and Means Committee 39-1, including the gentlewoman from California who voted “yes.”

The only difference between when it passed out of the committee to where we are today is that some outside interest groups, who apparently control the voting cards and the opinions of a lot of people, said this is a bad bill, so now we are a “no.” That is very, very unfortunate.

I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. MALLIOTAKIS).

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman SMITH for advocating for this bill, working to bring it to the floor, and making sure that we do not have foreign election interference.

Mr. Speaker, my legislation, H.R. 8314, the No Foreign Election Interference Act, closes a loophole in our tax code that foreign citizens and potentially foreign adversaries have used to influence and derail the will of the United States people.

Under current law, foreign nationals are prohibited from donating to political committees, as my colleague on the other side pointed out.

However, what my colleague on the other side of the aisle failed to mention is that there are no restrictions on foreign nationals flowing money through tax-exempt organizations and then moving that money into super-PAC issue advocacy organizations that get involved in American elections with the intention to influence our elections. This is a major loophole.

Public reporting suggests that foreign nationals who are barred from directly contributing to candidate campaigns by the FEC are exploiting tax-exempt organizations as a pass-through, something that as current law stands is permissible.

For example, a Swiss billionaire has used a network of nonprofits to steer tens of millions of dollars to influence our elections and undermine our democracy.

According to The New York Times, the same individual between 2016 and 2020 donated significant sums of money to the Sixteen Thirty Fund, which subsequently sent over \$60 million to super-PACs that supported exclusively Democrats. Perhaps that is why we all of a sudden see this opposition to this legislation after it passed committee almost unanimously.

We should all be uncomfortable with any noncitizen having so much sway over our electoral decisions and public discourse. Our elections are our elections. They do not belong to individuals who cannot even cast a ballot in the United States.

This bill would prohibit any tax-exempt organization that receives foreign national contributions from subsequently making contributions to political committees, such as super-PACs, for 8 years. Failure to comply would result in significant fines and eventually revocation of tax-exempt status.

Let me be abundantly clear: To address the concern brought up by my colleague on the other side of the aisle, this legislation does not include any dues-paying trade organizations or labor unions. The sole intent of this bill is to keep foreign mega-donor money out of our elections.

Again, I thank Chairman JASON SMITH of Ways and Means for working with me on this legislation, and I hope that my colleagues will support this legislation today and that it will pass with bipartisan support as it did out of the committee.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, I am prepared to close, and I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, as I stated earlier, the intent of this bill is noble and even reasonable, but as it is written, it is fundamentally flawed.

While it is true that the bill passed out of committee on a nearly unanimous vote, and in that iteration, I did vote for it. Upon further scrutiny of the bill, we noticed that there were some very troubling aspects of this bill, which make it not fulfill the solution to the problem that it is seeking to do.

If my colleagues on the other side of the aisle were correct in saying that it doesn’t unfairly target unions, they could tighten up the definition of what contributions are in this bill, or they could amend it to specifically exclude labor unions from the provisions of this bill that are so punitive.

My question to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle is I can understand wanting to remove foreign influence from our elections, but why do they want to silence the voices of working families in the United States, because that is what this bill does.

I support removing dark money from politics, but this bill is not the right bill, and it is certainly not the right approach.

Its significant penalties on tax-exempt organizations unfairly target workers and the unions that represent them, and there is nothing swampy about wanting to defend those workers.

This bill does not fail to meaningfully reduce foreign election interference, so I must urge my colleagues to vote “no” in opposition of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I think it is noteworthy to know that whenever we did the markup on this bill in committee, the other side did not present one amendment to protect what they are suggesting now that they should have done in amendment. Guess what? They voted 39-1 for this bill.

Those penalties that the gentlewoman from California was pointing out that she didn't like, that hasn't changed. That was in the bill, and they passed it. She voted for it.

This bill is about making sure American elections are decided by American voters, not foreign nationals who want to tip the scales in favor of their preferred candidate or policy.

The 2020 elections were the most expensive elections in history with election spending totaling more than \$14 billion, an amount surely to be surpassed in 2024.

The American people deserve to know that the commercials and ads that are being pumped through their TVs and phones are free from foreign influence.

Representative MALLIOTAKIS' bill will close a loophole that allows wealthy foreigners to exercise outsized influence in our U.S. elections through donations to tax-exempt organizations who then flood our airwaves through super-PAC spending, emboldened with foreign dollars—not American dollars, foreign dollars.

I urge my colleagues to stand with American voters who shouldn't have their voices silenced by billionaires from overseas. I ask and encourage this body to support this legislation.

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 Missouri (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8314, 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.

Ms. SÁNCHEZ. 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.

VSO EQUAL TAX TREATMENT ACT

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1432) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the deductibility of charitable contributions to certain organizations for members of the Armed Forces, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1432

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 "VSO Equal Tax Treatment Act" or as the "VETT Act".

SEC. 2. DEDUCTIBILITY OF CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO CERTAIN ORGANIZATIONS FOR MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 170(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after paragraph (5) the following new paragraph:

"(6) An organization described in section 501(c)(19) that is a federally chartered corporation."

(b) PERCENTAGE LIMITATION.—Section 170(b)(1)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking "or" at the end of clause (viii), by adding "or" at the end of clause (ix), and by inserting after clause (ix) the following new clause:

"(x) an organization described in section 501(c)(19) that is a federally chartered corporation."

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. 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 the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1432, the VSO Equal Tax Treatment Act, or VETT Act, introduced by my Ways and Means colleague, Dr. BRAD WENSTRUP, and Representative JIMMY PANETTA.

In short, this legislation makes it easier for those looking to support our veterans to do so through donations to the veterans service organization of their choosing.

Right now, certain VSOs are prohibited from accepting tax-deductible donations if over 10 percent of the members in their organization are not considered "wartime veterans," but this prohibition is outdated.

As our veteran populations age, this needlessly restrictive definition excludes veteran populations who joined the service following the Vietnam war and before the Persian Gulf war.

An estimated 2.4 million veterans living today do not meet the definition of wartime veterans, including some of the men and women who bravely served this country in Iraq and Afghanistan.

VSOs provide critical services to our Nation's veterans. They help with filing service-connected claims with the VA. They provide other types of assistance when it comes to navigating the confusing web of government programs our veterans rely on.

They also stand in support of our military families, the moms and dads, the husbands and wives, and the sons and daughters of our veterans.

Under this legislation, our tax code will no longer discriminate among our veterans service organizations. Charitable contributions to all federally chartered, tax-exempt organizations that serve current and former members of the military will be tax deductible.

The Ways and Means Committee approved this legislation unanimously. I urge all my colleagues to follow our bipartisan lead and vote "yes" on this commonsense bill to support our veterans, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1432, the VETT Act. Veterans service organizations provide vital and integral support to our servicemembers in their local communities.

This bill updates outdated rules in the tax code, and in doing so, ensures that Americans have the needed incentives to support these organizations that serve those who served our country.

By providing equal treatment to veterans that served in war and those who served in peacetime, we are ensuring that VSOs are able to grow and maintain their memberships without having to risk losing their ability to receive tax deductible charitable donations.

Mr. Speaker, if there is any group in our country, in our society that deserves all of the effort that we can put forth to make sure that they receive the fairest of treatment in terms of what they have done to serve our country, this is something I think we owe them all.

I support this legislation and reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1645

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. WENSTRUP).

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my bill, H.R. 1432, the VSO Equal Tax Treatment Act, or the VETT Act.

The VETT Act is a commonsense, bipartisan bill, which I have been proud to lead since 2018. As a veteran myself, I know firsthand how these organizations offer vital support and a sense of community to Americans who wore our Nation's uniform and sacrificed so much for our country.

All veterans deserve our support and gratitude, regardless of the period in which they served. Yet, under the current tax code, veterans service organizations whose membership consist of less than 90 percent wartime veterans are prohibited from accepting tax-deductible donations.

This disadvantages the VSOs that serve a broad membership of both wartime and nonwartime veterans, and

forces them to choose between the significant benefit of being able to accept tax-deductible donations for serving the 2.4 million veterans who do not meet the definition of wartime veterans.

It is long past time that we fix this antiquated provision in the tax code by updating the definition of charitable contributions so that it includes congressionally chartered veterans service organizations. The VETT Act would do exactly that, ending an unfair tax on Americans who donate to these deserving VSOs.

This legislation is supported by a host of VSOs, including AMVETS, The American Legion, Fleet Reserve Association, Jewish War Veterans of the USA, Military Order of the World Wars, Non Commissioned Officers Association, U.S. Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers Association, and TREA: The Enlisted Association.

I thank my partner on this bill, Representative JIMMY PANETTA, who has been a tremendous advocate for veterans in Congress and who I have been proud to work with on this bill and other legislation, especially concerning veterans.

I would be remiss if I didn't share my appreciation for our former colleague, Representative RON KIND, who was the Democrat lead on this bill in previous Congresses.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this bill and fix this error in the tax code for the benefit of our veteran community.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. Speaker, I thank all of my colleagues for their work on this legislation, especially Mr. PANETTA and Dr. Wenstrup.

Again, if there is any group who could expect and should expect the greatest efforts to make sure that they are protected, it is our veterans.

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

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, there is a reason this bill passed the Ways and Means Committee 42-0. There is no denying this is the right thing to do. I urge all my colleagues to vote "yes," and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1432, 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.

CHRONIC DISEASE FLEXIBLE COVERAGE ACT

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass

the bill (H.R. 3800) to codify Internal Revenue Service guidance relating to treatment of certain services and items for chronic conditions as meeting the preventive care deductible safe harbor for purposes of high deductible health plans in connection with health savings accounts, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3800

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 "Chronic Disease Flexible Coverage Act".

SEC. 2. SERVICES AND ITEMS FOR CHRONIC CONDITIONS TREATED AS PREVENTIVE CARE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The additional preventive care services and items for chronic conditions that may be treated as preventive care for purposes of section 223(c)(2)(C) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as set forth in IRS Notice 2019-45 shall have the same force and effect as if included in the enactment of this Act.

(b) NO INFERENCE.—To the extent not inconsistent with this section, no inference shall be made from subsection (a) with respect to such other rules or guidance as the Secretary has provided, or may provide, with respect to preventive services for purposes of section 223(c)(2)(C) of such Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. 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 the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, 6 in 10 Americans live with at least one chronic disease, such as heart disease, cancer, or diabetes. Nearly 90 percent of the \$4.1 trillion in annual healthcare spending in this country goes toward the treatment of patients with chronic diseases.

Part of improving the delivery of healthcare in America must be expanding the opportunity for folks to better manage their chronic health conditions so that they can live longer, healthier lives, and we can bring down the financial impact of healthcare on individuals, families, businesses, and the government.

The Chronic Disease Flexible Coverage Act, introduced by Ways and Means colleagues Dr. WENSTRUP and Representative BLUMENAUER, will expand treatment and disease management options by allowing employers that offer high-deductible healthcare plans to also offer predeductible coverage, otherwise known as first-dollar

coverage, for 14 chronic healthcare services.

Those services include beta blockers for patients with congestive heart failure, blood pressure monitors for patients with high blood pressure, inhalers for patients with asthma, and cholesterol drugs and testing for patients with heart disease. The list does not have to end there. In fact, the bill also allows for that list of covered services to be expanded in the future.

The Chronic Disease Flexible Coverage Act actually codifies a Trump administration policy that will incentivize employers to offer coverage for these services so that they can lower healthcare costs for their workers and their businesses.

High-deductible health plans are a great option for employers and employees looking for more affordable coverage, and this bill will make them even more beneficial to individuals with chronic disease.

Flexibilities like these in care delivery and coverage options are key to improving patient outcomes, and I encourage all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the Chronic Disease Flexible Coverage Act is sponsored by Dr. WENSTRUP and Representative EARL BLUMENAUER. I thank my colleague Dr. WENSTRUP and my friend EARL BLUMENAUER for their tireless work in healthcare and on healthcare issues.

As EARL prepares to retire, I recognize that he has long been a champion for improving care and services for those with chronic illnesses. I will miss his leadership on the Ways and Means Committee and in Congress.

While I voted against the bill in committee, I do understand the principle about trying to protect people from high out-of-pocket costs. This bill codifies the safe harbor for preventive services for high-deductible plans that offer additional preventive benefits predeductible.

Given that the bill codifies the regulation, it is not making a new policy or giving Americans any protections they don't currently enjoy.

While I understand the desire to help workers stuck in high-deductible plans, we really need to look at the impact high-deductible plans are having on patients and families and how they contribute to medical debt.

More than 100 million Americans are saddled with medical debt that can often be as a result of plans with high deductibles. We know out-of-pocket costs deter Americans from getting the care that they need, and we must change that.

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

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to

the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. WENSTRUP).

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding.

I rise today in support of H.R. 3800, the Chronic Disease Flexible Coverage Act. I am proud to lead this bill with my colleague EARL BLUMENAUER.

As a physician, I have seen firsthand the impact that chronic disease is having on patients. Six in ten Americans live with at least one chronic disease. According to the CDC, approximately 90 percent of the United States' healthcare spending is attributed to managing and treating patients with chronic diseases and mental health conditions.

Clearly, we must take action to help Americans living with chronic disease better manage and treat their conditions. This bill would give employers who offer high-deductible health plans the option to cover 14 chronic care management medical services before an individual reaches their deductible.

In doing this, this bill allows employers the flexibility that helps incentivize their employees to adhere to services that help manage their chronic condition and keep them healthier. This is a win-win-win. It is a win for the patient, a win for the employer, and a win for our Nation, where we manage healthy patients and keep them healthy so that they will be able to go to work and live a full life.

Surveys show that when you offer employers the opportunity to expand pre deductible services, they see the value in doing so and choose to give their employees that very opportunity.

Every American deserves to live a healthy life or as healthy as possible considering their health situation. This bill would help Americans do just that, by better managing and treating chronic conditions that affect so many of our fellow citizens.

Patients are served well when their disease is treated before it progresses and gets worse. When patients with chronic disease can access care sooner, they can stay healthier longer. A healthy nation is a strong nation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this bill.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, this legislation was approved by the Ways and Means Committee with overwhelming bipartisan support, and I hope we can show that same level of support here today. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EDWARDS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3800, 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.

□ 1700

FISCAL YEAR 2024 VETERANS AFFAIRS MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6324) to authorize major medical facility projects for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2024, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6324

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 "Fiscal Year 2024 Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Authorization Act".

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY PROJECTS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may carry out the following major medical facility projects in fiscal year 2024 at the locations specified and in an amount for each project not to exceed the amount specified for such location:

(1) Construction of a new specialty care building 201, renovation of building 18, and expansion of parking facilities in American Lake, Washington, in an amount not to exceed \$155,600,000.

(2) Expansion of clinical space for mental health, expansion of parking facilities, and land acquisition in Dallas, Texas, in an amount not to exceed \$93,100,000.

(3) Construction of a new health care center and utility plant in El Paso, Texas, in an amount not to exceed \$759,200,000.

(4) Replacement of community living center and expansion of parking facilities in Perry Point, Maryland, in an amount not to exceed \$274,310,000.

(5) Seismic retrofit and renovation of buildings 100 and 101, roadway and site improvements, construction of a new specialty care facility, and demolition and expansion of parking facilities in Portland, Oregon, in an amount not to exceed \$613,000,000.

(6) Initiation of replacement of the medical center of the Sierra Nevada Health Care System of the Department of Veterans Affairs, including land acquisition and preliminary site work, in Reno, Nevada, in an amount not to exceed \$223,800,000.

(7) Construction of a new spinal cord injury building, partial renovation of building 1, parking facilities, central utility plant upgrades, and the seismic retrofit of the existing spinal cord injury building 11 at the San Diego Health Care System of the Department in San Diego, California, in an amount not to exceed \$311,700,000.

(8) Construction of a new research facility, parking structure, and demolition in San Francisco, California, in an amount not to exceed \$264,500,000.

(9) Seismic corrections for building 1, construction of a new administrative building, and expansion of the outpatient clinic and parking structure in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in an amount not to exceed \$370,370,000.

(10) Phase 1 of the replacement of bed tower, expansion of clinical building, consolidation of administrative building and warehouse, water tower, and new utility plant and parking garages in St. Louis, Missouri, in an amount not to exceed \$135,340,000.

(11) Construction of a new surgical and clinical space tower, renovation of buildings 1 and 2, and demolition in West Haven, Con-

necticut, in an amount not to exceed \$153,128,000.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2024 or the year in which funds are appropriated for the Construction, Major Projects account, \$3,354,048,000 for the projects authorized in subsection (a).

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. 6324, as amended.

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 my bill, H.R. 6324, as amended. H.R. 6324 will authorize major VA medical construction projects in Washington, Texas, Maryland, Oregon, Nevada, California, Missouri, Connecticut, and Puerto Rico.

Updating VA's aging infrastructure is a constant process. In order to best serve our Nation's veterans and provide them with the modern healthcare that they deserve, it is essential that we fund projects like these.

The projects in this bill include new healthcare centers, a community living center, specialty care buildings, mental health clinics, research facilities, and others. The average VA medical center is decades older than the average private hospital.

I still believe the best way to solve the problem would be to align spending on VA facilities with the veteran population. Unfortunately, that is not being taken care of in the Senate. We have passed it out of here.

We also need to fund the construction projects VA is requesting right now. This legislation would deliver new facilities in communities throughout the country.

I recognize the work of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for helping with this legislation and bringing this bill to the floor on behalf of our Nation's veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6324, 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. 6324, the Fiscal Year 2024 Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Authorization Act, as amended.

I have always supported providing sufficient funding for VA construction projects which make critical investments in improving veterans' access to healthcare and modernizing the facilities where they receive their care.

These investments come at a critical time, when VA employees are being asked to do more with less and provide world-class care in aging and outdated buildings.

The average age of VA-owned buildings is approaching 60 years old, with 1,800 buildings still in active use that are designated as historic or eligible for historic status. Meanwhile, private-sector hospitals are less than 15 years old on average.

Despite its aging infrastructure and these challenges, the Department of Veterans Affairs continues to deliver high-quality healthcare, with VA hospitals once again this year outperforming private hospitals on the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' annual hospital quality star ratings.

To ensure VA can continue providing exceptional care for years to come, we must invest appropriately in its infrastructure.

H.R. 6324, as amended, authorizes more than \$3.35 billion for major medical facility construction projects in 11 locations, including: \$759.2 million for construction of a new healthcare center and utility plant in El Paso, Texas; \$274.3 million for replacement of a community living center and expansion of parking facilities in Perry Point, Maryland; \$613 million for seismic retrofitting and renovation of buildings, construction of a new specialty care facility, and parking upgrades in Portland, Oregon; and \$311.7 million for construction of a new spinal cord injury building, utility plant upgrades, seismic retrofitting, and other projects in San Diego, California.

These projects will ensure the veterans in these communities have access to the highest level of care VA can provide. This legislation is a crucial step to continue our goal of making critical investments in the modernization of VA medical facilities.

Mr. Speaker, I wholeheartedly support H.R. 6324, as amended, I urge my colleagues to do the same, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I am ready to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I ask all of my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 6324, the Fiscal Year 2024 Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Authorization Act, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

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. 6324, 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.

VETERANS' COMPENSATION COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2024

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7777) to increase, effective as of December 1, 2024, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7777

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' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2024".

SEC. 2. INCREASE IN RATES OF DISABILITY COMPENSATION AND DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION.

(a) RATE ADJUSTMENT.—Effective on December 1, 2024, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall increase, in accordance with subsection (c), the dollar amounts in effect on November 30, 2024, for the payment of disability compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation under the provisions specified in subsection (b).

(b) AMOUNTS TO BE INCREASED.—The dollar amounts to be increased pursuant to subsection (a) are the following:

(1) WARTIME DISABILITY COMPENSATION.—Each of the dollar amounts under section 1114 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION FOR DEPENDENTS.—Each of the dollar amounts under section 1115(1) of such title.

(3) CLOTHING ALLOWANCE.—The dollar amount under section 1162 of such title.

(4) DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION TO SURVIVING SPOUSE.—Each of the dollar amounts under subsections (a) through (d) of section 1311 of such title.

(5) DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION TO CHILDREN.—Each of the dollar amounts under sections 1313(a) and 1314 of such title.

(c) DETERMINATION OF INCREASE.—Each dollar amount described in subsection (b) shall be increased by the same percentage as the percentage by which benefit amounts payable under title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq.) are increased effective December 1, 2024, as a result of a determination under section 215(i) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)).

(d) SPECIAL RULE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may adjust administratively, consistent with the increases made under subsection (a), the rates of disability compensation payable to persons under section 10 of Public Law 85-857 (72 Stat. 1263) who have not received compensation under chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 3. PUBLICATION OF ADJUSTED RATES.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish in the Federal Register the amounts specified in section 2(b), as increased under that section, not later than the date on which the matters specified in section 215(i)(2)(D) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)(2)(D)) are required to be published by reason of a determination made under section 215(i) of such Act during fiscal year 2025.

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. 7777.

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. 7777, offered by my friend and fellow veteran, Representative LUTTRELL.

This bill will ensure that VA compensation benefits for veterans and their surviving loved ones keep pace with inflation and the increased cost of living.

Veterans and their families often depend on VA compensation benefits to pay for daily living expenses and to support their families. This bill would help them meet their financial needs by increasing the amount of certain disability compensation benefits by the same percentage as the cost-of-living increase for Social Security benefits recipients.

Congress must pass the cost-of-living adjustment every year to ensure that our veterans and their loved ones cover their expenses and keep food on the table for their families.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7777, 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. 7777, the Veterans Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2024.

As we do every year, today, we are considering legislation to increase payments for wartime disability compensation, compensation for dependents, the clothing allowance for certain disabled veterans, and dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses and children. Specifically, this bill mandates that the VA raise these benefit amounts by the same percentage as the cost-of-living adjustment, or COLA, provided to Social Security recipients.

This ensures that veterans and their families maintain their quality of life and are protected from reductions in their earned benefits as economic conditions shift.

The cost-of-living adjustment reflects our Nation's ongoing gratitude for the service and sacrifice of not only those who have bravely worn our Nation's uniform but also to their families, who bear significant burdens as well. As the ranking member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I am honored to support this effort.

I also commend the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs and extend my thanks to Ranking Member PAPPAS and Chairman LUTTRELL for sponsoring this year's House bill and for their steadfast commitment to supporting our veterans.

I fully support H.R. 7777 and urge my colleagues to do the same. I also call on the Senate to swiftly pass this measure.

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

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

Mr. LUTTRELL. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to be here today to speak on my bill, H.R. 7777, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2024.

The bill would increase certain amounts of compensation that veterans and their families receive as well as the clothing allowance benefits for certain veterans.

Specifically, the bill would ensure that the VA benefits are adjusted by the same percentage as the cost-of-living adjustment for Social Security benefits recipients.

Veterans and their families often depend on VA compensation benefits to meet their financial needs. This bill is critical to ensure that their VA benefits keep up with inflation and today's increased cost of living.

I appreciate Ranking Member PAPPAS and Mr. BOST for their support of this bill. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7777, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

I ask all my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 7777, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2024, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

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. 7777.

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.

PRIORITIZING VETERANS' SURVIVORS ACT

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7100) to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the organization of the Office of Survivors Assistance of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7100

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 "Prioritizing Veterans' Survivors Act".

SEC. 2. CLARIFICATION OF ORGANIZATION OF THE OFFICE OF SURVIVORS ASSISTANCE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Section 321(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking "in the Department" and inserting "in the Office of the Secretary".

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 have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 7100.

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. 7100, as offered by Representative CISCOMANI.

This bill would ensure that VA prioritizes care, services, and benefits for the surviving family members of veterans as much as VA does for the veterans.

The bill would do so by ensuring the VA Office of Survivors Assistance conducts its mission with the Office of the VA Secretary.

In 2008, Congress created an Office of Survivors Assistance to serve as the Secretary's principal adviser and to serve as a resource on all benefits and services for veterans' surviving loved ones.

The Biden-Harris administration did veterans' survivors a disservice by moving this office from the Secretary's office to the Veterans Benefits Administration's Pension and Fiduciary Service. This office is nowhere near the top of the organization chart, and the office no longer advises the Secretary on all benefits and services for those survivors.

The Office of Survivors Assistance is understaffed and no longer has resources for survivors on all care, services, and benefits offered by all VA offices.

Mr. CISCOMANI's bill would correct the Biden-Harris administration's misguided changes and ensure survivors have a seat at the table again.

We must ensure the voices of veterans' surviving families are heard and that they are prioritized by the VA. This bill will ensure that.

I am proud to be co-lead of this bill with Representative CISCOMANI, and I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 7100.

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

□ 1715

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for H.R. 7100, the Prioritizing Veterans' Survivors Act. This bill would require VA to move the Office of Survivors Assistance, or OSA, to a position directly reporting to the Office of the VA Secretary.

The Office of Survivors Assistance was established by statute in 2008 to serve as a resource regarding all benefits and services furnished by the Department to survivors and dependents of deceased veterans and members of the armed services. OSA also serves as a principal adviser to the Secretary and promotes the use of VA benefits, programs, and services to survivors.

Recently, VA moved supervision of OSA from the Office of Outreach, Transition, and Economic Development to VBA's Pension and Fiduciary Service. VA made this move with the idea that it would increase emphasis on the office and oversight of OSA, as VBA has more capacity to properly oversee the function. However, the survivor community has been critical of this move, characterizing it as a downgrade of the function and a diminishing of the importance of survivors in VA's mission. H.R. 7100 is responsive to those concerns.

Historically, there has been a lack of resources dedicated to the mission of serving survivors. For example, there are only three employees in the Office of Survivors Assistance to serve over 450,000 employees—I repeat, three employees in the Office of Survivors Assistance to serve over 450,000.

We also see a lack of awareness of whom is part of the survivor community, where the community is, and a lack of direct and targeted outreach. As such, we have seen an underutilization of survivor benefits, so we must do whatever we can to remedy that situation.

This bill is a small but important step in that process. I would be remiss, however, if I didn't also point to other legislation that we can and should be taking up to improve benefits for survivors.

I have introduced H.R. 7150, the Survivor Benefits Delivery Improvement Act, a bill that puts new tools in VA's hands to aid in reaching survivors where they are and better inform them of the benefits they have earned.

We have Members like JULIA BROWNLEY, who has introduced legislation to extend CHAMP-VA eligibility.

Representative JAHANA HAYES has also introduced legislation to raise the levels of dependency and indemnity compensation benefits on par with other Federal survivor programs.

We have Members like Representative DEAN PHILLIPS who has introduced Love Lives On Act that would repeal the ridiculous penalties survivors face when they choose to remarry.

We have legislation introduced by Representative FRANK MRVAN to increase benefits for those using chapter

35 education benefits, but making those individuals eligible for more robust, comprehensive benefits equal to the Forever GI Bill.

My hope is that in the waning days of this Congress, we see fit to consider these other pieces of legislation, as well. In the meantime, however, I do support this bill, and I encourage my colleagues to support it, as well.

I extend a special thank-you to the survivors who may be listening today and those who are with us only in spirit. Their stories demonstrate bravery and courage, and they deserve every ounce of our effort in creating a VA that is welcoming and accessible, and every dollar of benefits we can muster on their behalf.

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. CISCOMANI), the sponsor of this bill.

Mr. CISCOMANI. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman BOST for yielding me time to speak today in support of my bill, H.R. 7100, the Prioritizing Veterans' Survivors Act.

Mr. Speaker, since I was elected, I have heard from military servicemembers and veterans' surviving family members about their struggle accessing VA benefits. In my district, I organized a Veterans Advisory Council, ensuring that surviving spouses and children accessing VA benefits and services is a top priority that we have discussed time and time again. I am always looking for ways to ensure that top VA leaders hear the concerns of veterans' loved ones.

From its creation, the Office of Survivors Assistance, or OSA, was meant to serve as the principal adviser to the VA Secretary on all survivors' benefits and services, including medical care and burial benefits.

When VA began operating the OSA within the Veterans Benefits Administration, the VA deprioritized survivors policy and skirted Congress' intent when they created this office. My bill would fix this, requiring OSA to operate within the Secretary's office, thereby prioritizing advocacy and services for servicemembers' and veterans' surviving spouses and families.

I would like to highlight the comment of a member of my Veterans Advisory Council, Ms. Jane Strain, a surviving spouse and an Army veteran herself. She said: "Surviving spouses and families are family members who cared for children, moved many times during a military career, compromised their careers, and maintained home life while the servicemember deployed. They have earned and deserve attention when the spouse has passed. Placing the OSA directly under the Secretary will help to recognize the importance of this population."

I was proud to work alongside Chairman BOST to ensure survivors have a seat at the table.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this commonsense legislation.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 7100, the Prioritizing Veterans' Survivors Act, and 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.

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. 7100.

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.

VIETNAM VETERANS LIVER FLUKE CANCER STUDY ACT

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4424) to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to study and report on the prevalence of cholangiocarcinoma in veterans who served in the Vietnam theater of operations during the Vietnam era, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4424

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 "Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act".

SEC. 2. STUDY ON THE PREVALENCE OF CHOLANGIOCARCINOMA IN VETERANS WHO SERVED IN THE VIETNAM THEATER OF OPERATIONS DURING THE VIETNAM ERA.

(a) *EPIDEMIOLOGICAL STUDY.*—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the Department of Health and Human Services, shall commence an epidemiological study on the prevalence of cholangiocarcinoma in covered veterans of the Vietnam era, using data from the Veterans Affairs Central Cancer Registry and the National Program of Cancer Registries. The study shall—

(1) identify the rate of incidence of cholangiocarcinoma in covered veterans of the Vietnam era and in residents of the United States, from the beginning of the Vietnam era to the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) for each of the groups specified in paragraph (1), identify the percentage of individuals with cholangiocarcinoma by various demographic characteristics, including by age, gender, race, ethnicity, and the geographic location of the patient at the time of diagnosis.

(b) *REPORT TO CONGRESS.*—Not later than one year after the completion of the study under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report containing—

(1) the results of the study under subsection (a); and

(2) recommendations for administrative or legislative actions required to address issues identified in the study under subsection (a).

(c) *CONTINUED TRACKING OF CHOLANGIOCARCINOMA IN COVERED VETERANS OF THE VIETNAM ERA.*—The Secretary shall track the prevalence of cholangiocarcinoma in covered veterans of the Vietnam era using the Veterans

Affairs Central Cancer Registry, and provide such information to Congress as required under subsection (d).

(d) *FOLLOW-UP REPORTS.*—The Secretary shall periodically submit to the Congress an updated report under subsection (b), as determined by the Secretary.

(e) *DEFINITIONS.*—In this section:

(1) The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(2) The term "Vietnam era" has the meaning given such term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(3) The term "covered veterans of the Vietnam era" means veterans who served in the Vietnam theater of operations during the Vietnam era.

SEC. 3. MODIFICATION OF CERTAIN HOUSING LOAN FEES.

The loan fee table in section 3729(b)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking "November 15, 2031" each place it appears and inserting "November 29, 2031".

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.

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. 4424, as amended, introduced by my friend and fellow veteran, Mr. LALOTA from New York. Representative LALOTA's bill would require VA to conduct a study and produce a report on the frequency of bile duct cancer for veterans who served in and around the Vietnam war.

Mr. Speaker, it goes without saying that many veterans and Vietnam veterans suffered greatly in their service to their country. Thousands of Vietnam veterans still live with the invisible and visible wounds of war today.

Eating uncooked fish while deployed over 60 years ago may have added to that harm. Certain undercooked fish contain a parasite known as a liver fluke, which can cause infection and scarring that could lead to bile duct cancer.

This type of cancer is a rare form of cancer and is in the U.S. but is more common in Southeast Asia. The study in this bill would rightly require VA to determine if the bile duct cancer is a result of the Vietnam-era veterans' deployment in that region.

One of the VA's most important missions is to take care of veterans' service-connected injuries. This study would help uphold that sacred mission. This bill is also an important step in continuing to ensure our Vietnam veterans receive the respect and care they have earned.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. LALOTA for his vitally important work on this bill, and I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 4424, as amended.

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 H.R. 4424, the Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act, as amended.

Liver fluke is a serious parasitic infection that is a well-recognized risk factor for the development of bile duct cancer.

H.R. 4424, as amended, would require VA, in consultation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, to commence an epidemiological study on the prevalence of bile duct cancer in veterans who served in the Vietnam war versus their nonveteran U.S. resident counterparts. This legislation requires VA to submit a regular report with the results of the study broken out by age, gender, race, ethnicity, and geographic location.

I certainly understand why Vietnam war veterans would be concerned about their exposure to this disease and believe we should do everything possible to ensure veterans have access to care and treatment for diseases they may have been exposed to as a part of their service.

Mr. Speaker, while I have concerns that this effort is duplicative given VA's previous and ongoing research on this disorder, I welcome additional research and will support the bill today, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. LALOTA), the sponsor of the bill.

Mr. LALOTA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman, a Marine Corps veteran, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, there is an obvious link between liver fluke disease and our Vietnam veterans' service in that war, but the VA won't cover their care. My bill would help fix that and do right by our Vietnam veterans.

Data from multiple studies clearly demonstrate Vietnam veterans have a much greater chance of contracting, suffering from, and dying from the liver fluke parasite, yet the VA does not help veterans who are fighting liver fluke disease. That is wrong, Mr. Speaker.

The correlation between the liver fluke parasite and service in Vietnam is obvious. In 2018, the Northport VA Medical Center conducted a first-of-its-kind study using a 50-veteran sample size. The initial results of that study highlighted three things: a substantial need for greater study of this issue; two, the development of standardized treatment options; and three, broader accessibility of care for veterans at VA facilities across the country.

That study was 6 years ago and could have been justification enough for the VA to start covering affected Vietnam veterans, but the VA insisted on an-

other study. A second study was ordered. After years of delays, supposedly due to the pandemic, a more recent study finally concluded in 2024. The 2024 study affirmed what so many Vietnam veterans have been saying for years, that there is indeed a link between the liver fluke disease and service in Vietnam.

□ 1730

Specifically, the study in which Marine Corps veterans participated demonstrate that there is a 30 percent greater risk of mortality from this liver fluke disease for marines who served in the Vietnam war theater as compared to marines who served elsewhere.

Mr. Speaker, you would think these findings, coupled with the 2018 findings, would be justification enough for the VA to start covering affected Vietnam veterans. Yet, after multiple in-depth studies which corroborate the link between our veterans' service in Vietnam and the rare liver fluke disease, the VA still says these studies still are not enough.

To fight the VA's ambivalence towards these Vietnam veterans, I am urging all of my colleagues to support my bipartisan legislation, H.R. 4424, the Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act.

This act would require the VA, in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, to conduct a third study to determine the prevalence of liver fluke amongst the Vietnam veteran population.

If the VA won't take action, then we will continue to force them to confront the facts until they come to the same conclusion as the rest of us.

Our Vietnam veterans are dying every day, and we do not have the luxury of time. Too much time has passed already. We went through a similar and terrible situation with our blue water Navy veterans and Agent Orange. Let us not make the same mistake with liver fluke.

I thank Chairman BOST and Ranking Member TAKANO for their leadership and support of this critical legislation. Together, we can make sure that our Vietnam veterans get the care, recognition, and support they so rightfully deserve.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers on this particular legislation, I am ready to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 4424, the Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

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. 4424, 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.

VETERANS ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT OF 2024

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7342) to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access, and for other purposes as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7342

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 Accessibility Advisory Committee Act of 2024".

SEC. 2. VETERANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EQUAL ACCESS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish within the Department of Veterans Affairs an advisory committee on matters relating to accessibility of the Department for individuals with disabilities.

(2) DESIGNATION.—The advisory committee established by paragraph (1) shall be known as the "Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access" (in this section the "Advisory Committee").

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) VOTING MEMBERS.—The Advisory Committee shall be composed of 15 voting members, appointed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. In appointing such members, the Secretary shall ensure the following:

(A) Four are veterans with disabilities, including mobility impairment, hearing, visual, and mental or cognitive disabilities.

(B) Four are experts on issues described in subsection (f)(1)(A) or the provisions of law set forth under subsection (f)(1)(B).

(C) Two are employees of the Department, one from the Section 508 Office and one from the Architectural Accessibility Program, who oversee the compliance of the Department with Federal accessibility laws.

(D) Five are representatives nominated by national veterans service organizations that advocate for veterans with physical, sensory, mental, or cognitive disabilities.

(2) EX OFFICIO MEMBERS.—The Advisory Committee shall also include four ex officio members (or their designees):

(A) The Under Secretary for Health.

(B) The Under Secretary for Benefits.

(C) The Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs.

(D) The chairperson of the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (known as the "Access Board").

(c) TERMS; VACANCIES.—

(1) TERMS.—A member of the Advisory Committee shall be appointed for a term of two years. The Secretary may reappoint members to the Advisory Committee for such additional two-year terms as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(2) VACANCIES.—The Secretary shall fill a vacancy in the Advisory Committee in the same manner as the original appointment

not later than 180 days after such vacancy occurs.

(d) MEETINGS.—

(1) FREQUENCY.—The Advisory Committee shall meet not less frequently than twice each year.

(2) SUBCOMMITTEES.—The Advisory Committee may form subcommittees, which shall meet as often as required.

(3) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Advisory Committee shall constitute a quorum.

(e) CHAIRPERSON.—Members of the Advisory Committee shall select a Chairperson from among the members of the Advisory Committee. If the position of Chairperson becomes vacant, the members of the Advisory Committee shall select a new Chairperson not later than 30 days after the date on which the position became vacant.

(f) DUTIES.—

(1) REQUIREMENT TO CONSULT AND SEEK ADVICE.—On a regular basis, the Secretary shall consult with and seek the advice of the Advisory Committee—

(A) on improving the accessibility of the Department for individuals with disabilities, including improving—

(i) the accessibility of information of the Department, including electronic information;

(ii) the accessibility of the services and benefits furnished by the Department;

(iii) the accessibility of the facilities of the Department;

(iv) the accessibility of facilities of health care providers furnishing care or services under the Veterans Community Care Program under section 1703 of title 38, United States Code; and

(v) the acquisition process of the Department to ensure that products and services, including information technology and information and communication technology (as defined in the standards issued by the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board pursuant to section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794d)), are accessible when purchased; and

(B) for ensuring the compliance of the Department with provisions of law relating to disability and accessibility, including—

(i) the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12184 et seq.);

(ii) sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 791, 794, and 794d);

(iii) the Plain Writing Act of 2010 (5 U.S.C. 301 note);

(iv) the 21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 note);

(v) the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (Public Law 90-480); and

(vi) such other provisions of Federal law as may be that ensure equal access to Federal facilities, benefits, or services for individuals with disabilities.

(2) PROVISION OF ADVICE.—In providing advice to the Secretary, the Advisory Committee shall, focusing on the areas of greatest need for the Department—

(A) assess the disability access needs of veterans, the public, and Department employees for full access to the Department's information, services, and benefits by reviewing relevant information, such as filed complaints by people with disabilities or physical assessments of the Department's facilities;

(B) provide assessments of accessibility at the Department and the compliance of the Department with applicable provisions of law relating to disability and accessibility; and

(C) provide advice on improving accessibility at the Department, including the accessibility of all—

(i) communications, including internal and public facing;

(ii) services and benefits; and

(iii) facilities.

(3) REPORTS.—

(A) REPORTS TO THE SECRETARY.—Not later than two years after the date of the first meeting of the Advisory Committee, and not less frequently than once every two years thereafter, the Advisory Committee shall submit to the Secretary a report that, focusing on areas of greatest need for the Department—

(i) identifies and assesses access barriers affecting veterans, the public, and employees of the Department;

(ii) determines the extent to which the programs and activities of the Department address the barriers identified in clause (i), including compliance of the Department with provisions of law relating to accessibility law and reporting;

(iii) provides recommendations and access priorities to improve the accessibility of the Department's services, benefits, information, technology, and facilities;

(iv) provides a description of access improvements and assesses the Department's implementation of recommendations from previous reports of the Advisory Committee, including any unmet recommendations that remain necessary for improving accessibility for the Department; and

(v) provides any recommendations for legislation, administrative action, or other actions that the Advisory Committee determines appropriate.

(B) REPORTS TO CONGRESS AND FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the receipt of a report required under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a copy of such report and any comments and recommendations of the Secretary concerning such report that the Secretary determines appropriate.

(ii) AVAILABILITY TO THE PUBLIC.—The Secretary shall publish on a publicly accessible website of the Department such report and such comments and recommendations as may have been submitted along with such report.

(iii) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—In this subparagraph, the term "appropriate congressional committees" means—

(I) the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives;

(II) the Special Committee on Aging of the Senate; and

(III) the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives.

(g) ADVISORY COMMITTEE PERSONNEL AND RESOURCE MATTERS.—

(1) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—A member of the Commission who is not an officer or employee of the Federal Government shall not be compensated for the performance of the duties of the Advisory Committee.

(2) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—A member of the Advisory Committee shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Advisory Committee.

(3) RESOURCES.—The Secretary shall ensure that such personnel, funding, and other resources are made available to the Advisory Committee as the Secretary determines appropriate to carry out the duties of the Advisory Committee.

(4) INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall furnish to the Advisory Committee such information as the Advisory Committee may request from the Secretary, subject to applicable provisions of law.

(h) TERMINATION OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—The Advisory Committee shall terminate on the date that is 10 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. ABOLITION OF INACTIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and before establishing the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access under section 2, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall—

(1) abolish an advisory committee of the Department of Veterans Affairs that—

(A) was not established by an Act of Congress; and

(B) is inactive;

(2) consolidate two advisory committees described in paragraph (1); or

(3) submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a recommendation to abolish an advisory committee of the Department that—

(A) was established by an Act of Congress; and

(B) is inactive.

SEC. 4. MODIFICATION OF CERTAIN HOUSING LOAN FEES.

The loan fee table in section 3729(b)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking "November 15, 2031" each place it appears and inserting "November 29, 2031".

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LOPEZ). 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 have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 7342, as amended.

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. 7342, offered by my friend and colleague, Congressman DAVID VALADAO of California.

This bill would direct the Department of Veterans Affairs to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access. The committee would advise the VA Secretary on how to improve access to VA services, programs, and facilities for veterans living with disabilities to enhance their experience at VA.

The committee would rightfully bring together veterans with disabilities, subject matter experts, VA employees, and representatives of veterans service organizations to get to the heart of the matter.

Mr. Speaker, it goes without saying that this is long overdue.

Americans with disabilities are entitled to equal access to healthcare and benefits nationwide, and that includes at VA. Congress made that very clear through the Americans with Disabilities Act and other laws, but veterans with disabilities are still being short-changed far too often.

We know these accessible gaps still exist because of the work of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, the Blinded

Veterans Association, other VSOs and advocacy groups, and the work of this committee.

I thank them for their collaboration with Congress on this legislation. Their only focus is to eliminate barriers and achieve universal access and equality for veterans living with disabilities. This is an important goal, and I believe the advisory committee is well justified.

I also share many of my colleagues' concerns about the growth of advisory committees in the Federal Government. There are simply too many. That is why this legislation would direct VA to eliminate or consolidate an inactive advisory committee.

This bill is a reasonable step forward to use VA resources wisely and ultimately improve access for veterans living with disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 7342, as amended, 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 today in support of H.R. 7342, as amended, the Veterans Accessibility Advisory Committee Act of 2024. This bill establishes an advisory committee that brings disabled veterans' voices into the fold and provides a seat at the table with top decisionmakers at VA.

Access is an issue I have sought to champion during my time in Congress, and particularly during my time with the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Disabled veterans still face many barriers in accessing the care and services they have rightfully earned. Those barriers deserve the time and attention of a VA advisory committee so that experts can come together to improve how veterans with disabilities access their care and benefits.

Advocates like the Blinded Veterans Association, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Disabled American Veterans, have been tireless voices in our communities, raising awareness of these issues.

Establishing a Veterans Accessibility Advisory Committee will provide a direct line for these voices to be heard and for change to be made at VA so that all veterans can access their care and benefits with ease.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO), who has sponsored the bill.

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding, and I thank him and his committee for all their help on getting this bill here.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support my bill, the Veterans Accessibility Advisory Committee Act. Sadly, many disabled veterans in the Central Valley and across the country are facing barriers in accessing the critical services they need.

From struggling with physical infrastructure at VA facilities to navigating the red tape in the benefits process, disabled veterans are too often getting left behind.

Doorways that are too narrow, elevators that are constantly out of service, and exam rooms that aren't big enough to accommodate wheelchairs are just a few obstacles veterans face when trying to receive care.

Serving disabled veterans is a critical part of the VA's mission, but they need to do more to ensure the unique needs of disabled veterans are being heard.

By establishing a permanent advisory committee within the VA, my bill ensures disabled veterans have a seat at the table in providing feedback so they can easily access the benefits, services, and facilities they have earned.

We cannot leave our disabled veterans behind. Our veterans have sacrificed so much for our Nation, and they deserve a VA that is responsive to their needs.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 7342, the Veterans Accessibility Advisory Committee Act of 2024, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support this legislation to improve access to VA services for veterans with disabilities, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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. 7342, 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.

CLEAR COMMUNICATION FOR VETERANS CLAIMS ACT

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7816) to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to seek to enter into an agreement with a federally funded research and development center for an assessment of notice letters that the Secretary sends to claimants for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7816

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 "Clear Communication for Veterans Claims Act".

SEC. 2. INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF NOTICES THAT THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS SENDS TO CLAIMANTS.

(a) AGREEMENT.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall seek to enter into an agreement with an FFRDC for an assessment of notices that the Secretary sends to claimants.

(b) ASSESSMENT.—An FFRDC that enters to an agreement under subsection (a) shall submit to the Secretary a written assessment of such notices. The assessment shall include the following:

(1) The determination of the FFRDC, made in consultation with covered entities, whether each such notice may be feasibly altered to reduce paper consumption by, and costs to, the Federal Government.

(2) The recommendations of the FFRDC regarding how the Secretary may make such notices clearer to claimants, better organized, and more concise.

(c) REPORT; IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 90 days after the Secretary receives the assessment under subsection (b), the Secretary shall—

(1) submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a copy of such assessment; and

(2) implement the recommendations in the assessment that are in compliance with the laws administered by the Secretary.

(d) DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary shall complete the implementation of such recommendations pursuant to subsection (c)(2) by not later than one year after the date on which the Secretary commences such implementation.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term "FFRDC" means a federally funded research and development center.

(2) The term "covered entities" includes—

(A) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs;

(B) an expert in laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs;

(C) a veterans service organization recognized under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code; and

(D) an entity that advocates for veterans.

(3) The terms "claimant" and "notice" have the meanings given such terms in section 5100 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF CERTAIN LIMITS ON PAYMENTS OF PENSION.

Section 5503(d)(7) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking "November 30, 2031" and inserting "December 31, 2031".

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 have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 7816, as amended.

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. 7816, as amended. This bill was introduced by my colleague, Representative DUARTE, and I am a proud cosponsor.

This bill, H.R. 7816, as amended, would require VA to contract with a

research entity to improve the notice letters VA sends to veterans and survivors who file claims for VA benefits.

VA is required to provide information throughout the VA claims process to veterans and their survivors who have filed claims for VA benefits.

However, at a recent oversight hearing, we heard from veterans and their advocates that VA's notice letters are difficult to understand, too long, filled with legal jargon, and contained information that is not relevant to a veteran's or survivor's overall claim.

These complex letters have caused veterans and survivors confusion and stress. Some have become so overwhelmed that they abandon their claims.

This is unacceptable. As a veteran myself, I have also received these complex letters. A veteran shouldn't have to be a Member of Congress or an attorney to understand his or her rights under the claims process.

H.R. 7816, as amended, would ensure that VA's notice letters do not discourage veterans from accessing the benefits they have earned.

This legislation would ensure that VA sends veterans and survivors understandable notice letters so that they can make informed decisions about their claims.

I thank the veterans service organizations for their support and help in drafting this bill.

I also thank Ranking Member TAKANO and his staff for working with Representative DUARTE and me to make the changes necessary to move this bill forward.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7816, as amended, 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. 7816, the Clear Communication for Veterans Claims Act, as amended.

When a veteran applies for benefits at VA, the agency corresponds with that veteran at multiple points in the process regarding their claim. This communication is often through letters which can be densely laden with legal jargon and confusing information which makes it hard for the veteran to understand what is required of them or the benefits decision VA has arrived at.

Now, this can lead the veteran to miss important deadlines or fail to submit proper documentation which can ultimately lead to the rejection of their claims.

Now, VA has launched an internal review of these notice letters and has already redrafted many of them to be more direct and easier to understand. However, VA can also use some outside help in reviewing the literally thousands of different possible letters they might send a veteran.

□ 1745

H.R. 7816 seeks to provide that assistance. Specifically, it mandates that VA

make its notice letters, documents that explain decisions on benefits, shorter, clearer, and easier for veterans and their families to understand.

This bill requires the VA to contract with a third party to assess and recommend improvements to these letters, which often contain complex legalese that can confuse veterans.

The bill also sets deadlines for action. The VA must contract with a federally funded research and development center, or FFRDC, to evaluate these communications within 30 days of the bill's enactment and submit its recommendation within 90 days. This effort aims to streamline the claims process and reduce the stress and confusion many veterans face when dealing with their benefits.

Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 7816 and urge my colleagues to do the same, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. DUARTE), our colleague who is the sponsor of this bill.

Mr. DUARTE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, the Clear Communication for Veterans Claims Act. I am proud that the House is considering my bill on the floor today and for the support of Democrats and Republicans so that veterans can obtain the benefits they have earned in service to our Nation.

I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) for his support of this bill and my Democrat co-lead, the gentleman from Illinois (Ms. BUDZINSKI), for joining me on this important legislation. This bill is a testament to what Congress can achieve when working across party lines.

Since coming to office, I have led several veterans' townhalls across California's Central Valley. One topic that continues to come up is the daunting challenge that our veterans, young and old, face when applying for and receiving benefits through the VA after their service to our Nation, and this is unacceptable.

Currently, when a veteran applies for benefits or files a claim with the VA, the VA responds in writing and often provides updates in writing.

At a Veterans' Affairs Committee hearing in March 2024, it became clear that the VA's effort to make these letters easy to understand, to guide veterans through the process, have failed. We learned the VA letters are often lengthy, packed with indecipherable legal jargon, sometimes omit crucial information needed to advance a claim, and can be over 20 pages long. These letters cause confusion, anxiety, and stress among our veterans, and some veterans are so overwhelmed that they give up on their claims entirely.

The Clear Communication for Veterans Claims Act would require the VA to work with a federally funded research and development center to sim-

ply the notification letters for VA benefits, including disability compensation, disability ratings, health benefits, and education.

This bill would require the VA to contract with a FFRDC to assess the letters sent to veterans within 30 days. Within 90 days of receiving the assessment, the VA would be required to notify Congress and implement any recommendations from the FFRDC.

This legislation is supported by numerous veterans' groups across California, including the Paralyzed Veterans of America, Disabled American Veterans, the National Organization of Veterans' Advocates, the American Legion, as well as the Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission.

Their endorsements underscore the vital need for this reform. We must uphold our commitment to those who have bravely served our country. As a Congressman, I am always honored to help Central Valley veterans get their benefits. This bill is a step toward correcting the flawed VA claims process to help ensure our veterans get the care and benefits they earned from a grateful Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) for supporting the Clear Communication for Veterans Claims Act. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I ask all my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 7816, the Clear Communication for Veterans Claims Act, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

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. 7816, 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.

COLONEL OLA LEE MIZE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CLINIC

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5464) to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Guntersville, Alabama, as the "Colonel Ola Lee Mize Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5464

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

SECTION 1. NAME OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINIC, GUNTERSVILLE, ALABAMA.

The Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic located at 100 Judy Smith Drive, Guntersville, Alabama, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the "Colonel Ola Lee Mize Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic". Any reference to such clinic in any law, regulation, map, document, paper, or other record of the United States shall be considered to be a reference to the Colonel Ola Lee Mize 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. 5464.

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. 5464, a bill to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Guntersville, Alabama, as the Colonel Ola Lee Mize Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic.

Ola Mize was born on August 28, 1931, in Albertville, Alabama. Although he was initially rejected by the U.S. Army for being underweight, after much persistence, he joined the Army in 1950 and was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division.

When the Korean war broke out, rather than pursuing an education, Ola Mize decided to reenlist. On the night of June 10, 1953, Sergeant Mize's unit was defending an outpost, Outpost Harry, when they came under artillery fire. This fire was shortly followed by an assault by a battalion-sized force of Chinese troops, which quickly overran the Americans' position.

Sergeant Mize then took his rifle and began taking defensive action, killing around 40 enemy troops.

When nearly all the officers were casualties, he took the initiative to establish a defensive position. Sergeant Mize and his team went from bunker to bunker, firing at the enemy, confusing them into thinking Americans had a larger defense position than they actually did.

With all the chaos going on around him, he worked tirelessly to assist the wounded and put them into makeshift shelters away from enemy fire.

The next morning, Sergeant Mize led a counterattack, wiping out the remaining enemy.

For his action, Ola Mize was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Eisenhower on September 7, 1954. After receiving the Medal of Honor, he contin-

ued his service, being awarded the Silver Star for Valor and for his service in Vietnam.

Ola Mize retired from the Army as a colonel in 1981.

Stories of heroes like Colonel Mize should continue to be told to generations of Americans.

By naming the VA clinic in his honor, we will surely do just that. Colonel Mize's service to our country and his legacy will always be remembered, and I thank the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ADERHOLT), the sponsor, as well as the entire Alabama delegation for leading this effort.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5464, 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. 5464, a bill to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Guntersville, Alabama, as the Colonel Ola Lee Mize Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic.

Colonel Mize's story is one of heroism and perseverance. His actions saved lives and helped turn the tide of conflict. I am glad to support this bill to honor his service.

Like many servicemembers, Mr. Mize joined the Army seeking to support his family. He was the son of Alabama sharecroppers and had to leave school in the ninth grade. Despite initially being rejected due to his small stature, he persevered and was accepted.

After a peacetime tour of duty, Mr. Mize reenlisted when the Korean war began.

As a member of the Army's Company K, 15th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division, and now a sergeant, Mr. Mize was stationed to defend a strategic posting known as Outpost Harry. His actions in this posting are nothing short of heroic.

He bravely answered the call to help a medic rescue an injured soldier at a listening post and brought him back to safety.

Sergeant Mize then fought his way to assist an American machine gun nest that had been overrun. On his way, he was blown down three separate times by artillery and grenade blasts, but he returned to his astounded men alive.

Sergeant Mize brought down as many as 65 enemy soldiers and helped rescue the outpost for the American forces. Of 56 Americans involved in the Outpost Harry fighting, only 8 survived, but Sergeant Mize's actions helped ensure that number was as high as it was.

In a testament to his loyalty to his men, Sergeant Mize initially refused the Medal of Honor when he was told that he would be honored with it, saying it should go to mark their bravery instead.

When he did finally accept it from President Eisenhower in 1954, he accepted it on behalf of his men.

Despite demonstrating more than enough valor for one lifetime, Colonel

Mize received a commission with the U.S. Special Forces and served four tours of duty, including three in Vietnam with the Army Green Berets.

In addition to his Medal of Honor, throughout his military career, he was awarded the Legion of Merit twice, the Silver Star, the Bronze Star five times, and the Purple Heart, among others.

After an assignment to the Special Forces School, he retired as a full colonel in 1981.

As a nation, we must remember Colonel Mize's sense of duty, loyalty to his men, and heroism. I can think of no better way to honor him.

Mr. Speaker, I support this important piece of legislation. I ask that my colleagues do the same, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ADERHOLT), the sponsor of this bill.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation, H.R. 5464, to rename the Guntersville, Alabama, community-based veterans outpatient clinic to the Colonel Ola Lee Mize Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic.

I was proud to introduce this bill in honor of Colonel Ola Lee Mize, a true American hero from Alabama's Fourth Congressional District, which I am honored to represent.

Ola Lee Mize was a native of Alabama's Fourth Congressional District. He was born and raised in Albertville, a town next to Guntersville, where this clinic is located.

In 1954, as it has been stated, Colonel Mize was awarded the Medal of Honor, which is the highest military honor, by President Dwight D. Eisenhower for his heroic actions in saving a wounded soldier and leading a successful military operation in defense of Outpost Harry, as it has been described by my colleagues.

According to reports, on that day, of the 56 Americans involved in the Outpost Harry battle, only 8 survived. Colonel Mize served his country with honor for more than 30 years in the United States Army.

Among his many other accomplishments were numerous additional deployments, including multiple tours in Vietnam as a Green Beret, rising to the rank of colonel and serving as commander of the Special Forces School at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

□ 1800

In addition to the Medal of Honor, Colonel Mize's other military declarations include two Legion of Merits, the Silver Star, five Bronze Stars, and the Purple Heart.

Following his retirement from the Army in 1982, Colonel Mize spent his remaining years in Gadsden, Alabama, in neighboring Etowah County, until he passed away in 2014.

He is survived by his wife, Betty Mize, and a daughter, Teresa Peterson, and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Like I said before, Colonel Mize was a true American hero, and the people of Alabama's Fourth Congressional District are proud to call him our own. We will not forget the legacy he left behind, and neither should any American. That is why renaming the veterans clinic in Guntersville will honor Colonel Mize's service and inspire future generations of Alabamians.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues, Chairman BOST and Ranking Member TAKANO, for their work in bringing this legislation to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 5464 to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Guntersville, Alabama, as the Colonel Ola Lee Mize Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic.

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

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

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. 5464.

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.

RESTORING BENEFITS TO DEFRAUDED VETERANS ACT

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4190) to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to repay the estates of deceased beneficiaries for certain benefits paid by the Secretary and misused by fiduciaries of such beneficiaries, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4190

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 "Restoring Benefits to Defrauded Veterans Act".

SEC. 2. REISSUANCE BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OF ESTATES OF DECEASED BENEFICIARIES FOR CERTAIN BENEFITS PAID BY THE SECRETARY AND MISUSED BY FIDUCIARIES.

Section 6107 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (d) and (e), respectively;

(2) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection (c):

"(c) REISSUANCE OF AMOUNTS IN THE CASE OF A DECEASED BENEFICIARY.—(1) If a beneficiary described in subsection (a) predeceases a payment under subsection (a) or (b), the Secretary shall pay such benefits, subject to paragraph

(2), to an individual or entity in accordance with section 5121 of this title.

"(2) The Secretary may not make a payment under this subsection to a fiduciary who misused benefits of the beneficiary."; and

(3) in subsection (e), as redesignated, by striking "subsection (a) or (b)" and inserting "this section".

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. 4190, as amended.

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. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4190, as amended.

This bill was introduced by Representative TRONE. It ensures that no fiduciary who steals a veteran's earned VA benefits can profit from their misuse if the veteran passes.

Mr. Speaker, I support the bill wholeheartedly, 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. 4190, the Restoring Benefits to Defrauded Veterans Act, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, it is an unfortunate reality that veterans, especially elderly veterans, find themselves as prime targets for fraud. It is even more unfortunate that oftentimes this fraud is perpetuated by those closest to the veteran, sometimes even family and friends who are tasked with assisting that veteran.

Thankfully, VA has a set of policies and procedures for uncovering, investigating, and prosecuting that fraud, which includes making restitution to the veteran.

Earlier this year, we passed H.R. 4016, the Veteran Fraud Reimbursement Act, introduced by Representative GERRY CONNOLLY, to help expedite that process. I urge the Senate to quickly take up that bill, as well.

Sadly, though, it sometimes happens that the veteran who was the victim of this fraud passes away before VA is able to make restitution, but VA is currently barred from making the estate of that beneficiary whole.

H.R. 4190, introduced by Representative DAVID TRONE, seeks to create a set of procedures for VA to follow to restore or reinstate benefits for veterans who were defrauded but unfortunately die before VA can compensate them.

More importantly, for those veterans who may have been defrauded by a family member, it also prevents VA

from repaying benefits to anyone who may have been a party to the fraud, regardless of whether they may have been named in the veteran's will as an heir.

Mr. Speaker, we owe our veterans and their survivors all the protections we can possibly afford them through the law. H.R. 4190 offers one more avenue to ensure veterans are receiving the benefits they have earned in spite of those who seek to defraud them.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support this measure, and I encourage the Senate to quickly pass this bill, as well.

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I have no speakers on this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. TRONE), my good friend who is the author of H.R. 4190. He currently serves on the House Appropriations Committee and the Budget Committee. He is also a former member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Mr. TRONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge a "yes" vote on my bill, the Restoring Benefits to Defrauded Veterans Act.

Today, we must remember that the courageous men and women who have dedicated their lives to defend our country and our freedoms still need us. My bill addresses this longstanding issue affecting millions of veterans: fraud.

Just last year, the Federal Trade Commission estimated \$477 million was stolen from veterans, military personnel, and their spouses. This is a \$63 million, or 15 percent, increase from the year before.

Under current law, if a veteran passes away before their case is resolved, their family cannot be reimbursed for lost dollars. That is unacceptable.

My bill, the Restoring Benefits to Defrauded Veterans Act, would help the veterans and their families reclaim these defrauded dollars and get them access to the money that they earned. Specifically, the legislation requires the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to reissue the misused benefits to a beneficiary's estate in cases where the beneficiary passed before the reissuance.

We must ensure that veterans and their families are able to recapture any lost benefits they were scammed out of. It is just the right thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge a "yes" vote.

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 4190, the Restoring Benefits to Defrauded Veterans Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

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. 4190, 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.

FAIRNESS FOR SERVICEMEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES ACT OF 2024

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2911) to amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to periodically review the automatic maximum coverage under the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance program and the Veterans' Group Life Insurance program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2911

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 "Fairness for Servicemembers and their Families Act of 2024".

SEC. 2. PERIODIC REVIEW OF AUTOMATIC MAXIMUM COVERAGE UNDER SERVICEMEMBERS' GROUP LIFE INSURANCE AND VETERANS' GROUP LIFE INSURANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter III of chapter 19 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§ 1980B. Periodic review of automatic maximum coverage

"(a) IN GENERAL.—On January 1, 2025, and every five years thereafter, the Secretary shall—

"(1) complete a review of how the amount specified in section 1967(a)(3)(A)(i) compares to the amount described in subsection (b); and

"(2) submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate the results of the review.

"(b) AMOUNT DESCRIBED.—The amount described in this subsection is the amount equal to—

"(1) \$500,000; multiplied by

"(2) the average percentage by which the Consumer Price Index changed during the five fiscal years preceding the review under subsection (a).

"(c) CONSUMER PRICE INDEX DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'Consumer Price Index' means the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor."

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 19 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1980A the following new item:

"1980B. Periodic review of automatic maximum coverage."

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. 2911, as amended.

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. 2911, as amended. This bill was introduced by Representative STRICKLAND and co-led by our colleagues, Representative BACON and Representative TURNER.

H.R. 2911, as amended, would require VA to regularly review and compare the maximum coverage under the VA life insurance programs with average cost-of-living changes across the country.

Mr. Speaker, I support this legislation, 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. 2911, the Fairness for Servicemembers and their Families Act of 2024, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, last Congress, we passed S. 2794 into law. This bill increased the maximum coverage amount under the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance, or SGLI, program and the Veterans' Group Life Insurance, or VGLI, program from \$400,000 to \$500,000.

Prior to that legislation, however, those maximum coverage amounts had not increased since 2005, clearly failing to keep pace with inflation.

To ensure that we are not waiting another decade or more to improve this benefit for our servicemembers and veterans, my good friend, Representative MARILYN STRICKLAND, has introduced this bill, which requires VA to periodically review coverage amounts every 5 years and to report to Congress what the level of benefits would be if adjusted for inflation over that period.

This will allow Congress to regularly make a more informed decision about whether or not these maximum coverage amounts should be increased.

Mr. Speaker, this is commonsense legislation that allows Congress to better do our part to support servicemembers, veterans, and their families, and I encourage my colleagues to support it.

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

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Ms. STRICKLAND), my good friend who is the author of H.R. 2911. She serves on the Armed Services Committee and the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Ms. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member TAKANO for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 2911, the Fairness for Servicemembers and their Families Act of 2024.

I first thank Chairmen BOST and LUTTRELL and Ranking Members TAKANO and PAPPAS for working with me to get this bill to the floor. I also thank my partners in this effort, Congressman DON BACON and Senator JOHN CORNYN.

The Fairness for Servicemembers and their Families Act would help ensure that life insurance benefits for servicemembers and veterans account for changes in the economy. This legislation would require the Department of Veterans Affairs to periodically review and report on the maximum coverage available under the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance and Veterans' Group Life Insurance. Accurate and reliable data will allow the VA to make necessary policy adjustments to ensure accurate payments.

I have the honor of representing Joint Base Lewis-McChord and tens of thousands of servicemembers and their families who call the South Sound home. Our servicemembers courageously put their lives on the line for their country, and it is our duty to reciprocate and help them. This means ensuring the well-being of their families and loved ones in the event of a tragedy.

Servicemembers' life insurance plans must keep pace with economic demands. A robust life insurance policy can provide a grieving family with the security they need to navigate the loss of their loved ones with dignity.

The brave men and women who sacrifice their lives deserve peace of mind, knowing that their families will be taken care of.

For nearly two decades, the maximum coverage of the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance and Veterans' Group Life Insurance programs have been stagnant, even as the cost of housing, goods, and services rose, as they typically do over time.

This bill would ensure that these programs are reviewed periodically to verify that their value sufficiently reflects the contemporary Consumer Price Index.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their unwavering commitment to supporting veterans and their families and for prioritizing their care.

Finally, I will take a point of privilege to thank my Army fellow who worked in my office last year, Major Felix Gumbiner, for bringing this issue to my attention and for working with the offices of Congressman BACON and Senator CORNYN to develop this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the House passing the Fairness for Servicemembers and their Families Act of 2024 and for it to become the law of the land.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 2911, the Fairness for Servicemembers and their Families Act of 2024, as amended.

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

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

□ 1815

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. 2911, 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.

VETERANS BENEFITS CONTINUITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2024

Mr. MIKE GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 9468) making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 9468

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes, namely:

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION COMPENSATION AND PENSIONS

For an additional amount for “Compensation and Pensions”, \$2,285,513,000, to remain available until expended.

VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION READJUSTMENT BENEFITS

For an additional amount for “Readjustment Benefits”, \$596,969,000, to remain available until expended.

GENERAL PROVISIONS—THIS ACT

SEC. 101. Each amount appropriated or made available by this Act is in addition to amounts otherwise appropriated for the fiscal year involved.

SEC. 102. Unless otherwise provided for by this Act, the additional amounts appropriated by this Act to appropriations accounts shall be available under the authorities and conditions applicable to such appropriations accounts for fiscal year 2024.

SEC. 103. (a) BUDGET FORMULATION AND FORECASTING.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations and the Committees on Veterans Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report detailing corrections the Department will make to improve forecasting, data quality and budget assumptions relating to budget submissions for funds provided under the headings “Compensations and Pensions” and “Readjustment Benefits”.

(b) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 60 days after the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations and the Committees on Veterans Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on status of funds made available

under the headings “Compensations and Pensions” and “Readjustment Benefits” for fiscal years 2024, 2025, and 2026 in this or any other Act: *Provided*, That such report shall be updated and submitted to such Committees every 90 days thereafter until September 30, 2026, and shall include information detailing any changes to estimates or assumptions on obligations and expenditures, including data supporting these changes.

SEC. 104. (a) The Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs shall conduct a review of the circumstances surrounding and the underlying causes of the announced funding shortfall for the Veterans Benefits Administration for fiscal year 2024 described in the letter to Congress from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on July 19, 2024, and the announced funding shortfall for the Veterans Health Administration in fiscal year 2025 described in the letter to Congress from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on July 31, 2024.

(b) Relating to the shortfall in the funding of the Veterans Benefits Administration in fiscal year 2024 and the expected shortfall in the funding of the Veterans Health Administration in fiscal year 2025, the review shall include, but not be limited to: a comparison of monthly obligations and expenditures in relevant accounts against the spend plan of the Department; the reasons for any significant diversions of obligations or expenditures from the spend plan; an analysis of the accuracy of projections and estimates relevant to such diversions; and any other matter determined relevant by the Inspector General.

(c) Relating to the expected shortfall in the funding of the Veterans Health Administration in fiscal year 2025, the review also shall include: any changes, abnormalities, or significant events as determined significant by the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs in the transfer, reallocation, or other movement of funding between or within the Central Office, a Veterans Integrated Service Network, a facility, a program or office, a special purpose fund, the Veterans Equitable Resource Allocation process, or the Medical Center Allocation System.

(d) Actions the Department of Veterans Affairs can take to improve the accuracy of supporting information submitted under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, with respect to the Department of Veterans Affairs and to prevent funding shortfalls for the Department.

(e) Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations and the Committees on Veterans Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report detailing the conduct and findings of the review.

This Act may be cited as the “Veterans Benefits Continuity and Accountability Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2024”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. MIKE GARCIA) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MIKE GARCIA of California. 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. 9468.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today I stand in support of this very important veterans supplemental bill.

My district, as you know, is home to one of the largest veteran populations in the country. From World War II to the global war on terror, we take pride in knowing that our sons and daughters have answered their Nation’s call to duty time and time again without hesitation.

They answered the call not for personal gain and not for personal glory but out of a deep love for their country and out of deep patriotism and a belief that their government, including the VA, would always stand behind them.

They didn’t ask for much, just that their government keep its end of the bargain. Right now, that belief, that trust, is being tested.

Due to the VA’s mismanagement of their budget, 7 million veterans will lose their benefits beginning on October 4 without congressional action.

They will lose their pension benefits, they will lose their GI Bill benefits, their burial benefits, life insurance payments, and survivor benefits. This is a cliff that happens on September 20 and will affect their payments as of October 1.

As a combat veteran and a former Naval aviator, I was not comfortable allowing these benefits to simply lapse.

My bill, the Veterans Benefits Continuity and Accountability Supplemental Appropriations Act, will step in to fill the VA’s \$2.88 billion shortfall as a result of their mismanagement, helping to avoid a disastrous funding cliff and stepping in where the VA failed.

My bill does more than just provide funding. It demands accountability, which is desperately needed here. It includes oversight measures like an inspector general investigation and a requirement for the VA to open its financial records to Congress.

We need to know exactly how this shortfall occurred and ensure that every dollar is spent appropriately. To that end, within 30 days, this bill requires a report from the VA on corrections made to the budget with assumptions for the President’s budget request to avoid this type of shortfall next year.

Within 60 days, this bill requires a report on how the VA spent the funds appropriated by this bill and requires this report every 90 days through FY26.

At the 180-day mark, it requires a report from the inspector general on the findings of his investigation into the causes of this shortfall.

We can’t afford to leave our vets high and dry without the medical care and GI benefits that they have earned, but we also can’t afford to just give the VA a blank check without figuring out the root cause of the issue to be solved.

This isn't just about funding. It is about fixing a broken system and ensuring that our veterans aren't left behind simply because of bureaucratic failures. They deserve better, and it is on us as Members of Congress and as their Representatives to fix this and get it right.

I thank Chairman COLE and the Appropriations Committee, Chairman BOST and the Committee on Veterans Affairs, as well as Chairman CARTER of the Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies for their support on this bill and their ongoing investigation into the shortfall to get answers for our vets.

We owe it to them, our veterans, to honor their service and fulfill our country's promise to them. We made a commitment to these men and women, and we cannot afford to fall short. This bill does exactly that, and I strongly encourage my colleagues to support it.

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

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 9468. This bill will alleviate a shortfall in the Veterans Benefits Administration by providing \$3 billion, ensuring veterans receive the benefits that they have rightfully earned.

Without this funding, veterans' and survivors' payments to over 500,000 individuals scheduled to be delivered on October 1 will be at risk.

This shortfall, unlike what the gentleman just referred to, exists because the PACT Act is working. Ever since it was signed into law, the VA has been hard at work finding veterans in need of care and cutting through the bureaucracy to get them the benefits and medical care that they deserve.

There are now a record number of veterans receiving disability or compensation benefits, 6.6 million, up from 6.3 million last year.

The VA is hard at work, processing a record number of claims exceeding 2 million, on pace to break last year's record by 30 percent. Veterans are also using the GI Bill and job training benefits at record rates.

Funding this shortfall will ensure that the VA continues delivering for veterans. However, this bill alone will not address all the pressing funding needs at the VA.

We know that the VA requires more funding to ensure that the PACT Act is fully implemented in the next fiscal year.

There is another \$12 billion shortfall for FY 2025 in the Veterans Health Administration also due to increasing demands from the PACT Act.

The smoke and mirrors that is being stirred up by our friends on the other side of the aisle is just that. There is massive demand for healthcare benefits and the additional PACT Act benefits that, thankfully, Democrats provided under President Biden and Vice President HARRIS' leadership.

You can see the fact that more veterans are enrolling in VA care. Over 412,000 have enrolled in the last 365 days, a 27 percent increase year over year. The VA has also seen a record number of healthcare appointments, on pace for 127 million in 2024, well exceeding the previous year's record.

The VA's targeted and aggressive outreach to veterans ensures that they know about the care and benefits the bipartisan PACT Act made available and shows that it is working.

Although this \$3 billion for benefits is critical, I urge my Republican colleagues to also support the \$12 billion that is needed for healthcare in FY 2025 in the continuing budget resolution.

People who are listening to this discussion should know that inexplicably, this funding has been excluded by the Republican majority in the CR that goes until March that we understand we are likely voting on tomorrow.

Our friends on the other side of the aisle are going to deprive veterans of the vital healthcare that the PACT Act requires that they receive and continue to cloud the ability for us to be able to get our veterans that care.

I am a show-me person, not a tell-me person, and so we need to show the veterans who have earned these benefits that the PACT Act requires we provide for them, and we do that by making sure that we address the shortfall that is the result of the demand that we knew there was.

For so many years, veterans were denied access to the care that they earned. The clear exposure to toxic substances while they were in battle and while they were defending our country resulted in illnesses that now the PACT Act allows them to get access to that healthcare and ensure that it is covered.

If we don't fulfill that \$12 billion and make sure that those resources are available to our veterans, then our friends on the other side of the aisle will be responsible for that.

As I have said, I support this bill before us, but I am disappointed that my colleagues across the aisle did not work in a bipartisan manner to draft this legislation.

Let me be clear; it is not perfect. There is a reporting requirement that I would have written differently if we were consulted on that language, but it is critical that we get this funding to our veterans and survivors before funding runs out.

Therefore, I do urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MIKE GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, to clarify, I appreciate the bipartisan support for this stopgap measure, but this isn't smoke and mirrors.

There are more veterans. There are more benefits. These are good things. All we are asking for is that the President's budget request and the congressional processes reflect the higher demands and thus, the higher dollar values, but also hopefully gain more effi-

ciency and, frankly, have the dollars go a little bit further through the VA processes.

That is why the reporting language in this bill is very important, but I am glad that this does have bipartisan support.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from the great State of California (Mr. VALADAO), a member of the Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies and a hero to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

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

I rise today in support of the Veterans Benefits Continuity and Accountability Supplemental Appropriations Act, which addresses the \$3 billion mandatory shortfall for disability and education benefits that the VA expects to face in October.

Our veterans have made incredible sacrifices for our country, and it is our responsibility to guarantee they receive the benefits they have earned.

We are debating this legislation today because the VA failed to properly manage their budget this year, putting the benefits of millions of veterans at risk.

This is unacceptable. Our veterans should not pay the price for the VA's mismanagement. This legislation makes good on our Nation's commitment to care for the men and women who have served our country.

It also requires greater oversight on the budget process moving forward to hold the VA accountable so that this does not happen again.

I look forward to voting "yes" on this legislation to ensure our veterans can continue to access the benefits that they have earned.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO), the distinguished ranking member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from Florida, for yielding, and I associate myself with all of what she has said in the debate so far.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for H.R. 9468, legislation that addresses a critical funding shortfall at the Veterans Benefits Administration, which could delay delivery of crucial veterans' education and disability benefits.

Now, when we passed the Honoring our PACT Act into law, we intended that the VA move quickly to implement the law.

This speed was necessary so that veterans who needed care and benefits could receive them as quickly as possible. We also gave VA the money necessary to do the work and the authority to move more quickly, if it could.

On day one, President Biden accelerated implementation of the law. One year later, VA also hit the gas so that more veterans could enroll in VA healthcare more quickly. VA set aggressive goals, and what we are seeing

right now is the result of VA exceeding those goals.

VA has granted almost 1.2 million PACT Act disability claims. Hundreds of thousands of new veterans have been enrolled in healthcare at VA. GI Bill and job training benefits are being used at unprecedented levels to further veterans' education and careers.

These are all good things, and I don't think my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are arguing that they are bad.

Their rhetoric regarding VA's financial management belies their true motive here, which is to take any and every opportunity to bash the Biden-Harris administration, in this case for simply providing care and benefits to veterans.

From what we have heard today, it sounds like Republicans are begrudgingly willing to fund VBA, when this is the bare minimum that we should be doing.

While I am glad that we are getting the VBA supplemental completed this week, I am very concerned and, frankly, disappointed that we are also not taking action on the \$12 billion Veterans Health Administration shortfall.

The deadline for the VHA shortfall is not this week, but that does not make it any less pressing. The time when VHA will need this funding is fast approaching, and this Congress has not shown itself to be capable of reliably passing funding bills on time.

Republicans have even refused to include VHA funding in their continuing resolution text that was introduced last week and is up for a vote tomorrow.

I have heard the chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee say that Congress never fails to fund the VA, and so I am confident that this VBA supplemental will pass easily with plenty of support from both sides of the aisle, but why the political games with veterans' healthcare?

Why not address it now while we are here working on VBA funding and provide veterans and their families and the VA workforce some much-needed stability? Why not include it in the CR we are voting on tomorrow?

□ 1830

We must get VHA the funding it needs to provide world-class healthcare to those who served. Any delay in that care could be devastating for veterans. Enough of the brinksmanship. Republicans are shorting veterans and their families by not addressing VHA funding now along with VBA funding. Democrats are once again charged with being the adults in the room and are calling on the majority to do the right thing. Pass all of the funding VA needs now and stop any uncertainty for veterans. Let's get this done.

VHA's need for an additional \$12 billion is not malfeasance or incompetence. More veterans than ever before are accessing VA healthcare. We should be celebrating and applauding

that fact, not denigrating VA and its hardworking staff. When every VA request for additional funding is met with suspicion, accusations of mismanagement, and derision of VA, what is the true motivation of my colleagues? Is it to ensure that VA is able to ensure the necessary care and benefits to veterans or is it to extract a pound of political flesh?

I have no doubt that this bill will pass. It includes added reporting requirements that will aid us in our oversight responsibilities, which I support. However, let us not assign blame where there is none, and let us not denigrate those who wake up daily to do their best to serve those who have served our Nation.

Whatever we do, Mr. Speaker, let us get VA all the resources it needs to deliver for our veterans.

Mr. MIKE GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, this isn't about getting a pound of political flesh or making this about Republicans versus Democrats, left versus right. This is about doing what is right for our veterans. The fact is, there is a real cliff that hits at the end of this week, and tying it to a CR is a disservice. We shouldn't use veterans as political pawns within the CR conversation.

Facts are stubborn things. The executive branch owns the VA. The VA is part of the executive branch. Before we discuss the \$12 billion shortfall in FY25 funding, we should require a root cause analysis to be done on why we have a shortfall this year itself. From there we will move forward.

You have our commitment as a Republican majority that we will never let the benefits of our veterans lapse as a result of anything, much less, frankly, lack of oversight by the executive branch.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Oklahoma (Mrs. BICE), a member of the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Subcommittee.

Mrs. BICE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 9468, which addresses the VA's budget shortfall.

The Biden administration shared news of this impending budget gap days before we left in July with very little information on why there was a shortfall. In fact, following several inquiries from my office, the administration still has not been able to fully substantiate why the budget projections were so off.

I thank my friend and colleague, MIKE GARCIA, for his strong leadership in authoring this bill. Ensuring the men and women who honorably served our Nation are provided the medical care and benefits that they have earned is my top priority. I am also pleased the bill includes new reporting and accountability requirements to ensure this type of budget mismanagement does not occur again in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to support H.R. 9468 to preserve the benefits of our veterans.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), the ranking member of the Appropriations Committee.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member WASSERMAN SCHULTZ for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation, which would provide our Nation's veterans with the benefits that they have duly earned in their selfless service and sacrifice to our Nation.

Veterans Affairs is imminently facing a shortfall. Why? Don't listen to mismanagement and other things. Why? It is because of successful efforts of the administration to identify and reach veterans across the country who are entitled to these benefits.

We signed something called the PACT Act, which says that servicepeople in all wars were going to be able to get medical services if they were exposed to toxic chemicals and to burn pits. That opened up a wide gulf of individuals who were going to take advantage of these medical services.

This is a success story. We should applaud the Biden-Harris administration for ensuring America is holding up its promises to our brave veterans. We shouldn't come kicking and screaming to it. We should applaud doing what we are doing.

Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed that the majority did not work across the aisle on this bill to ensure we are meeting all of our veterans' needs. While I support this bill, it falls short of what is needed to ensure that veterans exposed to toxic substances receive the care they deserve and require.

Two summers ago, again, we enacted that PACT Act. We promised our veterans that they would see the benefits of medical care that they require after exposure to toxic substances with dedicated funding. We need to provide the additional \$12 billion. It is not there. This is \$12 billion for medical services which they have not included. Medical services for our veterans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YAKYM). The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Connecticut.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, we need to provide the additional \$12 billion to ensure there is no interruption for our veterans' healthcare, which the majority failed to include in this bill and in their half-year continuing resolution that they are going to bring to the floor tomorrow.

One thing that is unbelievable in that bill coming up tomorrow is they tell the Veterans Administration to spend faster on the medical services, except they put no money in for medical services, so spend faster on zero dollars. It is laughable, but it is very, very serious and detrimental to our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of it.

Mr. MIKE GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I just want to reiterate again, facts are stubborn things. The VA is part of the executive branch. We have a higher demand. We know the PACT Act exists. Let's have the President ask for a commensurate level of money before going to Congress. The PBR, President's budget request, should reflect this higher demand.

This is one of the issues with root cause. That is what we are asking for, not just giving the money to the VA, but getting to the root cause.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST), the chairman of the Veterans Affairs' Committee.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 9468, offered by my friend and fellow veteran—let me say that again, friend and fellow veteran—because when our side over here is talking, we are talking as veterans who understand the issues. Representative MIKE GARCIA of California is carrying this bill. I thank him for his service. I am a veteran.

Today, we are carrying out our responsibility to protect our veterans and taxpayers. This bill would appropriate \$2.88 billion to make sure that veterans' disability compensation and education payments will continue without delay.

We also expect the Department of Veterans Affairs to handle the taxpayers' money responsibly. That is why the bill would also force VA to improve their budget and provide more information on how they handle the benefits funding because, Mr. Speaker, the Biden-Harris administration should never have put VA in this position in the first place. The VA shortfall is yet another prime example of critical mismanagement by the current administration.

This bill would also direct the inspector general to do a top-to-bottom audit of the reasons for the healthcare and benefits shortfall. I have been getting half answers from executives at VA for 2 months about this shortfall.

The Biden-Harris administration has asked Congress to hand over another \$12 billion right now based on eight pages of old numbers that don't add up. That is not what our constituents sent us here to do. They expect me, as the chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee and as a Member of Congress, to ask very important questions and get to the bottom of the reality of what is happening, and that is what I intend to do.

This legislation is a step in the right direction, and it upholds the House Republicans' commitment to always care for men and women who have served our military. I am proud to support it. Whenever the statement is made about the fact that Republicans aren't doing that, yes, we are, but we are doing it with the responsibility of exactly what

we are supposed to be doing, and that is giving oversight. Somehow the other side of the aisle forgets that we have to do that, and for some reason the administration doesn't want to answer the questions we are asking.

Mr. Speaker, our responsibility is to look over the budget and make sure it is being spent wisely. Remember, the VA was not created for the VA; it was created for the veterans, and that is what this language does.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I don't have any additional speakers. I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, do you know what is a stubborn thing? Math. Math is a stubborn thing. As I have mentioned earlier, this bill falls short of supporting the full funding needs for the VA. It is very simple.

The VA has told us that by March of 2025, which is only a few months away, they will need an additional \$12 billion for veterans' healthcare. There is nothing mysterious about this.

I am not that good at math, but the VA has reported that they are delivering more appointments to veterans than ever before, and that has something directly to do with why they need the additional resources. In fact, there have been 91 million appointments thus far in 2024, outpacing last year's total. The VA expects to see 127 million appointments by the end of this month.

The VA has also reported that costs for drugs and prosthetic devices are higher due to market pressures. Additionally, community care costs will need to grow by 16.5 percent next year in order to deliver anticipated community care needs for veterans.

Math is a difficult thing, apparently, for our friends on the other side of the aisle. Despite these warnings, my colleagues across the aisle have decided to ignore the VA, to obfuscate, to create smoke and mirrors.

Mr. Speaker, I spent the morning with over 100 of my veterans who served in World War II, the Korean conflict, and the Vietnam war, and I promised them I was coming back here to make sure that we addressed this \$3 billion shortfall and that we would ensure that we fully implemented the PACT Act and ensured that veterans who were exposed to toxic substances would have their care covered. The PACT Act presumes, Mr. Speaker, that that exposure is what caused their illnesses, caused the disease that so many had to struggle with getting the ability to have that healthcare paid for until the PACT Act became law.

Despite these warnings, my colleagues across the aisle have decided to ignore the VA. In their continuing resolution, which would end on March 28, and which we expect to vote on tomorrow, they purposefully excluded any additional funding for veterans.

I will remind you, Mr. Speaker, and my colleagues, that when we committed that we would make sure that

the PACT Act funds were guaranteed, that we had guaranteed funding so that we wouldn't leave the funding for veterans' healthcare to the whims of the appropriations process, as we do every year, our friends on the other side of the aisle decided to put a bill together that denied that guaranteed funding.

They denied that guaranteed funding repeatedly until they were finally shamed into living up to our commitment to our veterans. This funding is needed to hire more medical professionals, deal with the growing cost of community care, relieve cost growth issues for pharmacy and prosthetics. We have to make sure that we are there for them.

The bottom line is that this bill that is here before us is a good first step in addressing the funding pressures the VA is experiencing due to the administration's successful implementation of the PACT Act, but it fails to address the additional funding needs in healthcare.

I encourage my colleagues across the aisle to include the funding in a CR that is necessary for the VA to ensure that our veterans receive the quality care that we promised them, that the law requires, and that they deserve.

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

□ 1845

Mr. MIKE GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Just a reminder, there is \$140 billion cash on hand by the VA in discretionary dollars for FY 2025. This bill works to close the gap for FY 2024 to the tune of \$2.88 billion.

This is an opportunity for every single Member of Congress to show their support for our veterans across the Nation, 7 million of them.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support for H.R. 9468, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FULCHER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MIKE GARCIA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 9468.

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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 8314; and
S. 2861.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the remaining electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

NO FOREIGN ELECTION INTERFERENCE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 8314) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to impose penalties with respect to contributions to political committees from certain tax exempt organizations that receive contributions from foreign nationals, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 218, nays 181, answered “present” 1, not voting 30, as follows:

[Roll No. 418]

YEAS—218

| | | |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Aderholt | Fitzgerald | Luttrell |
| Alford | Fitzpatrick | Mace |
| Allen | Fleischmann | Malliotakis |
| Allred | Flood | Maloy |
| Amodei | Fong | Mann |
| Arrington | Foxx | Massie |
| Babin | Franklin, Scott | Mast |
| Bacon | Fry | McCauley |
| Balderson | Fulcher | McClain |
| Banks | Gaetz | McClintock |
| Barr | Garbarino | McCormick |
| Bean (FL) | Garcia, Mike | McHenry |
| Bentz | Jimenez | Meuser |
| Bergman | Golden (ME) | Miller (IL) |
| Bice | Gonzales, Tony | Miller (OH) |
| Biggs | Gonzalez, V. | Miller (WV) |
| Bilirakis | Good (VA) | Miller-Meeks |
| Bishop (NC) | Gooden (TX) | Mills |
| Boebert | Gosar | Molinaro |
| Bost | Graves (LA) | Moolenaar |
| Brecheen | Graves (MO) | Mooney |
| Buchanan | Green (TN) | Moore (AL) |
| Bucshon | Greene (GA) | Moore (UT) |
| Burchett | Griffith | Moran |
| Burgess | Grothman | Murphy |
| Burlison | Guest | Nehls |
| Calvert | Guthrie | Newhouse |
| Cammack | Hageman | Norman |
| Caraveo | Harris | Nunn (IA) |
| Carey | Harshbarger | Ogles |
| Carl | Hern | Owens |
| Carter (GA) | Higgins (LA) | Palmer |
| Carter (TX) | Hill | Pappas |
| Chavez-DeRemer | Hinson | Perez |
| Ciscomani | Houchin | Perry |
| Cline | Hudson | Pfleger |
| Cloud | Huizenga | Posey |
| Clyde | Hunt | Reschenthaler |
| Cole | Issa | Rodgers (WA) |
| Comer | Jackson (TX) | Rogers (AL) |
| Costa | James | Rogers (KY) |
| Craig | Johnson (SD) | Rose |
| Crane | Jordan | Rosendale |
| Crawford | Joyce (OH) | Rouzer |
| Crenshaw | Joyce (PA) | Roy |
| Cuellar | Kean (NJ) | Rulli |
| D'Esposito | Kelly (MS) | Rutherford |
| Davidson | Kelly (PA) | Ryan |
| Davis (NC) | Kiggans (VA) | Scalise |
| De La Cruz | Kiley | Schrier |
| DesJarlais | Kim (CA) | Schweikert |
| Diaz-Balart | Kustoff | Scott, Austin |
| Donalds | LaHood | Self |
| Duarte | LaLota | Sessions |
| Duncan | Landsman | Simpson |
| Edwards | Langworthy | Slotkin |
| Elzey | Latta | Smith (MO) |
| Emmer | LaTurner | Smith (NE) |
| Estes | Lawler | Smith (NJ) |
| Ezell | Lee (FL) | Smucker |
| Fallon | Lesko | Sorensen |
| Feenstra | Letlow | Stauber |
| Ferguson | Lopez | Steel |
| Finstad | Loudermilk | Stefanik |
| Fischbach | Lucas | Steil |

Steube
Strong
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Timmons
Turner
Valadao
Van Drew

Van Dwyne
Wagner
Walberg
Waltz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman

Wild
Williams (NY)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yakym
Zinke

NAYS—181

Adams
Aguilar
Amo
Auchincloss
Balint
Barragan
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bowman
Boyle (PA)
Brown
Brownley
Budzinski
Carbajal
Cardenas
Carson
Carter (LA)
Cartwright
Casar
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cherfilus-
McCormick
Chu
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Connolly
Correa
Courtney
Crockett
Crow
Davids (KS)
Davis (IL)
Dean (PA)
DeGette
DeLauro
DeBene
Deluzio
DeSaulnier
Doggett
Escobar
Eshoo
Espallat
Fletcher
Foster
Foushee
Frankel, Lois
Frost
Garamendi
Garcia (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Garcia, Robert
Goldman (NY)

Gomez
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Himes
Horsford
Houlihan
Hoyer
Hoyle (OR)
Huffman
Huffman
Ivey
Jackson (IL)
Jacobs
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kamlager-Dove
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (NJ)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Lee (PA)
Leger Fernandez
Levin
Lofgren
Lynch
Magaziner
Manning
Matsui
McBath
McClellan
McCollum
McGovern
Meeks
Menendez
Meng
Mfume
Moore (WI)
Murphy
Moskowitz
Moulton
Mrvan
Mullin
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Nickel
Norcross
Ocasio-Cortez

So (two-thirds not being in the affirmative) the motion was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

BILLIE JEAN KING CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2861) to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Billie Jean King, an American icon, in recognition of a remarkable life devoted to championing equal rights for all, in sports and in society, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 308, nays 87, not voting 35, as follows:

[Roll No. 419]

YEAS—308

| | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Adams | Connolly | Harder (CA) |
| Aderholt | Correa | Hayes |
| Aguilar | Costa | Hill |
| Alford | Courtney | Himes |
| Allen | Craig | Hinson |
| Allred | Crenshaw | Horsford |
| Amo | Crockett | Houchin |
| Amodei | Crow | Houlihan |
| Auchincloss | Cuellar | Hoyer |
| Bacon | D'Esposito | Hoyle (OR) |
| Balint | Davids (KS) | Huffman |
| Barr | Davis (IL) | Issa |
| Barragan | Davis (NC) | Ivey |
| Bean (FL) | De La Cruz | Jackson (IL) |
| Beatty | Dean (PA) | Jacobs |
| Bentz | DeGette | James |
| Bera | DeLauro | Jayapal |
| Bergman | DelBene | Jeffries |
| Beyer | Deluzio | Johnson (GA) |
| Bice | DeSaulnier | Johnson (SD) |
| Bilirakis | DesJarlais | Joyce (OH) |
| Bishop (GA) | Diaz-Balart | Kamlager-Dove |
| Blunt Rochester | Doggett | Kaptur |
| Bonamici | Duarte | Kean (NJ) |
| Bowman | Emmer | Keating |
| Boyle (PA) | Escobar | Kelly (IL) |
| Brown | Eshoo | Kelly (PA) |
| Brownley | Feenstra | Kennedy |
| Bucshon | Ferguson | Khanna |
| Budzinski | Fitzpatrick | Kiggans (VA) |
| Burgess | Fleischmann | Kildee |
| Calvert | Fletcher | Kiley |
| Caraveo | Flood | Kilmer |
| Carbajal | Fong | Kim (CA) |
| Cardenas | Foster | Kim (NJ) |
| Carey | Foushee | Krishnamoorthi |
| Carl | Foxx | Kuster |
| Carson | Frankel, Lois | LaHood |
| Carter (GA) | Frost | LaLota |
| Carter (LA) | Garamendi | Landsman |
| Cartwright | Garbarino | Langworthy |
| Casar | Garcia (IL) | Larsen (WA) |
| Case | Garcia (TX) | Larson (CT) |
| Casten | Garcia, Mike | LaTurner |
| Castor (FL) | Garcia, Robert | Lawler |
| Castro (TX) | Jimenez | Lee (CA) |
| Chavez-DeRemer | Golden (ME) | Lee (FL) |
| Cherfilus- McCormick | Goldman (NY) | Lee (NV) |
| Chu | Gomez | Lee (PA) |
| Ciscomani | Gonzales, Tony | Leger Fernandez |
| Clark (MA) | Gonzalez, V. | Letlow |
| Clarke (NY) | Gottheimer | Levin |
| Cleaver | Graves (LA) | Lofgren |
| Clyburn | Graves (MO) | Lopez |
| Cohen | Green, Al (TX) | Loudermilk |
| Cole | Griffith | Lynch |
| Comer | Guest | Mace |
| | Guthrie | Magaziner |

ANSWERED “PRESENT”—1

Cohen

NOT VOTING—30

| | | |
|------------|--------------|---------------|
| Armstrong | Granger | Pence |
| Baird | Grijalva | Salazar |
| Blumenauer | Jackson (NC) | Schiff |
| Bush | LaMalfa | Spartz |
| Collins | Lamborn | Swalwell |
| Curtis | Lieu | Thompson (MS) |
| Dingell | Luetkemeyer | Tiffany |
| Dunn (FL) | Luna | Van Orden |
| Evans | McGarvey | Wexton |
| Gallego | Oberholte | Williams (TX) |

□ 1905

Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Messrs. PHILIPS, RUPPERSBERGER, LYNCH, CLYBURN, and HOYER changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina, Mses. WILD, SLOTKIN, and Mr. GARBARINO changed their votes from “nay” to “yea.”

| | | |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Malliotakis | Pelosi | Spanberger |
| Maloy | Peltola | Stansbury |
| Manning | Perez | Stanton |
| Mast | Peters | Steel |
| Matsui | Pettersen | Stefanik |
| McBath | Phillips | Steil |
| McCaul | Pingree | Stevens |
| McClellan | Pocan | Strickland |
| McCintock | Porter | Suozi |
| McCollum | Pressley | Sykes |
| McGarvey | Quigley | Takano |
| McGovern | Ramirez | Thanedar |
| McHenry | Raskin | Thompson (CA) |
| Meeks | Reschenthaler | Thompson (PA) |
| Menendez | Rodgers (WA) | Titus |
| Meng | Rogers (KY) | Tlaib |
| Meuser | Ross | Tokuda |
| Mfume | Rouzer | Tonko |
| Miller (OH) | Ruiz | Torres (CA) |
| Miller (WV) | Rulli | Torres (NY) |
| Miller-Meeks | Ruppersberger | Trahan |
| Molinaro | Rutherford | Trone |
| Moore (UT) | Ryan | Turner |
| Moore (WI) | Salinas | Underwood |
| Moran | Sánchez | Valadao |
| Morelle | Sarbanes | Van Drew |
| Moskowitz | Scalise | Vargas |
| Moulton | Scanlon | Veasey |
| Mrvan | Schakowsky | Velázquez |
| Mullin | Schneider | Wagner |
| Murphy | Scholten | Wasserman |
| Nadler | Schrier | Schultz |
| Napolitano | Schweikert | Waters |
| Neal | Scott (VA) | Watson Coleman |
| Neguse | Scott, David | Webster (FL) |
| Newhouse | Sessions | Wenstrup |
| Nickel | Sewell | Wild |
| Norcross | Sherman | Williams (GA) |
| Nunn (IA) | Sherrill | Williams (NY) |
| Oberholte | Simpson | Wilson (FL) |
| Ocasio-Cortez | Slotkin | Wilson (SC) |
| Omar | Smith (MO) | Wittman |
| Owens | Smith (NE) | Womack |
| Pallone | Smith (WA) | Zinke |
| Panetta | Sorensen | |
| Pappas | Soto | |

NAYS—87

| | | |
|-----------------|--------------|---------------|
| Arrington | Fry | Miller (IL) |
| Babin | Fulcher | Mills |
| Balderson | Gaetz | Moolenaar |
| Banks | Good (VA) | Mooney |
| Biggs | Gooden (TX) | Moore (AL) |
| Bishop (NC) | Gosar | Nehls |
| Boebert | Green (TN) | Norman |
| Brecheen | Greene (GA) | Ogles |
| Burchett | Grothman | Palmer |
| Burlison | Hageman | Perry |
| Cammack | Harris | Pfluger |
| Carter (TX) | Harshbarger | Posey |
| Cline | Hern | Rose |
| Cloud | Higgins (LA) | Rosendale |
| Clyde | Hudson | Roy |
| Collins | Huizenga | Scott, Austin |
| Crane | Hunt | Self |
| Crawford | Jackson (TX) | Smucker |
| Davidson | Jordan | Stauber |
| Donalds | Joyce (PA) | Steube |
| Duncan | Kelly (MS) | Strong |
| Edwards | LaMalfa | Tenney |
| Estes | Latta | Timmons |
| Ezell | Lesko | Van Dyne |
| Fallon | Luttrell | Walberg |
| Finstad | Mann | Waltz |
| Fischbach | Massie | Weber (TX) |
| Fitzgerald | McClain | Westerman |
| Franklin, Scott | McCormick | Yakym |

NOT VOTING—35

| | | |
|------------|--------------|---------------|
| Armstrong | Galleo | Salazar |
| Baird | Granger | Schiff |
| Blumenauer | Grijalva | Smith (NJ) |
| Bost | Jackson (NC) | Spartz |
| Buchanan | Kustoff | Swaiwell |
| Bush | Lamborn | Thompson (MS) |
| Curtis | Lieu | Tiffany |
| Dingell | Lucas | Van Orden |
| Dunn (FL) | Luetkemeyer | Vasquez |
| Ellzey | Luna | Wexton |
| Espallat | Pence | Williams (TX) |
| Evans | Rogers (AL) | |

□ 1913

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia changed his vote from “yea” to “nay.” So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, due to unforeseen events, I was unfortunately unable to cast my vote for legislation considered on the House floor today. Had I been able to be present, I would have voted according to the following: NAY on Roll Call No. 418—H.R. 8314, No Foreign Election Interference Act and YEA on Roll Call No. 419—S. 2861, Billie Jean King Congressional Gold Medal Act.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NEWHOUSE). The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings is in violation of the rules of the House.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 9255

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Mr. Speaker, I hereby remove my name as cosponsor of H.R. 9255.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's request is granted.

MOMENT OF SILENCE TO HONOR THE LIFE OF CORPORAL MAHER HUSSEINI

(Mr. CRENSHAW asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I are here tonight to honor the life of Harris County Precinct 4 Constable, Corporal Maher Hussein, who was senselessly murdered on September 3.

Maher was an American by choice, immigrating here 30 years ago. He was my constituent. He lived the American Dream, starting a business and raising a family.

He also sought to serve the community he called home: Harris County and the city of Houston.

For 3 years, he was a proud and dedicated member of the thin blue line. He committed himself to training others who wanted to serve their country and community as a law enforcement officer.

Corporal Hussein leaves behind a wife, Jamila; and two sons, Amin and Jamil. His loss leaves an irreparable hole in their lives and the lives of all those impacted.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN).

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I speak with a heavy heart because on occasions such as this, we are all reminded of the realistic possibility of losing a loved one without notice. It was without notice that a wife has lost her husband, that children have lost

their father, and America has lost a hero.

While Members of Congress do not always agree, today we stand shoulder to shoulder in our desire to see tragedies such as this cease within our Nation.

We want the family of this hero to know that we are forever grateful to them for sharing him with us. They are not only in our thoughts and prayers, they are also in our hearts.

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, as Houstonians, Texans, and Americans, we want to thank him for his service and sacrifice, and, most of all, we thank his family.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to observe a moment of silence to honor Corporal Maher Hussein.

DENNIS JOHN BENIGNO TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2024

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7208) to reauthorize the Traumatic Brain Injury program, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7208

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 “Dennis John Benigno Traumatic Brain Injury Program Reauthorization Act of 2024”.

SEC. 2. THE BILL PASCRELL, JR., NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY SURVEILLANCE AND REGISTRIES.

Section 394C of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280b-1d) is amended—

(1) by amending the section header to read as follows: “THE BILL PASCRELL, JR., NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY SURVEILLANCE AND REGISTRIES”; and

(2) by striking subsection (b).

SEC. 3. PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF INJURIES.

Section 394A(b) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280b-3(b)) is amended by striking “fiscal years 2020 through 2024” and inserting “fiscal years 2025 through 2029”.

SEC. 4. STATE GRANTS FOR PROJECTS REGARDING TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY.

Section 1252 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300d-52) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)(1), by striking “that is not less than \$1 for each \$2 of Federal funds provided under the grant.” and inserting the following: “that is—

“(A) for fiscal years 2020 through 2024, not less than \$1 for each \$2 of Federal funds provided under the grant; and

“(B) for fiscal year 2025 and each succeeding fiscal year, not less than \$0.50 for each \$2 of Federal funds provided under the grant.”;

(2) by striking subsection (e);

(3) by redesignating subsections (f) through (i) as subsections (e) through (h), respectively;

(4) by amending subsection (g)(2), as so redesignated, to read as follows:

“(2)(A) The term ‘traumatic brain injury’ means an acquired injury to the brain.

“(B) Such term—

“(i) does not include brain dysfunction caused by congenital or degenerative disorders, nor birth trauma; and

“(ii) may include—

“(I) brain injuries caused by anoxia due to trauma; and

“(II) damage to the brain from an internal or external source that results in toxicity, surgery, or vascular disorders not associated with aging.

“(C) The Secretary may revise the definition of such term as the Secretary determines necessary, after consultation with States and other appropriate public or non-profit private entities.”; and

(5) in subsection (i), as so redesignated, by striking “fiscal years 2020 through 2024” and inserting “fiscal years 2025 through 2029”.

SEC. 5. STATE GRANTS FOR PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY SERVICES.

Section 1253(l) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300d-53(l)) is amended by striking “fiscal years 2020 through 2024” and inserting “fiscal years 2025 through 2029”.

SEC. 6. REPORT ON DESIGNATING BRAIN INJURY AS A CHRONIC CONDITION.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, shall—

(1) examine the evidence base for designating brain injury as a chronic condition that can impact individuals with brain injury across the lifespan; and

(2) not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act—

(A) submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate a report detailing the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the examination described in paragraph (1); and

(B) make publicly available on the website of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention the report described in subparagraph (A).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Iowa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Iowa?

There was no objection.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7208, the Dennis John Benigno Traumatic Brain Injury Program Reauthorization Act of 2024 led by Congressman Bill Pascrell.

This bill will continue important resources for TBI prevention, help improve access to TBI rehabilitation, and support TBI patient advocacy systems.

From 2020 to 2021, there were over 200,000 TBI-related hospitalizations and almost 70,000 deaths. People 75 and older had the highest rates of TBI-related hospitalizations and deaths.

Recent data suggests that over 1.5 million Americans survive a traumatic brain injury each year. TBIs can im-

part a person's life in many ways, putting patients at increased risk for depression, falls, and permanent cognitive decline.

This legislation would continue resources to help support States and other entities to ensure providers and patients are educated on the incidence of TBIs and improve methods to treat and prevent such incidents.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7208, the Dennis John Benigno Traumatic Brain Injury Program Reauthorization Act.

This bill was long championed by the late New Jersey Congressman Bill Pascrell. It reauthorizes a critical grant program to States through the Administration for Community Living, as well as data collection, surveillance, and analysis through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Before I talk about the importance of the bill, I want to take a moment to talk about our dear friend and colleague, Representative Bill Pascrell, Jr., who served here in this House for 27 years. He truly was the first son of Paterson and left an indelible mark on north Jersey throughout his public service career as a mayor, a public schoolteacher, an assemblyman, and a Congressman.

Simply put, he never, ever backed down from doing what was right and was always fighting for the little guy. So it is fitting today that we are considering legislation that he was extremely passionate about and embodied his tenacious spirit in supporting policies that made an impact in all of our communities.

First enacted in 1996 thanks to the tireless advocacy of Representative Pascrell, this law was the only Federal program which specifically addressed TBI prevention, research, and service delivery through grants to States.

Today, I am proud that this legislation will bear the names of two fierce advocates in the TBI community.

In his first term in Congress, Representative Pascrell founded the Congressional Traumatic Brain Injury Task Force after meeting with Dennis John Benigno.

Dennis John was a 15-year-old boy who was critically injured in 1984 after being struck by a car and suffered a severe brain injury that left him completely disabled. Before then, many in Congress had little firsthand knowledge about TBI or its forever long-term care impact on patients and families. This passion to share Dennis John's story and highlight the need of TBI research and support across the country became the successful law before us today.

This legislation will not only honor the legacy and courage of the Benigno family but also rename the national program to bear its biggest congress-

sional champion's name, the Representative Bill Pascrell, Jr. National Program for Traumatic Brain Injury Surveillance and Injury.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there were more than 214,000 TBI-related hospitalizations in 2020 and more than 69,000 TBI-related deaths in 2021. These estimates do not include the many TBIs that are only treated in the emergency department, urgent care, primary care, or those who simply go untreated.

I urge my colleagues to continue the support for this program and the research, treatment, and data surveillance counted on by the 5.3 million people living with lifelong disabilities due to a TBI.

I thank Chair RODGERS and Subcommittee Chair GUTHRIE for their collaboration to advance this important bipartisan bill and to forever honor the legacy of its greatest champions.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues' support on a bipartisan basis, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1930

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I urge my colleagues to support this in the name of both Mr. Benigno and our colleague, Bill Pascrell, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I encourage a “yes” vote on this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MOLINARO). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7208, 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.

MEDICAID PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 8111) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to ensure the reliability of address information provided under the Medicaid program, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8111

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 “Medicaid Program Improvement Act”.

SEC. 2. ENSURING THE RELIABILITY OF ADDRESS INFORMATION PROVIDED UNDER THE MEDICAID PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1902(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (86), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (87), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (87) the following new paragraph:

“(88) beginning January 1, 2026, provide for a process to regularly obtain address information for individuals enrolled under such plan (or a waiver of such plan) from reliable data sources (as described in section 435.919(f)(1)(iii) of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation)) and act on any changes to such an address based on such information in accordance with such section (or successor regulation), except that this paragraph shall only apply in the case of the 50 States and the District of Columbia.”.

(b) APPLICATION TO CHIP.—Section 2107(e)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397gg(e)(1)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (H) through (U) as subparagraphs (I) through (V), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (G) the following new subparagraph:

“(H) Section 1902(a)(88) (relating to regularly obtaining address information for enrollees).”.

(c) ENSURING TRANSMISSION OF ADDRESS INFORMATION FROM MANAGED CARE ORGANIZATIONS.—Section 1932 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396u-2) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(j) TRANSMISSION OF ADDRESS INFORMATION.—Beginning January 1, 2026, each contract under a State plan with a managed care entity under section 1903(m) shall provide that the entity transmits to the State any address information for an individual enrolled with the entity that is provided to such entity directly from, or verified by such entity directly with, such individual.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Iowa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. 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 in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Iowa?

There was no objection.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 8111, the Medicaid Program Improvement Act.

Mr. Speaker, this bill represents a significant step forward in how we manage and improve the Medicaid program. Every day, Medicaid serves millions of Americans, providing critical healthcare services. However, an often overlooked aspect of this vital program is the accuracy and reliability of address information for our beneficiaries.

Inaccurate or outdated addresses can lead to beneficiaries being enrolled in multiple State Medicaid programs, jeopardizing program integrity. The Medicaid Program Improvement Act addresses this issue head on. By amending title XIX of the Social Security Act, we will ensure that Medicaid

programs have a robust and regular process for verifying and updating address information.

Starting January 1, 2026, State Medicaid programs will utilize reliable data sources to keep address information current, which will be crucial in ensuring that individuals receive the care they need, but are also eligible without unnecessary interruptions.

Additionally, my bill extends these requirements to the Children’s Health Insurance Program, CHIP, and mandates that managed care organizations transmit accurate address information to States.

This comprehensive approach guarantees that all aspects of our Medicaid and CHIP systems work in concert to deliver seamless, effective care. Let’s take this important step together and ensure that State Medicaid systems function reliably and effectively as much as they can.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 8111, which is sponsored by the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS), as well as the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT).

Mr. Speaker, this bipartisan bill would require State Medicaid agencies to regularly obtain updated beneficiary address information from reliable sources, including Medicaid managed care plans. This requirement helps to accomplish two things.

First, when the time comes for a State Medicaid agency to renew a person’s Medicaid eligibility, it is critical that the State has the most up-to-date address information. Too often, people lose Medicaid coverage for administrative reasons. Some people just don’t return the paperwork for this reason, for example.

Some people simply never receive the notice that the State has sent to them indicating it was time to renew their healthcare coverage for Medicaid. Collecting and using updated address information from reliable sources helps States to reach people and renew their coverage.

The second thing is having updated address information helps States identify when an individual may have moved out of State, and this information could help States ensure payments are not made for beneficiaries who are no longer residents of the State.

Mr. Speaker, this is a straightforward policy that helps to address practical challenges for people and for State Medicaid agencies, and I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on H.R. 8111.

Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers. In closing, I would simply ask that Members vote for this bill on a bipartisan basis. It is important for Medicaid recipients.

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

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I encourage a “yes” vote on

this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEBER of Texas). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8111, 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.

ACCELERATING KID ACCESS TO CARE ACT

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4758) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to streamline enrollment under the Medicaid program of certain providers across State lines, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4758

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 “Accelerating Kids’ Access to Care Act”.

SEC. 2. STREAMLINED ENROLLMENT PROCESS FOR ELIGIBLE OUT-OF-STATE PROVIDERS UNDER MEDICAID AND CHIP.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1902(kk) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(kk)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(10) STREAMLINED ENROLLMENT PROCESS FOR ELIGIBLE OUT-OF-STATE PROVIDERS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The State—

“(i) adopts and implements a process to allow an eligible out-of-State provider to enroll under the State plan (or a waiver of such plan) to furnish items and services to, or order, prescribe, refer, or certify eligibility for items and services for, qualifying individuals without the imposition of screening or enrollment requirements in addition to those imposed by the State in which the eligible out-of-State provider is located; and

“(ii) provides that an eligible out-of-State provider that enrolls as a participating provider in the State plan (or a waiver of such plan) through such process shall be so enrolled for a 5-year period, unless the provider is terminated or excluded from participation during such period.

“(B) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

“(i) ELIGIBLE OUT-OF-STATE PROVIDER.—The term ‘eligible out-of-State provider’ means, with respect to a State, a provider—

“(I) that is located in any other State;

“(II) that—

“(aa) was determined by the Secretary to have a limited risk of fraud, waste, and abuse for purposes of determining the level of screening to be conducted under section 1866(j)(2), has been so screened under such section 1866(j)(2), and is enrolled in the Medicare program under title XVIII; or

“(bb) was determined by the State agency administering or supervising the administration of the State plan (or a waiver of such plan) of such other State to have a limited risk of fraud, waste, and abuse for purposes of determining the level of screening to be conducted under paragraph (1) of this subsection, has been so screened under such

paragraph (1), and is enrolled under such State plan (or a waiver of such plan); and

“(III) that has not been—

“(aa) excluded from participation in any Federal health care program pursuant to section 1128 or 1128A;

“(bb) excluded from participation in the State plan (or a waiver of such plan) pursuant to part 1002 of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation), or State law; or

“(cc) terminated from participating in a Federal health care program or the State plan (or a waiver of such plan) for a reason described in paragraph (8)(A).

“(ii) QUALIFYING INDIVIDUAL.—The term ‘qualifying individual’ means an individual under 21 years of age who is enrolled under the State plan (or waiver of such plan).

“(iii) STATE.—The term ‘State’ means 1 of the 50 States or the District of Columbia.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 1902(a)(77) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(a)(77)) is amended by inserting “enrollment,” after “screening.”.

(2) The subsection heading for section 1902(kk) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(kk)) is amended by inserting “ENROLLMENT,” after “SCREENING.”.

(3) Section 2107(e)(1)(G) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1397gg(e)(1)(G)) is amended by inserting “enrollment,” after “screening.”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is 3 years after the date of enactment of this section.

SEC. 3. PREVENTING THE USE OF ABUSIVE SPREAD PRICING IN MEDICAID.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1927 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r–8) is amended—

(1) in subsection (e), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(6) TRANSPARENT PRESCRIPTION DRUG PASS-THROUGH PRICING REQUIRED.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A contract between the State and a pharmacy benefit manager (referred to in this paragraph as a ‘PBM’), or a contract between the State and a managed care entity or other specified entity (as such terms are defined in section 1903(m)(9)(D) and collectively referred to in this paragraph as the ‘entity’) that includes provisions making the entity responsible for coverage of covered outpatient drugs dispensed to individuals enrolled with the entity, shall require that payment for such drugs and related administrative services (as applicable), including payments made by a PBM on behalf of the State or entity, is based on a transparent prescription drug pass-through pricing model under which—

“(i) any payment made by the entity or the PBM (as applicable) for such a drug—

“(I) is limited to—

“(aa) ingredient cost; and

“(bb) a professional dispensing fee that is not less than the professional dispensing fee that the State would pay if the State were making the payment directly in accordance with the State plan;

“(II) is passed through in its entirety (except as reduced under Federal or State laws and regulations in response to instances of waste, fraud, or abuse) by the entity or PBM to the pharmacy or provider that dispenses the drug; and

“(III) is made in a manner that is consistent with sections 447.502, 447.512, 447.514, and 447.518 of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation) as if such requirements applied directly to the entity or the PBM, except that any payment by the entity or the PBM for the ingredient cost of such drug purchased by a covered entity (as defined in subsection (a)(5)(B)) may exceed the actual acquisition cost (as defined in 447.502 of title 42, Code of Federal Regula-

tions, or any successor regulation) for such drug if—

“(aa) such drug was subject to an agreement under section 340B of the Public Health Service Act;

“(bb) such payment for the ingredient cost of such drug does not exceed the maximum payment that would have been made by the entity or the PBM for the ingredient cost of such drug if such drug had not been purchased by such covered entity; and

“(cc) such covered entity reports to the Secretary (in a form and manner specified by the Secretary), on an annual basis and with respect to payments for the ingredient costs of such drugs so purchased by such covered entity that are in excess of the actual acquisition costs for such drugs, the aggregate amount of such excess;

“(ii) payment to the entity or the PBM (as applicable) for administrative services performed by the entity or PBM is limited to an administrative fee that reflects the fair market value (as defined by the Secretary) of such services;

“(iii) the entity or the PBM (as applicable) makes available to the State, and the Secretary upon request in a form and manner specified by the Secretary, all costs and payments related to covered outpatient drugs and accompanying administrative services (as described in clause (ii)) incurred, received, or made by the entity or the PBM, broken down (as specified by the Secretary), to the extent such costs and payments are attributable to an individual covered outpatient drug, by each such drug, including any ingredient costs, professional dispensing fees, administrative fees (as described in clause (ii)), post-sale and post-invoice fees, discounts, or related adjustments such as direct and indirect remuneration fees, and any and all other remuneration; and

“(iv) any form of spread pricing whereby any amount charged or claimed by the entity or the PBM (as applicable) that exceeds the amount paid to the pharmacies or providers on behalf of the State or entity, including any post-sale or post-invoice fees, discounts, or related adjustments such as direct and indirect remuneration fees or assessments (after allowing for an administrative fee as described in clause (ii)) is not allowable for purposes of claiming Federal matching payments under this title.

“(B) MAKING CERTAIN INFORMATION AVAILABLE.—The Secretary shall publish, not less frequently than on an annual basis, information received by the Secretary pursuant to subparagraph (A)(i)(III)(cc). Such information shall be so published in an electronic and searchable format, such as through the 340B Office of Pharmacy Affairs Information System (or a successor system).”; and

(2) in subsection (k), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(12) PHARMACY BENEFIT MANAGER.—The term ‘pharmacy benefit manager’ means any person or entity that, either directly or through an intermediary, acts as a price negotiator or group purchaser on behalf of a State, managed care entity (as defined in section 1903(m)(9)(D)), or other specified entity (as so defined), and may also more broadly manage aspects of the prescription drug benefits provided by a State, managed care entity, or other specified entity, including the processing and payment of claims for prescription drugs, the performance of drug utilization review, the processing of drug prior authorization requests, the managing of appeals or grievances related to the prescription drug benefits, contracting with pharmacies, controlling the cost of covered outpatient drugs, or the provision of services related thereto. Such term includes any person or entity that acts as a price negotiator (with regard to payment amounts to phar-

macies and providers for a covered outpatient drug or the net cost of the drug) or group purchaser on behalf of a State, managed care entity, or other specified entity, including such a person or entity that carries out 1 or more of the other activities described in the preceding sentence, irrespective of whether such person or entity calls itself a pharmacy benefit manager.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 1903(m) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396b(m)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(A)(xiii)—

(A) by striking “and (III)” and inserting “(III)”;

(B) by inserting before the period at the end the following: “, and (IV) if the contract includes provisions making the entity responsible for coverage of covered outpatient drugs, the entity shall comply with the requirements of section 1927(e)(6)”;

(C) by moving the left margin 2 ems to the left; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(10) No payment shall be made under this title to a State with respect to expenditures incurred by the State for payment for services provided by an other specified entity (as defined in paragraph (9)(D)(iii)) unless such services are provided in accordance with a contract between the State and such entity which satisfies the requirements of paragraph (2)(A)(xiii).”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to contracts between States and managed care entities, other specified entities, or pharmacy benefit managers that have an effective date beginning on or after the date that is 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) IMPLEMENTATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Health and Human Services may implement the amendments made by this section by program instruction or otherwise.

(2) NONAPPLICATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE ACT.—Implementation of the amendments made by this section shall be exempt from the requirements of section 553 of title 5, United States Code.

(e) NONAPPLICATION OF PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT.—Chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, shall not apply to any data collection undertaken by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under section 1927(e) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396r–8(f)), as amended by this section.

SEC. 4. MEDICAID IMPROVEMENT FUND.

Section 1941(b)(3)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396w–1(b)(3)(A)) is amended by striking “\$0” and inserting “\$69,000,000”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Iowa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. 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 in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Iowa?

There was no objection.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of my legislation, H.R. 4758, the Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act.

Mr. Speaker, for many families facing rare and severe pediatric conditions, accessing out-of-State care can be a daunting and lengthy process. The barriers are not just logistical, but also administrative, leading to unnecessary delays that can be detrimental to a child's health and even life threatening.

The Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act addresses this issue by streamlining the enrollment process for out-of-State pediatric providers under Medicaid, meaning that, if a child needs to travel out of State to receive care, bureaucratic hurdles won't stand in their way.

More specifically, the Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act will enable States to adopt a simplified process for out-of-State providers to enroll in their Medicaid programs. This change will reduce delays and prevent the denial of care due to administrative inefficiencies.

It will also ensure that, once enrolled, providers remain active for 5 years, unless otherwise terminated, which brings stability and consistency to care delivery.

In addition, the bill includes provisions to combat abusive pricing practices in Medicaid, ensuring transparency and fairness in the cost of prescription drugs. By enforcing transparent pricing models by banning spread pricing, we can protect both the integrity of Medicaid dollars and the interests of families relying on this essential program.

This bipartisan piece of legislation is supported by over 215 organizations, including the Children's Hospital Association and the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, reflecting a broad consensus on its importance.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Mrs. TRAHAN) and Senators GRASSLEY and BENNET for their work on this bill, and I ask all of my colleagues to join us in supporting this vital piece of legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4758, the Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act, sponsored by the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Mrs. TRAHAN) and the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS).

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4758 will ensure that children enrolled in Medicaid who need specialized care from out-of-State providers can receive that care without undue delay.

Children with complex medical needs often require care that can only be provided by specialists in States other than the one in which they live, and it is unacceptable that these children may have to wait months to receive

the care they need, making their condition worse and adding unnecessary stress and burden to their already overwhelmed families.

These delays stem from complicated processes that prevent out-of-State Medicaid providers from quickly enrolling in the child's home State Medicaid program. H.R. 4758 will streamline that process to ensure children can more quickly get the care that they need.

This bill also includes a prohibition on so-called spread pricing by pharmacy benefit managers in the Medicaid program. Spread pricing occurs when pharmacy benefit managers keep a portion of the amount paid to them for prescription drugs, charging Medicaid an excess amount for the drug. I will be pleased to see this wasteful spending come to an end, frankly.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Mrs. TRAHAN) for her leadership on this important bill. I urge all of my colleagues to vote "yes," and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for the Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act, which will help families access lifesaving care for children with complex medical conditions.

In Georgia, we are blessed to have world-class children's hospitals that care for kids across the country. However, in some cases, patients with rare and complex diseases have to travel out of State to receive specialized care when the services they need are not available in their own State.

The process is difficult and full of red tape, often delaying children and their families from receiving the care they desperately need and, in some cases, blocking access to care altogether.

The Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act will allow States to streamline the process for out-of-State pediatric care providers to enroll in another State's Medicaid program, while also providing important guardrails. This is a commonsense policy that will help children with complex medical conditions access critical care.

Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased to see the bipartisan amendment includes crucial pharmacy benefit manager reforms for my Drug Price Transparency and Medicaid Act. This provision would prohibit spread pricing in Medicaid and clarify that States should reimburse PBMs contracting with Medicaid managed care organizations for an administrative fee for managing the pharmacy benefit for Medicaid beneficiaries.

This will save taxpayers millions of dollars and will protect patients, pharmacies, and others from middleman tactics that drive up prescription drug prices.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-

MEEKS) and the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Mrs. TRAHAN) for working on this issue, and I urge my colleagues to support the Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Mrs. TRAHAN), the main author of this bill.

Mrs. TRAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I express my sincere gratitude to Ranking Member PALLONE, Chair RODGERS, Ranking Member ESHOO, Chairman GUTHRIE, Congresswoman MILLER-MEEKS, and my colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee for their unanimous support of this important bipartisan, bicameral legislation.

When medical professionals determine that clinical care is necessary to treat a child battling a rare disease, there should be no reason that administrative burdens get in the way. However, that is exactly what happens far too often to children with complex medical needs.

In fact, when children with serious health conditions lack access to the specialized care that they need in their home State, parents can be forced to navigate the complicated process of working with healthcare providers and State Medicaid officials to arrange for out-of-State care.

Unfortunately, those same parents are often met with burdensome requirements that can lead to significant delays for children in desperate need of care. In some cases, it can prevent access to care entirely.

Mr. Speaker, the Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act is urgently needed to eliminate this red tape and ensure that children receive appropriate, often lifesaving care that they deserve.

Mr. Speaker, to highlight the importance of getting this bipartisan legislation over the finish line, I highlight a story from a patient who was negatively impacted by the onerous and time-consuming Medicaid provider screening and enrollment process.

Almost 3 years ago, a baby, who I will name Lily, was born in a rural State with her esophagus in two separate segments and connected abnormally to her windpipe. Since this condition requires a particularly complicated procedure to correct it, doctors explained to the family that there are only two places in the country where it could be done. One of them was Boston Children's Hospital, in my home State of Massachusetts.

Mr. Speaker, like most parents, Lily's mom and dad were immediately ready to travel to Boston, where the surgeons were standing by to perform the lifesaving operation. Instead, Lily, who was a Medicaid recipient, was waiting for her home State to enroll the eight providers at Boston Children's Hospital who had the expertise to perform this complex surgery.

Her State, confused about the rules concerning out-of-State provider enrollment, wouldn't authorize the surgery that Lily desperately needed. Over the next 7 months, Lily's surgery was delayed and rescheduled over 3 times. As she waited, she lived with a floppy airway that could have collapsed at any moment.

Mr. Speaker, clearly the stakes are far too high to allow bureaucratic hurdles to stand in the way of urgent medical care for children like Lily. Failing to address this issue will have severe and far-reaching consequences, not only on children who are battling complications that could be addressed with immediate care, but also their families, who are forced to endure significant financial and emotional strain when the care is delayed.

What is worse is that these delays also lead to a greater reliance on emergency services and drive up overall healthcare costs.

Passage of the Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act is instrumental in fixing this issue. This bipartisan legislation will get us one step closer to ensuring that no child on Medicaid has to endure unnecessary delays when they need critical care outside of their home State.

That is why I am so grateful to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and in both Chambers who were instrumental in drafting the advancement of this legislation, including Congresswoman MILLER-MEEKS and Senators GRASSLEY and BENNET.

Mr. Speaker, that is why I urge Members on both sides of the aisle to join us in passing this strong, bipartisan, and potentially lifesaving legislation.

□ 1945

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I think we heard from Representative TRAHAN why this is so important. I urge all colleagues to vote for it on a bipartisan basis, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, this bipartisan, bicameral legislation is critical in making sure that kids have the access to lifesaving care that they need without burdensome overregulation.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage a "yes" vote on this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4758, 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 title XIX of the Social Security Act to streamline enrollment under the Medicaid program of certain providers across

State lines, and to prevent the use of abusive spread pricing in Medicaid."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

BOLD INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ALZHEIMER'S REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2024

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7218) to amend title III of the Public Health Service Act to extend the program for promotion of public health knowledge and awareness of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7218

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 "BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Reauthorization Act of 2024".

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF PROGRAM FOR PROMOTION OF PUBLIC HEALTH KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND RELATED DEMENTIAS.

Section 398B(e) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280c-5(e)) is amended by inserting "and \$33,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2029" before the period at the end.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Iowa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material into the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Iowa?

There was no objection.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7218, the Building Our Largest Dementia, or BOLD, Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Reauthorization Act of 2024, led by Representative BRETT GUTHRIE.

Nearly 7 million Americans, including my mother, aged 65 and older are currently living with Alzheimer's. By 2050, this number is projected to rise to 12.7 million. This means that over 10 percent of people over the age of 65 have Alzheimer's. Sadly, one in three seniors dies with Alzheimer's or another type of dementia.

The cost of this disease is also tremendous, with health and long-term care costs projected to reach \$360 billion in 2024. The BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Reauthorization would continue to support and strengthen programs and strategies to promote

brain health and improve outcomes for individuals living with Alzheimer's and related dementias and their caregivers.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7218, the BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Act, sponsored by Health Subcommittee Chairman GUTHRIE and Representative TONKO.

This bipartisan legislation would authorize funding for State and local programs that support their public health efforts to address Alzheimer's dementia in their communities.

Approximately 6.9 million Americans ages 65 or older are living with Alzheimer's dementia. Given the impact Alzheimer's has on those suffering from the disease and their families, it is critical we reauthorize funding for the BOLD Act to continue efforts to address this disease.

In 2018, the original BOLD Act was signed into law, which directed the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to build an Alzheimer's public health infrastructure to address the disease across the country. Since then, State and local public health departments have been able to build out Alzheimer's programs that focus on increasing early detection and diagnosis, risk reduction, prevention of avoidable hospitalizations, and supporting caregiving for dementia.

Now, thanks to the BOLD Act, our Nation has made significant strides in strengthening our Alzheimer's public health infrastructure. By passing this bill, we make a commitment to continue our progress in addressing Alzheimer's dementia.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" to reauthorize funding for the BOLD Act, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. GUTHRIE).

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my good friend from Iowa for yielding. I also appreciate her leadership on this issue. So many of the bills we are debating and talking about tonight under her leadership are complementing and bringing in her medical expertise to the Energy and Commerce Committee, particularly the Health Subcommittee.

Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight in support of my bill, H.R. 7218, the Building Our Largest Dementia, or BOLD, Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Reauthorization Act of 2024.

Nearly 7 million Americans aged 65 and older are currently living with Alzheimer's. I know my good friend from Iowa said her mother has dementia. I just lost my mother-in-law almost a year ago to Alzheimer's.

By 2050, this number is projected to rise to 12.7 million. This means that over 10 percent of people over the age of 65 have Alzheimer's. Sadly, one in

three seniors dies with Alzheimer's or another dementia.

The cost of this disease is tremendous, particularly in the human costs of what it does to families, what it does to the person suffering with Alzheimer's, the families' emotions, the exhaustion of dealing with this very emotional and difficult disease.

It is also tremendously costly, with long-term healthcare costs projected to reach \$360 billion in 2024 and nearly \$1 trillion in 2050, according to the Alzheimer's Association.

The BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Reauthorization Act would enable continued research into Alzheimer's disease, invest in caregiver support services, including more hands-on educational resources for those caregiving for their loved ones, and help support local efforts to detect and diagnose Alzheimer's disease sooner, especially for those in rural and medically underserved communities.

The more we know about this disease, the sooner we will be able to appropriately treat it, giving patients more precious time with their loved ones and easing the significant caregiver burdens associated with Alzheimer's and related dementias.

I look forward to continued progress in ushering in a new era of innovation. I appreciate the bipartisan action that the Energy and Commerce Committee has taken on this bill, and I appreciate everybody working together.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to continue to show bipartisan action by supporting the underlying bill.

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

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 7218, the BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Reauthorization Act of 2024.

As my colleagues have pointed out, this legislation reauthorizes programs to drive early screening and detection as well as research initiatives to help identify treatments and cures for Alzheimer's disease through 2029.

Alzheimer's is a cruel disease that attacks a person's quality of life. As a pharmacist, I saw firsthand the impact Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia have on patients, families, caregivers, and society overall.

People living with Alzheimer's lose their memories, their independence, their relationships, and, ultimately, their lives.

Beyond the patients, caregivers and loved ones endure immense emotional and financial difficulties.

With nearly 7 million Americans suffering with Alzheimer's, there is a critical need for Federal resources to prevent, treat, and ultimately find a cure for this devastating disease.

I am optimistic that the tide can be reversed. We now have FDA-approved

treatments to slow disease progression, and I think we all can agree that we look forward to the day the world has its first survivor of Alzheimer's.

Mr. Speaker, while great progress has been made and new therapies are advancing to help patients and caregivers, we cannot let up the fight.

In honor of those who have battled and continue to battle this disease, let's continue to work together to raise awareness and pass this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) will control the balance of time of the majority.

There was no objection.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, this is a bill that is very important. We know how important it is to address Alzheimer's, so I urge all of my colleagues to vote "yes," and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I urge support, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7218.

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.

MEDICAID PROVIDER SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 8112) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to further require certain additional provider screening under the Medicaid program, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8112

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

SECTION 1. MEDICAID PROVIDER SCREENING REQUIREMENTS.

Section 1902(kk)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(kk)(1)) is amended—

(1) by striking "The State" and inserting:

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The State"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

"(B) ADDITIONAL PROVIDER SCREENING.—Beginning January 1, 2027, as part of the enrollment (or reenrollment or revalidation of enrollment) of a provider or supplier under this title, and not less frequently than monthly during the period that such provider or supplier is so enrolled, the State conducts a check of any database or similar system developed pursuant to section 6401(b)(2) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to determine whether the Secretary has terminated the participation of such provider or supplier under title XVIII, or whether any other State has terminated the participation of such provider or supplier under

such other State's State plan under this title (or waiver of the plan), or such other State's State child health plan under title XXI (or waiver of the plan)."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material into the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 8112 is simple. We should not let bad actors that the Medicaid program has determined should not see seniors continue to see Medicaid patients.

Medicare may remove providers for a number of reasons, including felonies that take place in the Medicare program or putting its beneficiaries at immediate risk, such as a malpractice suit that results in conviction for criminal neglect.

For example, a doctor who has been found guilty of running a pill mill can be removed from being able to be paid by Medicare and Medicaid. Doctors that have been terminated are listed in the Data EXchange, or the DEX, a Federal database that monitors doctors who have been terminated from Medicare and Medicaid program, but currently, States are not required to check the DEX.

If a doctor breaks the law in one State and is removed from that State's Medicaid program, the doctor will be entered into the Data EXchange. However, if my home State isn't checking that, the doctor may set up a practice across the State line and be paid by Medicaid.

This bill is straightforward and would require States to check every month to ensure that bad actors aren't in our systems. I hope we can all agree that keeping bad actors and bad doctors out of Medicaid is in everyone's best interests.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 8112, legislation to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to further require certain additional provider screening under the Medicaid program.

This bill clarifies that States must regularly check a Federal database that identifies healthcare providers that have been revoked from Medicare

or terminated from States' Medicaid programs. It is important that States regularly take this step to identify providers who have been terminated from Medicare or Medicaid for reasons like fraudulent conduct or falsification of medical records. Once these bad actors are identified, States should take appropriate action against them.

This is yet another way that we can protect Americans against healthcare providers who don't have the best interests of their patients in mind.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me in voting "yes" on H.R. 8112, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. D'ESPOSITO).

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chair RODGERS for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge support for my bill, H.R. 8112, the Medicaid integrity act.

As it stands now, bad actor physicians are logged into the Data Exchange database, or the DEX, and prohibited from participating and billing Medicare, preventing them from further taking advantage of America's seniors.

Tragically, there exists no such protection for Americans on Medicaid, as States are not required to check the status of a provider's eligibility.

Americans who rely on Medicaid are among the most vulnerable populations in this Nation, and the adoption of my bill would implement additional protectors to do right by these vulnerable Americans.

I was sent to Congress by my neighbors in New York's Fourth Congressional District not to restrict or limit Medicare or Medicaid but to protect and expand these vital lifesaving programs. The legislation my colleagues will soon have an opportunity to vote on will do exactly that.

□ 2000

This 1½ page bill applies the same simple protections we use for Medicare to Medicaid, ensuring the physicians looking to make a quick buck on America's most vulnerable are prohibited from doing so.

This is a no-brainer. This no-brainer legislation strengthens Medicaid, ensuring its integrity, and makes good on America's promise to our vulnerable and elderly made nearly 60 years ago.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, again, what we are trying to do here, as the chair of the committee has said, is get rid of bad actors.

I think this is an effective way to do it, so I would hope everyone would join me on both sides of the aisle in voting "yes" on this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I encourage a "yes" vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) that the House suspend

the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8112, 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.

AUTISM COLLABORATION, ACCOUNTABILITY, RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND SUPPORT ACT OF 2024

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7213) to amend the Public Health Service Act to [enhance activities of the National Institutes of Health with respect to research on autism spectrum disorder and enhance programs relating to autism/reauthorize certain programs with respect to autism spectrum disorder?], and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7213

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 "Autism Collaboration, Accountability, Research, Education, and Support Act of 2024" or the "Autism CARES Act of 2024".

SEC. 2. NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH ACTIVITIES.

(a) EXPANSION OF ACTIVITIES.—Section 409C(a)(1) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 284g(a)(1)) is amended—

(1) by striking "()" shall, subject to the availability" and inserting the following: "()", in consultation with relevant Federal departments and agencies, as appropriate, shall—

"(A) subject to the availability";

(2) by striking "basic and clinical research in fields including pathology" and inserting the following: "basic and clinical research—

"(i) in fields, such as pathology";

(3) by striking "toxicology, and interventions" and inserting the following: "toxicology, psychiatry, psychology, developmental behavioral pediatrics, audiology, and gerontology; and

"(ii) on interventions";

(4) by striking "disorder. Such research shall investigate" and inserting the following: "disorder; and

"(B) ensure that research referred to in subparagraph (A)—

"(i) investigates";

(5) by striking "prevention, services across the lifespan, supports, intervention, and treatment of autism spectrum disorder" and inserting "prevention, services and supports across the lifespan, intervention, and treatment of autism spectrum disorder and co-occurring conditions"; and

(6) by striking "treatments." and inserting the following: "treatments;

"(ii) examines supports for caregivers; and

"(iii) reflects the entire population of individuals with autism spectrum disorder, including those individuals with co-occurring conditions and the full range of needs for supports and services, including such supports and services to ensure the safety, and promote the well-being, of such individuals.".

(b) CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE.—Section 409C(b) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 284g(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by striking "including the fields of" and inserting "in fields such as"; and

(B) by striking "behavioral psychology, and clinical psychology" and inserting "behavioral psychology, clinical psychology, and gerontology";

(2) in paragraph (5)(A), by striking "five" and inserting "seven"; and

(3) in paragraph (5)(B), by striking "period of not to exceed" and inserting "period not to exceed".

(c) PUBLIC INPUT.—Section 409C(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 284g(d)) is amended to read as follows:

"(d) PUBLIC INPUT.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall under subsection (a)(1) provide for means through which the public can obtain information on the existing and planned programs and activities of the National Institutes of Health with respect to autism spectrum disorder and through which the Director can receive comments from the public regarding such programs and activities.

"(2) GUIDANCE.—The Director may provide guidance to centers under subsection (b)(1) on strategies, activities, and opportunities to promote engagement with, and solicit input from, individuals with autism spectrum disorder and their family members, guardians, advocates or authorized representatives, providers, or other appropriate individuals to inform the activities of the center. Such strategies, activities, and opportunities should consider including, as appropriate, individuals, family members, and caregivers of individuals with autism spectrum disorder who represent the entire population of individuals with autism spectrum disorder, including those individuals with co-occurring conditions and the full range of needs for supports and services, including such supports and services to ensure the safety, and promote the well-being, of such individuals, to inform the activities of the center."

(d) BUDGET ESTIMATE.—Section 409C of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 284g) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(e) BUDGET ESTIMATE.—For each of fiscal years 2026 through 2029, the Director shall prepare and submit, directly to the President for review and transmittal to Congress, an annual budget estimate for the initiatives of the National Institutes of Health pursuant to the strategic plan developed under section 399CC(b)(5) and updated under section 399CC(b)(6)(B), after reasonable opportunity for comment (but without change) by the Secretary and the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee established under section 399CC."

SEC. 3. PROGRAMS RELATING TO AUTISM.

(a) DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SURVEILLANCE AND RESEARCH PROGRAM.—Section 399AA of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280i) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(3), by striking "an Indian tribe, or a tribal organization" and inserting "an Indian Tribe, or a Tribal organization";

(2) in subsection (b)(1), by inserting "across the lifespan" before the period at the end;

(3) in subsection (d)(1)—

(A) in the paragraph heading, by striking "TRIBE; TRIBAL" and inserting "TRIBE; TRIBAL";

(B) by striking "tribe" and inserting "Tribe"; and

(C) by striking "tribal" and inserting "Tribal"; and

(4) in subsection (e), by striking "2024" and inserting "2029".

(b) AUTISM EDUCATION, EARLY DETECTION, AND INTERVENTION.—Section 399BB of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280i-1) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(1), by striking “culturally competent information” and inserting “culturally and linguistically appropriate information”;

(2) in subsection (b)(2)—

(A) by striking “promote research” and inserting “promote research, which may include research that takes a community-based approach.”; and

(B) by striking “screening tools” each place it appears and inserting “screening and diagnostic tools”;

(3) in subsection (b)(3), by striking “at higher risk” and inserting “at increased likelihood”;

(4) in subsection (b)(4), by inserting “, which may give consideration to the perspectives of parents and guardians” before the semicolon at the end;

(5) in subsection (b)(7), by striking “at higher risk” and inserting “at increased likelihood”;

(6) in subsection (c)(1), by striking “culturally competent information” and inserting “culturally and linguistically appropriate information”;

(7) in subsection (c)(2)(A)(ii), by striking “culturally competent information” and inserting “culturally and linguistically appropriate information”;

(8) by amending paragraph (1) of subsection (e) to read as follows:

(9) in subsection (e)(1)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting “, and strengthen the capacity of,” after “expand”; and

(B) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) by striking “expand existing or develop new” and inserting “expand and strengthen the capacity of existing, or, in States that do not have such a program, develop new.”; and

(ii) by striking “(Act) in States that do not have such a program” and inserting “(Act)”;

(C) in subparagraph (B)(v), by inserting “or other providers, as applicable” before the semicolon at the end; and

(D) by amending subparagraph (C) to read as follows:

“(C) program sites—

“(i) provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services;

“(ii) take a multidisciplinary approach and have experience working with underserved populations; and

“(iii) identify opportunities to partner with community-based organizations to expand the capacity of communities to serve individuals with autism spectrum disorder or other developmental disabilities.”;

(10) in subsection (e)(2), by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of the Autism CARES Act of 2024, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate a report that examines the need for, and feasibility of, expanding the developmental-behavioral pediatrician training programs described in subparagraph (A).”;

(11) by amending subsection (f) to read as follows:

“(f) INTERVENTION.—The Secretary shall promote research through grants or contracts, which may include grants or contracts to research centers or networks, to—

“(1) develop and evaluate evidence-based practices and interventions to improve outcomes for individuals with autism spectrum disorder or other developmental disabilities by addressing physical and behavioral health and communication needs of such individuals across the lifespan;

“(2) develop guidelines for such evidence-based practices and interventions; and

“(3) disseminate information related to such evidence-based practices and interventions and guidelines.”; and

(12) in subsection (g), by striking “2024” and inserting “2029”.

(c) INTERAGENCY AUTISM COORDINATING COMMITTEE.—Section 399CC of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280i-2) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting “, on a regular basis” after “shall”;

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “develop a summary” and inserting “summarize”; and

(C) by striking paragraphs (5) and (6) and inserting the following:

“(5) develop a strategic plan for the conduct of, and support for, autism spectrum disorder research, as described in section 409C(a)(1), which shall include—

“(A) proposed budgetary requirements; and

“(B) recommendations to ensure that autism spectrum disorder research, and services and support activities to the extent practicable, of the Department of Health and Human Services and of other Federal departments and agencies are not unnecessarily duplicative; and

“(6) submit to the Congress and the President—

“(A) an annual update on the summary of advances described in paragraph (2); and

“(B) a biennial update on the strategic plan described in paragraph (5), including progress made in achieving the goals outlined in such strategic plan and any specific measures taken pursuant to such strategic plan.”; and

(2) in subsection (f), by striking “2024” and inserting “2029”.

(d) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Section 399DD of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280i-3) is amended—

(1) by striking “2019” each place it appears and inserting “2024”; and

(2) in subsection (a), by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 4 years after September 30, 2024, the Secretary, in consultation with other relevant Federal departments and agencies, shall prepare and submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives, and make publicly available, including through posting on the website of the Department of Health and Human Services, a progress report on activities related to autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities. Such report shall include activities and research related to the entire population of individuals with autism spectrum disorder, including those individuals with co-occurring conditions and the full range of needs for supports and services, including such supports and services to ensure the safety, and promote the well-being, of such individuals.”;

(3) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the heading of subsection (b), by striking “HEALTH AND WELL-BEING” and inserting “MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS”;

(B) in paragraph (1), by striking “health and well-being” and inserting “mental health needs”; and

(C) by amending paragraph (2) to read as follows:

“(2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall contain—

“(A) an overview of policies and programs relevant to the mental health of individuals with autism spectrum disorder across their lifespan, including an identification of existing Federal laws, regulations, policies, research, and programs; and

“(B) recommendations to improve mental health outcomes and address related dispari-

ties in mental health care for individuals with autism spectrum disorder, including prevention, care coordination, and community-based services.”;

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) UPDATE ON YOUNG ADULTS AND YOUTH TRANSITIONING TO ADULTHOOD.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Autism CARES Act of 2024, the Secretary, in coordination with other relevant Federal departments and agencies, as appropriate, shall prepare and submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate an update to the report required pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, as added by section 6 of the Autism CARES Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-157), and in effect before the date of enactment of the Autism CARES Act of 2019 (Public Law 116-60), concerning young adults with autism spectrum disorder and the challenges related to the transition from existing school-based services to those services available during adulthood.”.

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 399EE of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280i-4) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “\$23,100,000 for each of fiscal years 2020 through 2024” and inserting “\$28,100,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2029”;

(2) in subsection (b), by striking “\$50,599,000 for each of fiscal years 2020 through 2024” and inserting “\$56,344,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2029”;

(3) in subsection (c), by striking “there are authorized to be appropriated \$296,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2020 through 2024” and inserting “there is authorized to be appropriated \$306,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2029”.

SEC. 4. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO COMMUNICATION TOOLS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”) may, at the request of a State, Indian Tribe, Tribal organization, locality, or territory, provide training and technical assistance to such jurisdiction on the manner in which Federal funding administered by the Secretary may be used to provide individuals with autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities with access to evidence-based services, tools, and technologies that support communication needs.

(b) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Secretary shall annually prepare and submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report summarizing any technical assistance provided by the Secretary in the preceding fiscal year under subsection (a) and any advancements in the development or evaluation of such evidence-based services, tools, and technologies.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. 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 in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7213, the Autism Collaboration, Accountability, Research, Education, and Support Act, or the Autism CARES Act of 2024, led by Congressman CHRIS SMITH.

First, I am grateful for all the work that has been done and the tremendous leadership of Representative SMITH. He has been a fierce advocate and a leader on these issues for decades.

Autism affects an estimated 1 in 36 children in the United States with recent studies showing an increasing prevalence nationwide.

Research has also shown that early intervention and therapies often lead to positive outcomes later on in life for individuals with autism.

The Autism CARES Act of 2024 will reauthorize critical programs and activities and support autism research, services, training, and monitoring across the Federal Government.

Importantly, it also takes steps to ensure the public and all individuals within the autism community have an opportunity to engage in and are included in the research process and other activities related to autism spectrum disorder.

I appreciate the passionate engagement and support from stakeholders throughout this process, and I am really grateful that we are considering this bill on the floor tonight before the program's September 30 expiration.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7213, the bicameral, bipartisan bill to reauthorize the Autism CARES Act, which is sponsored by my colleague from New Jersey, CHRIS SMITH.

The Autism CARES Act, formerly known as the Combating Autism Act, is the primary source of Federal funding for autism research services, training, and monitoring.

Since 2006, this law has paved the way for incredible scientific developments. Research funded by the law has advanced diagnosis in young children 18 to 24 months of age and has helped identify timely interventions to make a lifetime difference in the care and treatment of individuals with autism spectrum disorder.

Another significant example of the act's success is the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Other Related Disabilities, or LEND program.

This program has trained nearly 22,000 interdisciplinary health professionals in autism screening and identification benchmarks to improve diagnosis and care.

These programs collectively provide diagnostic services to confirm or rule out autism or developmental disabilities to over 115,000 children.

In my home State of New Jersey, the prevalence of autism remains alarmingly high as the incidence of autism continues to grow nationally.

We are fortunate to have Rutgers University as the home of New Jersey's Autism Center for Excellence, leading the way on several important issues to the New Jersey autism community, including highlighting disparities in getting diagnosed, providing service programs to adults with autism spectrum disorder, and improving the lives of people who are living with this disorder. Progress has been made, but our work is far from over. We must continue supporting children, families, and caregivers throughout their lives.

I am pleased that through our bicameral, bipartisan negotiations, we are able to increase the number of NIH Centers of Excellence from five to seven.

We were also able to come to agreement on requiring more updated reporting for the Department of Health and Human Services on mental health needs among autism patients.

This will help provide better research and support for children transitioning to adulthood with autism and providing a technical assistance center to ensure evidence-based communication tools are available to patients with speech pathology or audiological challenges.

Now, I must say that I am disappointed that the current Speaker's protocol prevents us from providing the robust funding necessary to meet the implementing agency's projections for this law's 5-year reauthorization period. I feel the bicameral, bipartisan compromise before us is a strong product, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the prime sponsor and the champion of the legislation.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chair for her leadership on this important issue and so many other health issues that is making all the difference in the world.

This bill would not be on the floor today without her leadership. I thank Chairwoman CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS so very, very much for that leadership. I thank my good friend, FRANK PALLONE, for his strong support as well. I thank HENRY CUELLAR, who is the prime Democrat cosponsor.

Mr. Speaker, 61 Members of the House have cosponsored it. It is a totally bipartisan piece of legislation. ANNA ESHOO was not only a cosponsor but very helpful when we did Autism CARES of 2019. This builds on that and expands it and strengthens it going forward.

I also thank the staff. We know so much of the great hard work, the spade work, is done by the staff; Molly Brimmer, Kristin Fritsch, and Caitlin Wil-

son. I also thank John McDonough on my staff. I thought John would be here. He will be here in a moment. I thank Scott Badesch who worked for the Autism Society, who is now on our staff for a dozen years, and also worked for the United Way.

It is a great collaboration of great people all on behalf of helping those on the spectrum, those with severe autism, and, of course, the family members and friends who have such a heavy, heavy lift in caring for and loving because there are so many challenges.

Autism spectrum disorder, Mr. Speaker, is a neurodevelopmental condition characterized by persistent impairments in social communication and social interaction, as well as restricted and repetitive patterns of behavior, leading to difficulty in developing, maintaining, and understanding relationships with others.

If that is not enough, frequently accompanying autism are other co-occurring medical, behavioral, or mental health conditions, including gastrointestinal disorders, learning challenges, sleep disorders, feeding and eating issues, mental health challenges such as depression and anxiety, and sensory sensitivities that can lead to seizures.

In some cases, certain symptoms are co-occurring conditions that result in self-injurious behaviors that present complex challenges to parents and caregivers.

I point out for the record, Mr. Speaker, about 30 years ago, Bobbie and Billy Gallagher, parents of two children with autism, who were babies at the time, came into my office in Whiting, New Jersey, and said we need to do something. Nothing is really being done.

Sure enough, we found out that CDC was spending about \$287,000 a year for their entire program, straight line for 5 years.

I introduced legislation, the Energy and Commerce Committee incorporated it into the Children's Health Act, and that began this important rise in focus and providing the necessary resources to help those with autism to try to find a way of mitigating its impact on both the person with it as well as upon the family.

The Autism CARES Act is a comprehensive reauthorization and strengthening of the whole-of-government effort that we have been working on now for three decades.

We wouldn't be here today as well if it wasn't for the organizations. Several of them, and we all know them: Autism Speaks, the Association of University Centers on Disabilities, The Arc of the United States, Profound Autism Alliance, and the Autism Society, among many others, provided us useful and very informed thoughts and suggestions that are incorporated into this bill.

For the last 2 years, we have been meeting with them, again, trying to find out what needs to be done and

where there is overlap. We don't want to repeat things that don't need to be done.

I have learned so much about how well this is working under the IACC, which is the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee. They go overboard trying to prevent duplicative research so that we are not just spending money. We are trying to do it in a way that is very, very precise and very focused.

As the chairwoman a moment ago said, 1 in 36 children in the United States are on the spectrum. In my State, it is 1 in 35, so we are one of the top three in the country that have manifestations of autism. We need to do more on this.

The bill does also include the idea of the entirety of the age. No matter what age you are, if you have autism, we want to help and provide the necessary resources.

We started that last time, and it is making a difference. As my friend from New Jersey pointed out, it increases from five to seven the NIH Centers of Excellence. NIH does so much in every category to try to, again, help those.

Let me just remind my colleagues, and I will finish with this, that we now have the capability to detect autism as early as 18 months. Incredible advancements have been made in this area. Yet, the median age of diagnosis in the United States is not until 4 years of age. We are missing crucial early intervention opportunities by not identifying and then helping those who have it.

I urge passage, and again, I thank the chairwoman.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 7213, the Autism CARES Act of 2024, which reauthorizes and strengthens the autism spectrum disorder initiative through 2029.

The Autism CARES Act is the single most important driver of Federal investment in autism research and training programs over the past two decades.

It has led to improvements in early intervention services, a better understanding of the prevalence of autism, and a better understanding of the co-occurring health conditions that autistic people experience.

Importantly, it has also been responsible for thousands of future health professionals being trained on how to screen, diagnose, and provide interventions to autistic people and other individuals with neurodevelopmental disabilities to improve their health and well-being.

Thanks to the Autism CARES Act, many health professionals are better

equipped to meet the ever-changing and diverse needs of autistic people and other people with neurodevelopmental disabilities.

This bill will ensure ongoing support by NIH of research at institutions like the Marcus Autism Center in Atlanta and the Georgia LEND program at Georgia State University.

Located in my home State of Georgia within Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, the Marcus Autism Center is one of the largest organizations in the country that blends research on autism with providing clinical services for children on the autism spectrum and their families.

I thank Representative CHRIS SMITH for working on this important issue, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

□ 2015

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I believe the gentlewoman has some additional speakers. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MOLINARO).

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I am certainly grateful to Representative CHRIS SMITH for his leadership.

The Autism CARES Act has made an immeasurable difference in the lives of countless Americans living with either autism, neurodivergence themselves or the family members who support them.

The massive investment made by this Federal Government in research, education, and intervention has not only ensured great advancement in how we diagnose, treat, and assist those living on the autism spectrum, but it has helped to bring dignity to their lives.

I join my colleagues in advocating for the bill. I certainly support the legislation. I do so as a Member of Congress, but I also do so as a father of an adult living on the autism spectrum. I cannot tell you the struggle, the challenge that families like ours and certainly individuals like my daughter have had to face.

Thanks to the Autism CARES Act originally adopted some years ago, now reauthorized, every step along the way we now have a partner in providing and ensuring that those caregivers, those who interact, those who provide care have the tools and the resources necessary to provide dignity and opportunity to her life.

On behalf of my daughter, Abigail Faith Molinaro, I join my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and encourage support for the Autism CARES Act reauthorization.

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

Again, I would say we can see this is a very important piece of legislation dealing with autism spectrum disorder, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support it.

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

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I encourage a "yes" vote on this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7213, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mrs. RODGERS. 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.

MEDICARE AND MEDICAID FRAUD PREVENTION ACT OF 2024

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 8089) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require certain additional provider screening under the Medicaid program, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8089

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 "Medicare and Medicaid Fraud Prevention Act of 2024".

SEC. 2. MEDICAID PROVIDER SCREENING REQUIREMENTS.

Section 1902(kk)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a(kk)(1)) is amended—

(1) by striking "The State" and inserting:

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The State"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

"(B) ADDITIONAL PROVIDER SCREENING.—Beginning January 1, 2027, as part of the enrollment (or reenrollment or revalidation of enrollment) of a provider or supplier under this title, and not less frequently than quarterly during the period that such provider or supplier is so enrolled, the State conducts a check of the Death Master File (as such term is defined in section 203(d) of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013) to determine whether such provider or supplier is deceased."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 8089, the Medicare and Medicaid Fraud Prevention Act is a straightforward bill, and I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. MIKE GARCIA) for putting forth this proposal.

The bill would require States to regularly check the Social Security Administration's Death Master File for doctors who are enrolled in their Medicaid programs and to remove the doctors who are already dead. It almost sounds silly, but it can be quite serious.

When a doctor dies, their national provider identification, or NPI, is not immediately deactivated. The NPI of the deceased physician is low-hanging fruit for a hacker to steal and start billing Medicaid with. This can go on for a long time if no one is checking for suspicious activity.

To address waste, fraud, and abuse, States will need to be an active partner. Removing deceased doctors from a State's Medicaid program is a simple step States can take.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 8089, the Medicare and Medicaid Fraud Prevention Act, sponsored by Representatives MIKE GARCIA and PETERS.

H.R. 8089 would clarify that State Medicaid agencies must check that a healthcare provider has not passed away as part of a provider's enrollment and revalidation of enrollment in the Medicaid program. States must perform this check using the Social Security Administration's Death Master File. This is the same system that H.R. 8084, the LIVE Beneficiaries Act, would require States to use in order to ensure deceased Medicaid enrollees do not remain enrolled in the program. We will also be discussing that bill today.

Ensuring that States check this file helps to identify and prevent waste and, in the case of providers, fraudulent activity of individuals who may attempt to use the identity of a deceased healthcare provider.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to vote "yes" on this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MIKE GARCIA).

Mr. MIKE GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank Madam Chair for her leadership on these very important issues.

Since day one of representing my constituents of the beautiful 27th Congressional District in the Halls of Congress, I promised to never vote to cut Social Security, Medicare, or Medicaid. In fact, I have been committed to improving or fortifying these programs throughout my time in the House of Representatives. It is with this commitment in mind that I rise today in support of my bill H.R. 8089, the Medicare and Medicaid Fraud Prevention Act.

In these hyperpartisan times, it feels harder than ever to find issues where Republicans and Democrats can come together to find commonsense solutions to help American families and help their lives in what is otherwise a very tumultuous period. That is why I am grateful for the partnership of my fellow Californian, Representative SCOTT PETERS, who was the co-lead for this very important bill.

I also extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Chairwoman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, as well as the staff of Chair RODGERS. Her leadership has been unprecedented in this Chamber. For everything that she has done, I thank her.

Mr. Speaker, I have long said that programs like Social Security and Medicare are, literally, contracts between the government and its citizens. The American people need the government to uphold their end of the contract by paying into and supporting these programs. The American people, literally, are giving their money into these programs and in exchange expect the government to return that money to them on the back side.

Congress must uphold our end by ensuring these programs remain viable and accessible to those who need them. That includes paying out benefits in full to those who earned them, which is why it is so important that Congress prioritize repealing things like the windfall elimination program and other provisions of Social Security by passing bills like H.R. 82, which I am proud to support and hopefully we can bring to the floor for a vote, as well.

Part of this commitment is ensuring that these programs remain solvent for years to come. That is exactly what this bill does. This bill will save Medicare and Medicaid millions of dollars over time by implementing a commonsense measure to ensure that fraudsters and scammers don't, literally, steal dead doctors' credentials to bill Medicare and Medicaid for services that they never provided. Our seniors and Americans deserve to have the funds in these programs used for them, not for scammers and fraudsters.

This is not just about combating fraud. It is about honoring our commitment to programs like Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security. These are programs that countless Americans rely on and deserve to be protected. I am proud to support them, and I will continue to support and never cut Medicare or Social Security. I once again urge support for my bill.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close. I urge all my colleagues to vote for this bill. It is obviously very important to prevent any kind of fraud in the Medicare and Medicaid programs. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I also encourage a "yes" vote on the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8089, 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.

LEVERAGING INTEGRITY AND VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR BENEFICIARIES ACT

Mrs. RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 8084) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to verify certain eligibility criteria for individuals enrolled for medical assistance quarterly, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8084

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 "Leveraging Integrity and Verification of Eligibility for Beneficiaries Act" or the "LIVE Beneficiaries Act".

SEC. 2. VERIFICATION OF CERTAIN ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR INDIVIDUALS ENROLLED FOR MEDICAL ASSISTANCE.

Section 1902 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (86), by striking ";" and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in paragraph (87)(D), by striking the period at the end and inserting ";" and;

(C) by inserting after paragraph (87)(D) the following new paragraph:

"(88) provide that the State shall comply with the eligibility verification requirements under subsection (uu), except that this paragraph shall apply only in the case of the 50 States and the District of Columbia."; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(uu) VERIFICATION OF CERTAIN ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of subsection (a)(88), the eligibility verification requirements, beginning January 1, 2026, are as follows:

"(A) QUARTERLY SCREENING TO VERIFY ENROLLEE STATUS.—The State shall, not less frequently than quarterly, review the Death Master File (as such term is defined in section 203(d) of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013) to determine whether any individuals enrolled for medical assistance under the State plan (or waiver of such plan) are deceased.

"(B) DISENROLLMENT UNDER STATE PLAN.—If the State determines, based on information obtained from the Death Master File, that an individual enrolled for medical assistance under the State plan (or waiver of such plan) is deceased, the State shall—

"(i) treat such information as factual information confirming the death of a beneficiary for purposes of section 431.213(a) of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation);

"(ii) disenroll such individual from the State plan (or waiver of such plan); and

"(iii) discontinue any payments for medical assistance under this title made on behalf of such individual (other than payments for any items or services furnished to such individual prior to the death of such individual).

"(C) REINSTATEMENT OF COVERAGE IN THE EVENT OF ERROR.—If a State determines that an

individual was misidentified as deceased based on information obtained from the Death Master File, and was erroneously disenrolled from medical assistance under the State plan (or waiver of such plan) based on such misidentification, the State shall immediately reenroll such individual under the State plan (or waiver of such plan), retroactive to the date of such disenrollment.

“(2) *RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.*—Nothing under this subsection shall be construed to preclude the ability of a State to use other electronic data sources to timely identify potentially deceased beneficiaries, so long as the State is also in compliance with the requirements of this subsection (and all other requirements under this title relating to Medicaid eligibility determination and redetermination).”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, according to the HHS Office of Inspector General, States pay hundreds of millions per year to Medicaid-managed care organizations to care for beneficiaries who have passed away.

It feels almost impossible to believe that precious Medicaid dollars intended to help pregnant women, children, and those in need would instead go to insurance companies to help manage care for people who are already deceased. Yet, it is happening.

H.R. 8084 will hopefully change this by requiring States to check the Social Security Administration's Death Master File every quarter to identify individuals still enrolled in the State's Medicaid program who are deceased. This is a commonsense solution that will better serve the people Medicaid is intended to help. I encourage my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 8084, the LIVE Beneficiaries Act, sponsored by Representatives CRAIG and BILIRAKIS.

This bipartisan bill would require State Medicaid agencies to use the database managed by the Social Security Administration to identify people who have passed away yet remain enrolled in the Medicaid program.

In recent years, the Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General has identified payments made by States to Medicaid-managed care plans for people who had already passed away.

H.R. 8084 would help to prevent this wasteful spending by requiring States to check the Social Security Administration's Death Master File on a quarterly basis at a minimum and to disenroll anyone who is deceased before any additional payments can be made inadvertently on their behalf.

Importantly, though, H.R. 8084 includes protections to ensure that in the rare circumstance an individual is falsely identified as deceased, the State must reinstate the person's coverage retroactive to the date that the person was improperly disenrolled.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in voting “yes” on this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), the subcommittee chair of the Innovation, Data, and Commerce Subcommittee of Energy and Commerce, and the prime sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chair for giving me the opportunity to speak. She has done such an outstanding job as chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee. We are so very fortunate. She thinks of her constituents and the American people as a whole first, and we really appreciate her service.

I rise in strong support of my bill, H.R. 8084, the Leveraging Integrity and Verification of Eligibility, or the LIVE Beneficiaries Act.

I am grateful to have worked in a bipartisan fashion alongside Representative CRAIG, and I thank her for her support of this commonsense bill focused on Medicaid program integrity and preventing fraud, waste, and abuse to save taxpayer dollars.

Our legislation requires CMS to ensure that States are certifying, at least on a quarterly basis, that enrollees are not listed on the Social Security Administration's Death Master File database. We also include a provision to give States the ability to check other death records to make sure Medicaid beneficiaries are not deceased.

I mean, what we want is to save money for our senior citizens and those who need Medicaid, as well. This is a good bill. Unfortunately, it is a must-pass bill. It shouldn't have to happen, but we are going to save dollars, and we are going to take care of this with this particular bill.

We also require immediate disenrollment of beneficiaries should they verify the death of Medicaid enrollees. This repeals the current CMS guidance that forced States to collect additional information about their beneficiaries to ensure their records are correct.

CMS has started to recognize this problem and take some administrative steps with States but not enough. This bill will help ensure we are abiding by good governance standards in statute. We know that too often fraudulent,

wasteful payments occur in the Medicaid and Medicare programs, and we should continue to find ways to cut down and save taxpayer dollars wherever possible.

Again, the money is intended to go to our seniors and those who are on Medicaid. That is what we are doing with this bill. I commend Representative GARCIA for his bill, as well. I also thank the chairman and the ranking member. I ask my colleagues to support H.R. 8084.

□ 2030

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. Speaker, again, this is a bill that addresses wasteful spending, and I think it is important for us to make sure we support it on a bipartisan basis.

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

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I urge a “yes” vote on this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8084, 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.

REAUTHORIZATION OF LIFESPAN RESPITE CARE PROGRAM

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6160) to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a lifespan respite care program, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6160

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

SECTION 1. REAUTHORIZATION OF LIFESPAN RESPITE CARE PROGRAM.

Section 2905 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300ii-4) is amended by striking “fiscal years 2020 through fiscal year 2024” and inserting “fiscal years 2025 through 2029”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. 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 in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6160, led by Mr. MOLINARO, which reauthorizes the Lifespan Respite Care Program administered by the Administration For Community Living.

This program helps support State systems to provide community-based respite care services to family caregivers tending to children and adults with disabilities and chronic conditions.

There are about 53 million family caregivers in the United States, more than 5 million who are parents or guardians caring for children with special healthcare needs.

Many family caregivers have unmet respite needs, and studies show that increasing respite accessibility can decrease burnout rates and help individuals continue caregiving.

Reauthorizing the Lifespan Respite Care Program will continue vital resources for family caregivers so they can operate at their highest potential.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6160, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the Lifespan Respite Care Program led by Representatives MOLINARO and CÁRDENAS.

There are more than 53 million family caregivers in the United States. For many, caregiving is a 24/7 job. While it can be very rewarding, it can also be emotionally and physically challenging. Respite care, the opportunity to temporarily entrust the care of loved ones to someone else, is one of the most frequently reported unmet needs of caregivers. Respite care can be provided in a variety of settings, including the home, adult daycare centers, or residential care facilities.

By providing temporary relief for caregivers, respite care helps to reduce the mental stress and physical health issues that caregivers might experience. In doing so, respite care also decreases the need for professional long-term care and allows people who require care to remain at home.

This bill reauthorizes the Lifespan Respite Care Program operated by the Administration for Community Living. This program empowers State systems to provide accessible community-based respite care services which can contribute to the health and well-being of both caregivers and care recipients.

This important program provides much-needed relief to caregivers and helps to improve the availability of respite services to families across the age and disability spectrums.

I encourage all my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 6160, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gen-

tleman from New York (Mr. MOLINARO), the prime sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairwoman not only for her leadership but for her support of this legislation as well.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 6160, the Lifespan Respite Care Reauthorization Act.

As we know, over 48 million Americans are caring for someone over the age of 18. Recent reports from the AARP have shown that caregivers have reported increases in stress levels and a decline in overall health.

Respite services offer families much-needed temporary care or supervision for children and adults of all ages with disabilities and chronic illnesses.

As the parent of an adult child with a developmental disability, I know firsthand the value of respite care. Having interacted with many respite care workers, I know how important their work is and how they deserve greater respect and more support.

My bill authorizes the Lifespan Respite Care Program through fiscal year 2029 to provide States with Federal funding to continue to offer these essential services and provide relief to our caregivers.

Authorized by Congress in 2006, the Lifespan Respite Care Program has been a lifeline for our caregivers and provides them with critical assistance so they can recharge and meet their family's needs.

Family caregivers are often the unsung heroes who make personal sacrifices to care for their loved ones. I am proud to work alongside my colleagues to pass this bipartisan Lifespan Respite Care Reauthorization Act and continue to provide caregivers with relief and assistance so they can lead a balanced life while tending to their loved ones.

I would like to extend my appreciation to Congressman CÁRDENAS for his support of this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support this common-sense bipartisan bill.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to the time remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New Jersey has 18½ minutes remaining.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, let me just say that respite care is obviously very important, and this bill goes a long way toward dealing with that. I would ask all my colleagues to support it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I urge a "yes" vote on this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6160, 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.

POISON CONTROL CENTERS REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2024

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 4351) to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain poison control programs.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 4351

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 "Poison Control Centers Reauthorization Act of 2024".

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF POISON CONTROL PROGRAMS.

(a) NATIONAL TOLL-FREE NUMBER AND OTHER COMMUNICATION CAPABILITIES.—Section 1271(c) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300d-71(c)) is amended by striking "fiscal years 2020 through 2024" and inserting "fiscal years 2025 through 2029".

(b) PROMOTING POISON CONTROL CENTER UTILIZATION.—Section 1272(c) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300d-72(c)) is amended by striking "fiscal years 2020 through 2024" and inserting "fiscal years 2025 through 2029".

(c) POISON CONTROL CENTER GRANT PROGRAM.—Section 1273(g) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300d-73(g)) is amended by striking "fiscal years 2020 through 2024" and inserting "fiscal years 2025 through 2029".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. 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 in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 4351, the Poison Control Centers Reauthorization Act of 2024. I thank Mrs. CHAVEZ-DEREMER, the sponsor of H.R. 7251, the House bill passed unanimously by the Energy and Commerce Committee. We applaud her leadership on this important bill and on the reauthorization of this program.

The Poison Control Network Program supports local poison centers to ensure that they can provide 24/7 access to specially trained providers, physicians, or toxicology experts, to provide guidance on possible poisoning and toxic exposures.

This reauthorization will help continue to provide resources for the Poison Help Line, which is a toll-free number for people to access trained experts.

It also renews funding for a nationwide media campaign to spread awareness for the Poison Help Line and disseminate best practices for poison prevention.

In fiscal year 2021, the most common poisonings reported were related to medications such as nonprescription fentanyl. This category is the most common poisoning that resulted in death for both adults and children.

In fact, children under the age of 6 were involved in almost half of all calls to local poison centers.

Poison centers play a critical role in helping to curb the rates of poisonings and toxic exposures. Reauthorizing this program will ensure local centers receive the resources they need to educate their communities and be available to help patients in need.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 4351, the Poison Control Centers Reauthorization Act.

Each year, there are over 2 million cases of people being exposed to poison in the United States. There are many substances implicated in poison exposures, from pain medications to cleaning substances to cosmetics and personal care products.

The incidence of poison exposure is highest in children under the age of 6, but poisoning affects all age groups, from infants to seniors.

This is why Congress funds poison control centers to serve all 50 States and U.S. territories, as well as the National Poison Help Line that connects callers with the poison control center serving their area. These centers help with poison emergencies and provide information to prevent poisonings. They serve as critical lifelines that provide all Americans with expert advice 24/7, 365 days a year, at no cost.

Over 70 percent of callers to poison control centers get the help they need over the phone and do not need to go to a hospital. Even healthcare professionals utilize poison control centers in emergencies.

The Poison Control Centers Reauthorization Act will reauthorize poison control programs, including the National Poison Hotline, programs to raise awareness of poison control centers, and direct funding for those centers. These important programs are essential to getting people the help they need in poison emergencies.

I thank Representatives CHAVEZ-DEMER, DAVIS, JOYCE, and CHERFILUS-McCORMICK for their work on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all of my colleagues to vote "yes" on S. 4351, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER), a subcommittee chair on the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Poison Control Centers Reauthorization Act of 2024.

As my colleagues have pointed out, this legislation reauthorizes the national network of poison control centers. These centers are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to provide free and confidential assistance with emergencies and other information to help prevent poisoning.

In fact, the Georgia Poison Center is a critical resource in Georgia, responding to over 80,000 calls last year alone. Poison control centers are also essential to combating the opioid and fentanyl crisis, because not only are these centers often the first resource people seek after an opioid overdose occurs, but they also collect real-time data to alert impacted communities about opioid abuse and misuse.

With the rise of illicit fentanyl poisonings across the country, we must prioritize these centers and support them to protect our families and communities.

Ensuring the reauthorization of these poison control centers will be another step in the right direction to combat the rise of illicit opioids that continues to plague our communities.

I would like to commend my colleagues for their continued leadership on this bipartisan legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

□ 2045

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, obviously, it is important for us to reauthorize these poison control programs and the centers. I urge my colleagues to support this on a bipartisan basis, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I encourage a "yes" vote on this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 4351.

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.

DEONDRA DIXON INCLUDE PROJECT ACT OF 2024

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7406) to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out a program of research, training, and investigation related to Down syndrome, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7406

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 "DeOndra Dixon INCLUDE Project Act of 2024".

SEC. 2. DOWN SYNDROME RESEARCH.

Part A of title IV of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 281 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 404P. DOWN SYNDROME RESEARCH.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the Office of the Director of NIH, and in consultation with other Federal agencies and partners, shall carry out a program of research, training, and investigation related to Down syndrome to be known as the 'INvestigation of Co-occurring conditions across the Lifespan to Understand Down syndromE Project' or the 'INCLUDE Project'.

"(b) PROGRAM ELEMENTS.—The program under subsection (a) shall include research, training, and investigation related to—

"(1) high-risk, high reward basic science studies of the effects of chromosome 21 on human development and health;

"(2) assembling and maintaining a large study population of individuals with Down syndrome;

"(3) expanding the number of clinical trials that are inclusive of, or expressly for, individuals with Down syndrome, including novel biomedical and pharmacological interventions and other therapies designed to promote or enhance activities of daily living;

"(4) the biological mechanisms in individuals with Down syndrome responsible for structural and functional anomalies in cells, tissues, and organs, cognitive and behavioral dysfunction, and stunted growth;

"(5) the identification of biomarkers for the detection of risk factors, diagnosis, and customized interventions and treatments for conditions co-occurring with Down syndrome;

"(6) why several co-occurring conditions, such as Alzheimer's Disease and autoimmunity, are prevalent in individuals with Down syndrome and how such conditions can be treated concurrently with Down syndrome; and

"(7) improving the quality of life of individuals with Down syndrome and their families.

"(c) COORDINATION; PRIORITIZING NON-DUPLICATIVE RESEARCH.—The Secretary shall ensure that—

"(1) the programs and activities of the institutes, centers, agencies, and offices of the National Institutes of Health relating to Down Syndrome and co-occurring conditions are coordinated, including through the Division of Program Coordination, Planning, and Strategic Initiatives under sections 402(b)(7) and 402A(c); and

"(2) such institutes, centers, agencies, and offices prioritize, as appropriate, Down syndrome research that does not duplicate existing research activities of the National Institutes of Health.

"(d) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall provide technical assistance to grantees and other involved entities, as appropriate, for carrying out activities pursuant to this section.

"(e) BIENNIAL REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall submit, on a biennial basis, to the Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate, a report that catalogs the research conducted or supported under this section.

"(2) CONTENTS.—Each report under paragraph (1) shall include—

"(A) identification of the institute, center, agency, office, or entity involved;

"(B) a statement of whether the research is or was being carried out directly by the institute, center, agency, office, or entity or by multiple

institutes, centers, agencies, offices, or entities; and

“(C) identification of any resulting real world evidence that is or may be used for clinical research and medical care for patients with Down syndrome.

“(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—To carry out this section, there is authorized to be appropriated \$90,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2029.

“(2) SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT.—Funds appropriated to carry out this section shall be used to supplement, not supplant, other funds allocated by the National Institutes of Health for research and other activities relating to Down syndrome.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. 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 the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 7406, the DeOndra Dixon INCLUDE Project Act of 2024, which I have led alongside my colleagues DIANA DEGETTE, TOM COLE, ROSA DELAURO, PETE STAUBER, and ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON.

As many know, one of my primary missions here in Congress has been to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities. It is deeply personal to me.

Our son, Cole, was born with that extra 21st chromosome, and for the past 17 years, I have seen the world through his eyes. It has made me a better mom and a better legislator.

When the INCLUDE Project was established in 2018, Down syndrome was among one of the least studied and funded genetic conditions at NIH despite being the most common chromosome abnormality, affecting 1 in every 700 babies.

Individuals with Down syndrome also have an increased risk of common diseases and medical conditions, such as cardiac issues, autoimmune conditions, and an early onset Alzheimer's-type dementia, which means the value of this research is hardly limited to the Down syndrome community. It has the potential to provide benefits to millions of people battling other conditions, as well.

The INCLUDE Project has made great strides, funding over 200 research awards, producing at least 600 publications, and helping to coordinate Down syndrome research and resources at over 20 institutes and centers.

H.R. 7406 will help us take Down syndrome research to new heights and

usher in a new era of breakthroughs to ensure that every person with Down syndrome and their families have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in support of H.R. 7406, the DeOndra Dixon INCLUDE Project Act, sponsored by Chair RODGERS and Representatives DEGETTE, COLE, HOLMES NORTON, and others.

This bill would reauthorize for 5 years funding for the INvestigation of Co-occurring conditions across the Lifespan to Understand Down syndrome. It is known as the INCLUDE Project at the National Institutes of Health.

This bill is named in honor of DeOndra Dixon, a lifelong advocate for the Down syndrome community. DeOndra was born with Down syndrome and was a tireless advocate for those with the disease. She was an awardee of the 2009 Quincy Jones Exceptional Advocacy Award and a 2011 ambassador for the Quincy Jones Exceptional Advocacy Award.

Sadly, DeOndra passed away in October 2020, but her memory lives on with her loved ones and the many people who she helped throughout her years of advocacy.

H.R. 7406 honors her legacy by continuing to support and fund Down syndrome research through the NIH.

Since its launch in 2018, the INCLUDE Project at NIH has been a key mechanism to fund Down syndrome research. In my district, Rutgers University received funding from the INCLUDE Project to study the predisposition people with Down syndrome have for Alzheimer's disease.

Studies like these help the scientific community better understand the disease and ensure those diagnosed with Down syndrome can live life to their fullest potential. This legislation would reauthorize funding for the program for 5 years and ensure that we continue to make progress in Down syndrome research.

I thank Chair RODGERS for her leadership on this issue. She has been a champion for people living with disabilities, and her advocacy for the INCLUDE program demonstrates that ongoing commitment.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to vote “yes” to reauthorize this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER), the dad of Isaac, most importantly.

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairwoman RODGERS for her support and steadfast leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak not just as a Member of Congress but as a father to a 22-year-old young man

with Down syndrome. My son is a living testament to the fact that his value and his potential extend far beyond any limitations imposed by his disability.

Society must never devalue any human life for a perceived flaw or defect. For too long, our society did just that with how it viewed and treated people with Down syndrome, but when we stopped sending people to institutions and started providing proper medical care, such as surgery for those with a congenital heart defect, we saw their life spans increase beyond what doctors told society was possible.

The DeOndra Dixon INCLUDE Project Act is a critical step toward advancing our understanding of Down syndrome and improving the quality of life for those living with it.

Named in honor of DeOndra Dixon, whose life exemplified resilience and excellence, this bill seeks to advance our collective effort to ensure that every individual, regardless of their circumstance, receives the respect and care they deserve.

This legislation will provide crucial statutory authority for an essential research initiative under the National Institutes of Health. The INCLUDE Project dedicated to this cause will benefit from solidified funding and framework.

This bill would enable sustained and coordinated efforts to address not only the primary characteristics of Down syndrome but also the occurring conditions that can impact individuals' health and well-being, such as Alzheimer's disease, which was previously mentioned.

Individuals with Down syndrome have a completely different disease spectrum than that of the general population, predisposing them to many conditions but protecting them from others.

INCLUDE allows for more specialized research, which will lead people with Down syndrome to live even longer, better lives, and it will create breakthroughs in identifying treatments and cures for some of the most devastating diseases that affect people like you and me.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my fellow Members to join me in voting “yes” on the DeOndra Dixon INCLUDE Project Act. Let us stand together to support this important initiative and ensure that scientific advancements lead to tangible improvements in the lives of individuals with Down syndrome.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, this is such an important bill that does research on not only Down syndrome but other conditions, and I urge my colleagues to support it on a bipartisan basis. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7406, 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.

SUPPORTING AND IMPROVING RURAL EMS NEEDS REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 265) to reauthorize the rural emergency medical service training and equipment assistance program, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 265

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 “Supporting and Improving Rural EMS Needs Reauthorization Act” or the “SIREN Reauthorization Act”.

SEC. 2. RURAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Section 330J of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254c-15) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration (referred to in this section as the ‘Secretary’)” and inserting “the Assistant Secretary.”;

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (C), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following:

“(E) ensure emergency medical services personnel are trained on mental health and substance use disorders and care for individuals with such disorders in emergency situations; and”;

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (B), by striking “; or” and inserting a semicolon;

(ii) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period and inserting “; or”;

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(D) acquire drugs or devices approved, cleared, or otherwise legally marketed under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act for emergency treatment of known or suspected overdose.”;

(3) by striking subsection (f);

(4) by redesignating subsection (g) as subsection (f);

(5) in subsection (f)(1), as so redesignated, by striking “2019 through 2023” and inserting “2024 through 2028”;

(6) by redesignating such section 330J as section 553 of the Public Health Service Act; and

(7) by transferring such section 553, as so redesignated, to appear at the end of part D of title V of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290dd et seq.).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. 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 the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 265, the SIREN Reauthorization Act.

EMS agencies play a critical role within our healthcare system, especially in rural areas where they may be the only provider for miles. More than half of rural EMS agencies are staffed solely by volunteers and oftentimes must raise their own funds just to continue operating.

The SIREN Reauthorization Act would continue vital resources for the Rural Emergency Medical Services Training program, which helps support local EMS agencies with recruitment and training efforts as well as purchasing equipment, including overdose reversal medication.

First responders are on the front lines of the opioid epidemic and must be able to properly acquire and administer overdose reversal medications to help save lives and prevent overdose deaths.

Reauthorizing this program is crucial to help bolster the rural health workforce.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of S. 265, the Supporting and Improving Rural EMS Needs Reauthorization Act, or the SIREN Reauthorization Act.

First created in 2018, the SIREN Act created a grant program for public and nonprofit emergency medical services, agencies, and fire departments in rural areas to support the recruitment, retention, education, and equipping of EMS personnel.

Administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, SAMHSA, this grant program has become a key partner to rural communities to ensure their EMS systems have funding for the most basic of operations. These grants go beyond brick-and-mortar assistance by helping rural EMS agencies better train and recruit staff, acquire new equipment, and develop new ways to educate EMS personnel.

These grants have provided critical funding to assist acquiring medication, medical supplies, increasing basic and advanced life support, and even replacing older response vehicles with newer or safer models.

In communities where the nearest hospital or trauma center is several

towns away, the small-town or frontier EMS workers are often the lifeline for patients in critical and vulnerable States. It is imperative that they have the Federal support they need to carry out this very important mission without interruption.

I thank Representatives DINGELL and JOYCE for their leadership in the House and their companion legislation, H.R. 4646, which passed the House in May. I also thank Chair RODGERS and subcommittee Chair GUTHRIE for their collaboration to ensure this program continues to receive the bipartisan support that it so well deserves.

Mr. Speaker, I urge that we support this bill to help rural EMS services. It is so important in rural areas, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I encourage a “yes” vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 265.

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.

□ 2100

SUPPORTING PATIENT EDUCATION AND KNOWLEDGE ACT OF 2024

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6033) to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a task force to improve access to health care information technology for non-English speakers, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6033

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 “Supporting Patient Education And Knowledge Act of 2024” or the “SPEAK Act of 2024”.

SEC. 2. GUIDANCE ON FURNISHING SERVICES VIA TELEHEALTH TO INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with 1 or more entities from each of the categories described in paragraphs (1) through (7) of subsection (b), shall issue and disseminate, or update and revise as applicable, guidance for the entities described in such subsection on the following:

(1) Best practices on facilitating and integrating use of interpreters during a telemedicine appointment.

(2) Best practices on providing accessible instructions on how to access telecommunications systems (as such term is used for purposes of section 1834(m) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m(m)) for individuals with limited English proficiency.

(3) Best practices on improving access to digital patient portals for individuals with limited English proficiency.

(4) Best practices on integrating the use of video platforms that enable multi-person video calls furnished via a telecommunications system for purposes of providing interpretation during a telemedicine appointment for an individual with limited English proficiency.

(5) Best practices for providing patient materials, communications, and instructions in multiple languages, including text message appointment reminders and prescription information.

(b) ENTITIES DESCRIBED.—For purposes of subsection (a), an entity described in this subsection is an entity in 1 or more of the following categories:

(1) Health information technology service providers, including—

(A) electronic medical record companies;
(B) remote patient monitoring companies; and
(C) telehealth or mobile health vendors and companies.

(2) Health care providers, including—

(A) physicians; and
(B) hospitals.

(3) Health insurers.

(4) Language service companies.

(5) Interpreter or translator professional associations.

(6) Health and language services quality certification organizations.

(7) Patient and consumer advocates, including such advocates that work with individuals with limited English proficiency.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. 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 in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6033, the Supporting Patient Education And Knowledge Act, or SPEAK Act, of 2024, led by Congresswoman MICHELLE STEEL.

Mrs. STEEL's legislation will make telehealth more accessible for patients with limited English proficiency. Telehealth became widely used during the COVID-19 public health emergency with as many as one in four Medicare beneficiaries utilizing the platform.

In 2022, Congress further extended the availability of telehealth services through the end of this year.

I believe that telehealth technology can, in some cases, help seniors access care in a timelier fashion, keeping them healthier and, in some cases, avoid costly complications from delayed treatment.

As Congress considers further extensions of telehealth flexibilities, this bill will ensure more seniors with limited English language proficiency can still benefit from telehealth.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6033, the Supporting Patient Education And Knowledge Act, or SPEAK Act, sponsored by Representatives STEEL and GOMEZ and cosponsored by Representative CÁRDENAS.

H.R. 6033 requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to issue guidance to improve access to healthcare for individuals with limited English proficiency. Specifically, the bill requires the HHS Secretary to consult with healthcare entities such as providers, health insurers, and consumer advocacy groups to identify best practices for improving access to telehealth services for patients with limited English proficiency.

The expansion of telehealth flexibility during the COVID-19 public health emergency and subsequently in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 has allowed millions of patients to receive access to necessary care. Since then, further expansion of telehealth services has helped provide critical services to hard-to-reach populations and helped beneficiaries in areas that are already underserved.

However, individuals and families with limited English proficiency can face significant barriers to accessing telehealth services and other healthcare information technology. H.R. 6033 will help identify and address barriers to accessing virtual health services for millions of patients with limited English proficiency.

This bill is supported by the National Immigration Law Center, the American Medical Association, America's Essential Hospitals, Justice in Aging, the National Health Law Program, and the American Academy of Family Physicians, among many others.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to vote "yes" on this important bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. STEEL), who is the leader of this legislation.

Mrs. STEEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge passage of my healthcare legislation with Congressman GOMEZ.

The Supporting Patient Education And Knowledge Act, the SPEAK Act, will improve access to telehealth for 25 million Americans with limited English proficiency and will help tackle the over \$1.7 billion in medical costs driven by language barriers.

The SPEAK Act will also help bring public and private actors together to identify best practices and improve telehealth access for urban and rural communities.

Telehealth services can be more affordable than traditional care, addressing a key need at a time of rising costs. It is transforming healthcare by increasing access, reducing costs, and improving outcomes.

As we continue to improve healthcare via new technology, I am fo-

cused on ensuring no American is left behind in the digital age.

As an immigrant myself who speaks English as a third language, I know the importance of services being available to all Americans.

My beautifully diverse district in southern California is a key example. My constituents speak English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Chinese, Tagalog, and more. I am proud to be their champion in Congress.

No matter what language you speak, Mr. Speaker, everyone should have access to telehealth. Everyone should have access to high-quality and affordable care.

I thank everyone who has supported the bill and worked hard for its passage. The SPEAK Act could be life-changing for so many people.

Mr. Speaker, I call on the House to pass the SPEAK Act and join me in increasing healthcare access, lowering costs, and improving patient outcomes.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. CÁRDENAS).

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6033, the Supporting Patient Education And Knowledge Act, which I am proud to co-lead with my Republican colleague from the other side of the aisle, Representative STEEL, and several of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

I am encouraged by this bipartisan effort and commitment to help ensure access to quality care across the United States.

Clear communication between patients and providers improves critical health outcomes, helps prevent potentially deadly errors, and it is the cornerstone of our health system.

As we continue the work to improve healthcare in America, we have a responsibility to all people in America, and this includes the 25 million people with limited English proficiency in the United States.

A failure to address the challenges individuals with limited English proficiency face would impact the health of all Americans, complicating expansions of telehealth services, and leading to higher system costs.

The SPEAK Act is a critical step in addressing these challenges. This legislation recognizes the diverse fabric of our Nation and fosters collaboration that is vital to guaranteeing our healthcare system meets the needs of all individuals.

By bringing providers, physicians, hospitals, health insurance companies, language service providers, and patient voices to the table, we advance our shared goal of increasing access while helping patients feel secure and confident when they seek care.

Helping providers communicate accurate health information to limited English proficient people benefits everyone. Ensuring telehealth advancements are accessible to limited English

proficient people benefits everyone as well.

Developing and implementing best practices to overcome barriers ensures that every individual, regardless of their linguistic background, receives the care they need and deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, Congresswoman STEEL, for co-leading this bill, and I also would like to take an opportunity to thank all of the committee staff and the staff from all of our teams for all of the wonderful work that they put into not just this bill but the many bills we are discussing this evening.

One of the things that frustrates me about being a Congressman is that beautiful moments like this when we come together and work on a bipartisan basis will never be seen on the news. If somebody gets into an argument with somebody in committee, they will carry that over and over and over, which leads the American people to believe we do not work together and that we do not care about everyone. Yes, we do.

So, once again, I thank the chairwoman, the ranking member, and everyone on the committee for bringing these wonderful bills to the floor and the many bills we have yet to work on throughout the rest of this year.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote for this bill.

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

□ 2110

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would urge support for this bipartisan bill because it is so important for improving access for telehealth services for persons with limited English proficiency, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I encourage a "yes" vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6033, 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.

TELEHEALTH ENHANCEMENT FOR MENTAL HEALTH ACT OF 2024

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7858) to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish a Medicare incident to modifier for mental health services furnished through telehealth, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7858

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 "Telehealth Enhancement for Mental Health Act of 2024" or the "TELEMH Act of 2024".

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF MEDICARE INCIDENT TO MODIFIER FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FURNISHED THROUGH TELEHEALTH AND OTHER TELEHEALTH SERVICES.

Section 1834(m) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m(m)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(10) REQUIRED USE OF MODIFIERS IN CERTAIN INSTANCES.—Not later than January 1, 2026, the Secretary shall establish requirements to include a code or modifier, as determined appropriate by the Secretary, in the case of claims for telehealth services under this subsection that are billed incident to a physician's or practitioner's professional service."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. 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 in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7858, the Telehealth Enhancement for Mental Health Act of 2024, led by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. JAMES), a valuable member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. JAMES' legislation will put in place program integrity measures so that we can better understand the extent to which telehealth is working for patients on Medicare.

Over the past several years, telehealth has proven itself to be a vital way for patients to access care, especially in rural communities. Telehealth services are still being used widely among Medicare beneficiaries compared to prepandemic levels. Evaluation and management services, such as doctors' visits and following up to imaging, have accounted for nearly all of telehealth spending in Medicare.

As Congress works to continue allowing seniors to access telehealth through Medicare, this bill will implement a key recommendation from the Department of Health and Human Services inspector general to increase transparency and allow more detailed data collection on types of providers performing telehealth services.

This will help ensure Medicare beneficiaries are not just benefiting from expanded access and quality care, but the best value these technologies have to offer.

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, September 11, 2024.

Hon. JASON SMITH,
Chair, Committee on Ways and Means,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIR SMITH: I write regarding H.R. 7858, the "TELEMH Act of 2024," which was referred in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means.

I ask that the Committee forgo action on the bill so that it may be scheduled for consideration on the House floor. This concession would in no way affect the Committee's jurisdiction over the subject matter of the bill. In addition, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I would support the Committee's request for conferees on the conference committee. Finally, I would be pleased to include this letter and your response in the Congressional Record during debate on the bill.

Thank you for your consideration of my request and for the extraordinary cooperation shown by you and your staff over matters of shared jurisdiction. I look forward to further opportunities to work with you this Congress.

Sincerely,

CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS,
Chair.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
Washington, DC, September 11, 2024.

Hon. CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS,
Chair, Committee on Energy and Commerce,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIR MCMORRIS RODGERS: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 7858, the "TELEMH Act of 2024." As you noted, the Committee on Ways and Means was granted an additional referral on this bill. I agree to forego action on this bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

The Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 7858 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this bill or similar legislation, and that our Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction. Our Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and asks that you support any such request.

Finally, I would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 7858.

Sincerely,

JASON SMITH,
Chairman.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7858, the Telehealth Enhancement for Mental Health Act.

This bill directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop a modifier on claims submitted to Medicare for mental health services furnished through telehealth. This modifier will allow the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to identify when mental health services are being provided virtually by different types of providers and will help ensure beneficiaries receiving mental health support remotely can access care when they need it.

We know that mental health care is healthcare. In the face of an ongoing mental health and substance use disorder epidemic, it is critical that Medicare beneficiaries are able to access behavioral and mental health services virtually.

This bill will ensure Medicare beneficiaries enjoy continued access to high-quality telemental health services from a range of qualified providers.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting “yes” on H.R. 7858, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. JAMES).

Mr. JAMES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS), my chairwoman, friend, and mentor, for her stellar leadership and for giving me a shot.

One of the big reasons why I ran for Congress in the first place was to help people, and this bill, with strong bipartisan support, is going to take another step in helping everyday Americans.

I rise today to speak about my critical bill, H.R. 7858, the Telehealth Enhancement for Mental Health Act of 2024. At a time when mental health needs are soaring, this bill will revolutionize access to mental health care by ushering transformative changes to Medicare reimbursement policies for mental health services provided for by telehealth.

It will modernize healthcare delivery by establishing a new modifier, or code, tailored explicitly for telehealth-delivered mental health services.

In layman’s terms, in normal people’s terms, it is hard out there. It is tough out there, and Americans need and deserve help from the folks that they sent here to represent them. Simply, this bill is a critical step toward realizing the full potential of telehealth in delivering these vital mental health services to Americans who are at their wits end.

By introducing a specific modifier for telehealth-based mental health services, we are not only streamlining the billing and reimbursement processes, cutting red tape, but also amplifying access for those in need regardless of their geographic barriers or their economic abilities.

Mr. Speaker, this is a no-brainer. Right now, our Nation is experiencing a hopelessness crisis, and this bipartisan legislation will allow millions to get the care that they need right when and where they need it.

The bottom line is this legislation is going to save lives, and I ask all of my colleagues to please support this commonsense, bipartisan legislation.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, again, now, we are dealing with another important telehealth bill for mental health services, and I urge my colleagues to support this bill, as well, on both sides of the aisle, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I urge a “yes” vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7858, 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 title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish a Medicare incident to modifier for mental health services furnished through telehealth and other telehealth services.”

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

LAUNCH COMMUNICATIONS ACT

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1648) to facilitate access to the electromagnetic spectrum for commercial space launches and commercial space reentries, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1648

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 “Launch Communications Act”.

SEC. 2. ACCESS TO ELECTROMAGNETIC SPECTRUM FOR COMMERCIAL SPACE LAUNCHES AND REENTRIES.

(a) SERVICE RULES; ALLOCATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall—

(A) complete any proceeding in effect as of such date of enactment related to the adoption of service rules for access to the frequencies described in subsection (c) for commercial space launches and commercial space reentries, including technical specifications, eligibility requirements, and coordination procedures to preserve the defense capabilities of the United States; and

(B) allocate on a secondary basis such frequencies for commercial space launches and commercial space reentries.

(2) COORDINATION WITH NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION.—The coordination procedures adopted under paragraph (1)(A) shall include requirements for persons conducting commercial space launches and commercial space reentries to coordinate with the Assistant Secretary regarding access to the frequencies described in subsection (c) for commercial space launches and commercial space reentries.

(3) LIMITATION.—Access to the frequencies described in subsection (c) in accordance with the service rules adopted under subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1), and the allocation of such frequencies under subparagraph (B) of that paragraph, shall be limited to the use of such frequencies for commercial space launches and commercial space reentries.

(b) STREAMLINING OF PROCESS FOR GRANTING AUTHORIZATIONS.—Not later than 180

days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall issue new regulations to streamline the process for granting authorizations for access to the frequencies described in subsection (c) for commercial space launches and commercial space reentries so as to provide for—

(1) authorizations that include access to such frequencies for multiple commercial space launches from 1 or more Federal space launch sites and multiple commercial space reentries to 1 or more Federal space reentry sites;

(2) authorizations that include access to such frequencies for multiple commercial space launches from 1 or more private space launch sites and multiple commercial space reentries to 1 or more private space reentry sites, upon successful coordination with any Federal space launch site within a range for access to such frequencies such that such a commercial space launch or commercial space reentry would not cause harmful interference with Federal systems;

(3) authorizations that include access to multiple uses of such frequencies for commercial space launch or commercial space reentry;

(4) electronic filing and processing of applications for authorizations for access to such frequencies for commercial space launches and commercial space reentries; and

(5) improved coordination by the Commission with the Assistant Secretary (who shall coordinate with the head of any other Federal agency, as the Assistant Secretary considers appropriate) to increase the speed of review of applications for authorizations for access to such frequencies for commercial space launches and commercial space reentries, including coordination to increase automation similar to the automation described in the service rules established by the Commission and the Assistant Secretary to promote the development and use, by entities other than the Federal Government, of spectrum in other bands, including bands with the frequencies between 71 and 76 gigahertz, between 81 and 86 gigahertz, and between 92 and 95 gigahertz.

(c) FREQUENCIES DESCRIBED.—The frequencies described in this subsection are the frequencies between 2025 and 2110 megahertz, between 2200 and 2290 megahertz, and between 2360 and 2395 megahertz.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Each range of frequencies described in this section shall be construed to be inclusive of the upper and lower frequencies in the range.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ASSISTANT SECRETARY.—The term “Assistant Secretary” means the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information.

(2) COMMERCIAL SPACE LAUNCH.—The term “commercial space launch” means a launch licensed under chapter 509 of title 51, United States Code.

(3) COMMERCIAL SPACE REENTRY.—The term “commercial space reentry” means a reentry licensed under chapter 509 of title 51, United States Code.

(4) COMMISSION.—The term “Commission” means the Federal Communications Commission.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. 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 in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 1648, the Launch Communications Act. Earlier this year, the House of Representatives passed a similar version, H.R. 682, which was led by the gentlemen from Florida's Second and Ninth Districts, Representatives SOTO and DUNN.

This legislation is the product of bipartisan, bicameral negotiations. It takes important steps to streamline the process for commercial space launch providers to access the spectrum frequencies they need and ensure that a lack of coordination between Federal agencies does not hamper the thriving commercial space economy.

Importantly, just like Congressman DUNN's H.R. 682, this bill not only adds a new license model to meet growing demand, but preserves the ability of launch providers to avail themselves of the special temporary authority model that has served us so well.

I thank Senator SCHMITT for working with us and for leading this product in the Senate, and I urge my colleagues to support S. 1648.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 1648, the Launch Communications Act.

Over the last decade, we have seen the costs for exploring space drop dramatically. As a result, space launches in this country have increased dramatically. In 2013, the Federal Aviation Administration authorized eight launches. By 2023, just a decade later, the number was 117, and the number of space launches is only expected to increase in the years to come. Indeed, the FAA has already authorized over 100 launches this year.

□ 2120

To ensure our Nation as a global leader in space and other cutting-edge technologies, we must continue to foster this growth, which, in turn, will enhance our national security capabilities.

Transporting satellites to space cannot happen without launch entities having reliable access to electromagnetic spectrum. While the FCC has made impressive strides in the last year to allocate more spectrum for space launches, additional spectrum resources are needed. Congress must build on the FCC's efforts by making more spectrum available for commercial space launches as well as the space reentries.

This bill would help solve this challenge. Specifically, the Launch Com-

munications Act directs the FCC to complete a rulemaking proceeding and adopt rules so that commercial space launches and reentries have access to the spectrum bands identified in the bill. The bill also requires the FCC to streamline its process for licensing spectrum to commercial space launch providers. Taken together, these efforts will better support providers as they communicate with their space vehicles during flight and upon reentry.

While this bill and its House companion are nearly identical, I will note that the differences between the two should not have a significant impact on the effect of the bill.

For instance, the House bill included a savings clause to specify that nothing in the bill would change the current special temporary authority for launch spectrum. While the version we are debating today does not have the savings clause, nothing in this bill should impact the ability of the FCC to provide access to launch spectrum using its special temporary authority.

I commend Representatives Soto and Dunn for their bipartisan work on the House version of the bill. S. 1648 will help secure America's leadership in the commercial space industry by strengthening our Nation's position as a prime destination for launching satellites into space.

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

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bill that basically provides commercial space launches access to spectrum and does other things to promote space launches and reentries.

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

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I also urge and encourage everyone to vote "yes" on the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1648.

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.

FUTURE USES OF TECHNOLOGY UPHOLDING RELIABLE AND ENHANCED NETWORKS ACT

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1513) to direct the Federal Communications Commission to establish a task force to be known as the "6G Task Force", and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1513

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 "Future Uses of Technology Upholding Reliable and Enhanced Networks Act" or the "FUTURE Networks Act".

SEC. 2. 6G TASK FORCE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commission shall establish a task force to be known as the "6G Task Force".

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) APPOINTMENT.—The members of the Task Force shall be appointed by the Chair.

(2) COMPOSITION.—To the extent practicable, the membership of the Task Force shall be composed of the following:

(A) Representatives of companies in the communications industry, except companies that are determined by the Chair to be not trusted.

(B) Representatives of public interest organizations or academic institutions, except public interest organizations or academic institutions that are determined by the Chair to be not trusted.

(C) Representatives of the Federal Government, State governments, local governments, or Tribal Governments, with at least one member representing each such type of government.

(c) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the Task Force is established under subsection (a), the Task Force shall publish in the Federal Register and on the website of the Commission, and submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, a report on sixth-generation wireless technology, including—

(A) the status of industry-led standards-setting bodies in setting standards for such technology;

(B) possible uses of such technology identified by industry-led standards-setting bodies that are setting standards for such technology;

(C) any limitations of such technology (including any supply chain or cybersecurity limitations) identified by industry-led standards-setting bodies that are setting standards for such technology; and

(D) how to best work with entities across the Federal Government, State governments, local governments, and Tribal Governments to leverage such technology, including with regard to siting, deployment, and adoption.

(2) DRAFT REPORT; PUBLIC COMMENT.—The Task Force shall—

(A) not later than 180 days after the date on which the Task Force is established under subsection (a), publish in the Federal Register and on the website of the Commission a draft of the report required by paragraph (1); and

(B) accept public comments on such draft and take such comments into consideration in preparing the final version of such report.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CHAIR.—The term "Chair" means the Chair of the Commission.

(2) COMMISSION.—The term "Commission" means the Federal Communications Commission.

(3) NOT TRUSTED.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term "not trusted" means, with respect to an entity, that—

(i) the Chair has made a public determination that such entity is owned by, controlled by, or subject to the influence of a foreign adversary; or

(ii) the Chair otherwise determines that such entity poses a threat to the national security of the United States.

(B) CRITERIA FOR DETERMINATION.—In making a determination under subparagraph (A)(ii), the Chair shall use the criteria described in paragraphs (1) through (4) of section 2(c) of the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act of 2019 (47 U.S.C. 1601(c)), as appropriate.

(4) STATE.—The term “State” has the meaning given such term in section 3 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 153).

(5) TASK FORCE.—The term “Task Force” means the 6G Task Force established under subsection (a).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material into the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the bill, H.R. 1513, the FUTURE Networks Act, led by Representative MATSUI.

The United States leads in the development of next-generation wireless technology. We have led the world in the development and deployment of 4G technologies, and carriers are now currently deploying 5G across the country. It is now time to look ahead to the next generation, 6G.

The United States must continue to be at the forefront of technological development and keep ahead of our adversaries. To do this, we must lead at international standards-setting bodies, identify new use cases for 6G, and understand potential security and supply chain issues that must be addressed as the technology is developed.

H.R. 1513 will support this effort by requiring the FCC to establish a 6G task force made up of both the public and private sectors to develop a report on the standards development process and possible uses of sixth-generation technology.

This task force will ensure that the United States is unified among industry and government and is doing what is needed to cement our leadership in 6G.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative MATSUI for her leadership and work on this legislation before the Energy and Commerce Committee. This bill advanced with a strong, bipartisan vote out of the committee.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1513, the Future Uses of Technology Upholding Reliable and Enhanced Networks Act, or FUTURE Networks Act.

This bipartisan bill, sponsored by Representative MATSUI, ranking member of the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, is an important step to protect Americans and our communications networks from threats posed by rapidly evolving next-generation technologies. It also ensures that the standards used to build technological advancements are designed from the start to be safe and secure.

H.R. 1513 establishes a task force at the Federal Communications Commission to study sixth-generation, or 6G, technologies to identify potential supply chain and cybersecurity vulnerabilities. The task force will include government, public interest advocates, academics, and industry.

The United States leads the world in the innovation of secure and resilient next-generation technologies, a position congressional Democrats and the Biden-Harris administration have fought to sustain.

Last year, the Biden-Harris administration released the National Cybersecurity Strategy to tackle cybersecurity threats and created a safer and more secure digital ecosystem. The FCC also developed the Cyber Trust Mark program to make trustworthy products easily identifiable to consumers.

The FUTURE Networks Act is yet another important step to support America's leadership in a secure and reliable future. By directing the FCC to engage in the exploration of 6G technology in the early stages of its development, this bill would enable American values to be embedded within the global framework for this technology and to ensure it will be available to all Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Communications and Technology Subcommittee Ranking Member MATSUI and Representative WALBERG for their bipartisan work on this bill, which passed unanimously out of the Energy and Commerce Committee earlier this year.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1513, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI), the sponsor of the bill.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1513, the FUTURE Networks Act.

To maintain U.S. leadership in wireless communication, we need to be proactive in our preparations for the next generation of networks.

This bill would direct the Federal Communications Commission to bring together industry leaders, public interest groups, and government experts to establish a 6G task force.

6G is going to be a global evolution in the way we communicate—not only for people, but for devices, factories, infrastructure, and more. It will be a global network of networks, handling information from nearly every sector of our economy.

The race to 6G isn't just about faster phones. It is about national security, the economy, and America's standing on the international stage.

If we lead, this global technology will be based on our values: democracy, open markets, and transparency. If we fall behind, America's foreign adversaries will have a new venue to expand their reach. This means less openness and more top-down control.

That is why I am so glad to see this bipartisan bill moving forward today. It will ensure our brightest minds in industry, government, and academia are advising the U.S. on the strategically vital development of 6G.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of suspending the rules and passing this legislation.

□ 2130

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I urge everyone to support this bill that protects us and keeps us in leadership on next generation technology, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I encourage a “yes” vote on this bill and yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. RODGERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1513.

The question was taken.

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

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. 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.

CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL PROJECT

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, California's high-speed rail project has been a boondoggle of epic proportions, funded mostly by California State taxpayers but also some \$3 billion plus in so-called shovel-ready stimulus money from 2009.

After 15 years and a \$9 billion bond plus Federal money, what do we actually have? We have a project that has ballooned to over \$120 billion with zero miles of track laid and a completion date pushed back another decade into the future.

This is all ostensibly to save carbon dioxide in our atmosphere, but I point out to you here that CO₂ is actually .04 percent of our atmosphere.

This is a bottomless money pit, and continuing to throw State and Federal dollars at it is a terrible waste when we need to be doing so many other things for our people, including agriculture and water supply. Revolving doors of CEOs of the California High-Speed Rail Authority aren't going to fix this anytime soon.

California faces a great need for water supply, infrastructure, and forest management that could provide a whole lot of benefit that the high-speed rail project never will do.

American taxpayers shouldn't be on the hook for California's boondoggle, so let's instead focus on things that will help the American people such as building more water supply and growing those needed crops that somewhere between 90 and 98 percent only grow in California that help the American people.

CELEBRATING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENERGY STUDY INSTITUTE

(Mr. TONKO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the 40th anniversary of the Environmental and Energy Study Institute, or EESI.

For four decades, EESI has provided valuable educational opportunities, policy analysis, and support to Congress and so many others all around the country.

EESI was founded as a caucus in Congress by a bipartisan group of Members, including Dick Ottinger from the great State of New York in 1975.

In the 1980s, it became an independent nonprofit focused on educating Members and staff, convening stakeholders, and advancing science-based solutions for climate, energy, and environmental challenges.

Many Members attended their annual Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Expo, which brings cutting-edge energy companies to the Hill to show off the latest innovations.

Over the years, I have been proud to collaborate with EESI so many times, and I truly value their work.

To EESI's staff and supporters, I congratulate them on this 40th anniversary, and I wish them many more years of being such an important partner to Members of Congress, moving upward and onward with additional innovation through the years.

RIISING NATIONAL DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT) is recognized for 13 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I think I heard applause and happiness that I am only allowed to go for 13 minutes.

For anyone that is paying attention, it is because of the lateness of the hour. My brothers and sisters on the Democrat side, we have to split the remaining time.

That is what is about to happen, so I am going to talk faster than normal. I apologize to those trying to take our words down.

Let's see if I can make the point. I actually edited my boards down because I wanted to go through, once again, the actual mathematical facts and my intense frustration that our brothers and sisters around the country running for office are promising things that there is no mathematical way to make them work and a complete void of an honest conversation of demographics and debt and the reality of what is going on. Let's actually race through this because I think I now have 12 minutes.

Please understand this. For every dollar of tax collection this year that your Federal Government takes in, we spend \$1.39.

Now, work with me. I used to come behind this microphone just a little while ago and say: We borrow 30 cents out of everything—no, we borrow 39 cents. If you remove interest, for every dollar we take in, we spend \$1.21. I need you to process this.

Please process this. For every dollar of tax collection the United States takes in, and that is this year, in a time when the economy has actually been pretty good. GDP growth has been pretty good. Tax collections have actually been pretty good, and we spend, meaning we are functionally borrowing, 39 cents for every dollar we take in.

Here is the point. How many of you, as Members of Congress—and if someone's watching, if you don't see people in the room, that is the way it is supposed to be. People are supposed to be back in their offices or other places actually doing their work.

One of the reasons you do these presentations is you are probably on a thousand televisions around this campus, and hopefully there are still some minds that are open to math.

Do you see this chart? Do you see the blue? We call that defense and non-defense. That is all I, as a Member of Congress, get to vote on. It is 26, 25 percent of spending.

Back to this board. For every dollar of tax collection, we have to borrow an additional 39 cents on top of it. Does someone see a math problem?

If what I get to vote on is 26 percent of the budget, it means every dime a

Member of Congress votes on is borrowed as well as a big chunk of what we call mandatory spending.

How many people are willing to tell that story, whether it be on the left or the right? The hallways in this place are full of people begging us for more spending. It is an investment, DAVID. We need the money.

I have done chart after chart after chart over the last few years, coming in here and showing when we have had very high marginal tax rates, we get about 17, 18 percent of the economy in taxes. When we have had very low marginal tax rates, we get about 17, 18 percent of the economy.

Will this place start to take it seriously? You have to adopt tax policies, regulatory policies, and code policies that dramatically do growth. Understand, what is the biggest change that has happened the last couple of years? What is the thing that has moved these numbers so dramatically?

□ 2140

I am going to play with this just a little bit.

Interest. The fact of the matter is, Social Security, \$1.460—480 billion. Total interest, because remember you have to pay the interest back to Social Security, the pension plans, all those things, and then interest to those who bought our bonds. Remember, the vast majority of our bonds are actually bought by Americans.

Interest now is the second biggest expenditure in the Federal Government. It is going to come in total gross interest maybe \$1.140—160 billion.

Then the next biggest, the third biggest expenditure is now Medicare, and number four is actually defense. The thing that is in the Constitution now is number four.

One of the points I want to make here is I was just showing you a chart that about 25 percent of what we get to vote on is defense and nondefense, and we are over 14 percent is just interest now. Understand, in about 10 years that a little less than \$1.2 trillion is going to be approaching \$2 trillion a year.

Tell me how many things we got to buy with that interest when for every dollar of tax collection we take in, \$1.39, so 39 cents on top of it is borrowed. That is the mathematical reality. This is the thing that I get booed at, I get people online saying: Oh, that hurts my feelings.

One hundred percent of the debt for this country from today through the next 30 years—go look at CBO's reports, Medicare—sorry, I don't mean to get so agitated, Medicare and the interest. In 9 or so years when the Social Security trust fund has been depleted, do we reach in the general fund and backfill it?

The insanity is, you hear the debates here: We will just tax rich people.

Even documents from the left say, well, if you do every tax that has been proposed on those over \$400,000, and

you adjust for the economics, you get about a point and a half of GDP. A point and a half of the size of the economy. For those of us who want to cut spending, add up everything we have talked about cutting, it is about one point of GDP. You have got a big 2½ percent there, 2½ percent for every policy on the other side, every policy on our side.

We are borrowing just a little less than 7 percent of the entire economy this year, and the economy is healthy. Dear Heaven, what happens if there is a war? What happens if there is another pandemic? What happens if parts of the economic clouds come and we have a recession? This is the time when things are good. We should be paying things back.

You look at the math. I know some of these charts are impossible to read from a distance. I am trying just to make the point that interest is our fragility. I have said it here multiple times. Do you want to know who really is about to run your country? It is not the Democrats; it is not the Republicans. It is not rich people; it is not the unions. It is the bond market. If you are borrowing seventy, eighty thousand dollars per second every day and you have got to go to the market, remember, this year, this fiscal year we will bring \$10 trillion to market. About eight of that is refinancing of the bonds that roll over. It is actually a little more than that.

If you look at the short end of the curve, they have to roll over a lot. Then there are a couple trillion of new issuances. If the world, if the bond vigilantes say, well, we don't want those things, we want a premium, you look at the charts, and this is actually assuming everything is wonderful.

When you see the CBO projection, and they talk about debt coming into the future, this is no pandemic, no war, no recession, yet if you listen to these microphones, it is person after person after person coming up with new brilliant ideas to spend money. Many of them you love. They are moral, they are helpful, and we have no damn way to finance them.

This delusion that we will just tax rich people, I have already shown chart after chart after chart, you confiscate all the wealth of those designated rich, you run the country for a few months. You crash every market, there is no retirement accounts, but you wipe out everything. It is just sort of a mathematical delusion.

There are ways to make this work, but are we going to legalize technology?

Last week, I actually did a presentation, and I was trying to show that all these projections of: We are going to take in this much money in additional enforcement at the IRS, and we have only hit like a fraction, a fraction of what was promised.

Remember, we are 2 years in. Remember, we originally appropriated 80, then it went down to 57. According to

CBO, we were supposed to be up around 10, 11 billion of additional tax collections coming in from the rich. We have hit 1, so we have hit basically 10 percent of the promises. That is story after story after story, we are not coming anything close to our fantasies.

Remember, the Inflation Reduction Act was going to pay for itself, and then we realized, hey, the subsidies, the planned economy, the new managed industrial policy that is America now, it is turning out to cost dramatically more. The tax collections didn't come anywhere close.

We are really bad at math here. We are really good at making public policy by feelings, but just try to say, let's have thought experiments. What would happen if the IRS used Chat and other things to answer the phone, customer service, so the vast majority of people who call the IRS could actually have their phone answered? I remember one person online said: Well, that would lose jobs.

I tried to show all that money we set aside for the IRS; it went down. Their auditors went down by 8 percent. We gave them billions of dollars, and it turns out we have a demographic issue.

Remember, starting in 1990, birth rates in the United States started to roll over. It turns out a lot of people don't want to work for the IRS.

There are ways to use technology to crash the price of healthcare, to make the environment healthier, cleaner, to move transportation, to actually do tax collections in an honest, fair, moral fashion.

This place is a protection racket. It is a protection of incumbent bureaucracies, incumbent business models. The hallways are full of lobbyists right now trying to stop us from disrupting and making our brothers and sisters healthier.

Diabetes is 33 percent of all U.S. healthcare. It is immoral what we allow to happen. We can make our brothers and sisters healthier. We can do amazing things for the debt and deficit. We just have to be willing to do things differently.

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

SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK) is recognized until 10 p.m. as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order hour.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise today to anchor this CBC Special Order hour. For the next 12 minutes and 30 seconds, Members of the CBC have an opportunity to discuss the importance of Suicide Prevention Month, an issue of great importance to the Congressional Black Caucus, Congress, the constituents we represent, and all Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chair for the opportunity to speak.

As we come together for Suicide Prevention Month, I am deeply aware that this heartbreaking crisis is hitting the Black community hard. The CDC reported that in 2023, the suicide rate among Black Americans rose by 19 percent, with Black youth experiencing the sharpest increase of any racial group in the Nation. This alarming trend highlights the urgent need for action.

Every life lost to suicide is a tragedy that makes waves through communities and through families, leaving a void that cannot be filled. Yet, too many of our loved ones don't get the mental health care and support they deserve. As lawmakers, we must confront the uncomfortable truth that our current system is simply falling short.

The Congressional Black Caucus has been at the forefront of addressing this epidemic, working tirelessly to secure critical mental health resources, but our work is far from over. Suicide Prevention Month offers us a moment to reflect on what more we can do, how we can ensure these resources reach every individual in need and especially our youth.

We must expand access to culturally competent mental health care, reduce stigma, and create safe spaces for our open conversations about mental health.

□ 2150

That is why I introduced the Mental Health Workforce Act, to address racial disparities in the mental health field. The bill seeks to allocate resources and establish programs that focus on the unique needs of marginalized communities, ensuring equitable access to mental health services.

Numerous barriers to access mental healthcare treatment persist in communities of color, including the stigma associated with mental illness, general distrust of healthcare institutions, and the lack of health insurance.

Together, we can change the trajectory of this crisis and ensure a future where every life is valued and protected.

It is critically important that you know you are not alone, and we are here to help.

Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JACKSON).

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight because we gather on this floor to give recognition to a growing and troubling problem in America today.

Never before have so many young people, and in particular so many African-American young people, been susceptible to the tragic influence of suicidal thoughts.

One of the things that we cannot leave out of this discussion is how much the anxiety of our politics has contributed to the overall dysfunction that has become a cancer on the lives and mental health of America's citizens.

I say to you tonight when people have to worry about political violence and insurrections, that is a strain on mental health. When people have to be concerned about losing their healthcare when they need it most; when people are concerned about the attacks on Medicaid and Medicare; when people are concerned about not being able to make decisions on their own bodies; when people are concerned about whether or not there will be a shooting in their school today; and when people have to listen to the former President of the United States demonize Haitian immigrants with absolutely no evidence for the erroneous claims he happens to be making, it is no wonder that America has become a Nation riddled with anxiety.

Let us be very clear: The will to live is connected to the conditions of one's life.

I am not a mental health expert, Mr. Speaker, but I happen to believe that people who have something to live for are often engaged in the act of living with a sense of promise and hope.

I understand that mental health diseases are real and must be treated separately, but there are a lot of people in this country who contemplate ending their lives not because they have a mental health disease but rather because the conditions in which they have to live have become overwhelming and completely debilitating.

Mr. Speaker, and when people can no longer see a future for themselves, they are more susceptible to the vicissitudes of despair.

The epidemic of opioid abuse is indicative of this analysis.

There are millions upon millions of people in this country who are simply trying to escape the conditions of their lives.

And every day they are fighting not to give in to the encroaching darkness that seems to stalk them both day and night.

And let's be honest, it is a familiar darkness. The content of which is comprised of questions like: How will I pay my mortgage;

How can I afford rent and keep up with my car note; and

How can I pay for the college education of my children while at the same time afford school supplies for the ones who are still in elementary school.

It is a familiar darkness.

It is comprised of concerns about the future of democracy;

the right to vote;

racism and the creeping eradication of America's commitment to diversity; the criminal justice system; questions of war and peace; and clean water, clean air, and clean food.

And my question tonight is this: What about them?

What are we prepared to do in this Congress to make the lives of the American people more secure and worthy of what it means to be called an American?

And contrary to what some have come to believe, not everybody in this country can pull themselves up by their own bootstraps.

There are millions of people who proverbially don't even own boots.

And I still believe that a nation of great wealth owes it to all of its citizens to provide a basic level of support, so that while it is true that not all of us will have maximum success—none of us, however, should be condemned to fail.

We have a moral and ethical obligation to make the future of this country brighter than the one we were born into.

And we do this not just in the policies we legislate, but also in the tone of our politics.

High octane rhetoric will not bring a level of ease to the hearts and minds of the American people.

And so I say to you tonight, let us not just be concerned about preventing suicide without confronting the conditions that make the lives of the American people needlessly miserable and more difficult than it has to be.

Let us dedicate ourselves to the flourishing of all people.

And let us be particularly mindful of the suffering that grows among us.

We want you to know tonight that we see you,

we hear you,

we love you,

and you are not in this battle alone.

Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to the time remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida has 7 minutes remaining.

Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during Suicide Prevention Month to bring attention to a deeply troubling issue affecting our Nation: racial disparities in suicide rates, particularly among Black youth.

According to the recent data from the CDC, the suicide rate among Black youth aged 10 through 19 climbed by a staggering 54 percent between 2018 and 2022, exceeding, for the first time, that of their White peers.

In my home State of Florida, where the suicide rate among Black teens is the third highest in the country, the need to address this crisis is especially urgent. Black youth are also significantly less likely to receive the mental health support they need as they face stigma and mistrust toward the healthcare system.

Racial discrimination, economic disenfranchisement, and the lack of culturally competent mental health services fuels disparities and creates barriers to accessing care, even when it is available.

We have long understood suicide prevention and mental health initiatives

to be public health interventions that benefit all Americans. It pains me to see such drastic disparities within these communities.

As Black youth suicide rates continue to climb, investments in cultural competence training, mental health screenings, research, and resources are desperately needed. By taking these steps, we can ensure those at risk are connected to the appropriate accessible and culturally sensitive care they need and deserve.

Lastly, we need to do more research into the specific risk factors affecting Black youth. Understanding the full scope of the problem is essential to developing practical solutions. Federal funding for studies that explore how stigma, cultural identity, and community engagement influence suicide risk in the Black community is long overdue. These studies will guide us in crafting policies and interventions that are both targeted and effective.

The importance of prevention and awareness cannot be understated. This Suicide Prevention Month, we must reaffirm our commitment to addressing the disparities in mental health head-on and ensure that no youth's life is lost to a preventable cause.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind Members to refrain from engaging in personalities toward nominees for the Office of President.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Kevin F. McCumber, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 7032. An act to amend the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 to provide the Congressional Budget Office with necessary authorities to expedite the sharing of data from executive branch agencies, and for other purposes.

H.R. 7377. An act to amend the Federal Oil and Gas Royalty Management Act of 1982 to improve the management of royalties from oil and gas leases, and for other purposes.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Kevin F. McCumber, Acting Clerk of the House, reported that on September 11, 2024, the following bill was presented to the President of the United States for approval:

H.R. 1076. To require the Comptroller General of the United States to carry out a study on the trafficking into the United States of synthetic drugs, and related illicit finance, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 56 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the

House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, September 18, 2024, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

EC-5324. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the Board's final rule — Quality Control Standards for Automated Valuation Models [Docket No.: R-1807] (RIN: 7100-AG60) received September 8, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

EC-5325. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director — Office of Legislative Affairs, Legal, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Fair Hiring in Banking Act (RIN: 3064-AF92) received August 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

EC-5326. A letter from the Director, Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Anti-Money Laundering Regulations for Residential Real Estate Transfers (RIN: 1506-AB54) received September 6, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

EC-5327. A letter from the Director, Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Anti-Money Laundering/Countering the Financing of Terrorism Program and Suspicious Activity Report Filing Requirements or Registered Investment Advisers and Exempt Reporting Advisers (RIN: 1506-AB58) received September 6, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

EC-5328. A letter from the Special Counsel, Bank Activities, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Quality Control Standards for Automated Valuation Models [Docket No.: OCC-2023-0002] (RIN: 1557-AD87) received August 27, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

EC-5329. A letter from the Federal Communications Commission, Office of Managing Director, AMD-PPM, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — In the Matter of Amendment of section 73.202(b), Table of FM Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations (Canadian, Texas) [MB Docket No.: 24-111; RM-11980]; Application for Construction Permit to Modify FM Station KPQP, Pandhandle, Texas [File No.: 0000220011; Facility ID No.: 189483] received August 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-5330. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — In the Matter of Amendment of Section 73.622(j), Table of Allotments, Television Broadcast Stations (Jacksonville, Florida) [MB Docket No.: 24-112; RM-11981] received August 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-5331. A letter from the Congressional and Public Affairs Specialist, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standards-Related Activities and the Export Administration Regulations [Docket No.: 240712-0190] (RIN: 0694-A106) received August 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

EC-5332. A letter from the Acting Director, Workforce Policy and Innovation, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's final rule — Time-Limited Promotions [Docket ID: OPM-2023-0041] (RIN: 3206-A052) received August 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability.

EC-5333. A letter from the Senior Regulatory Analyst, Policy and Regulations Branch, PERMA, JAO, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Subsistence Management Regulations for Public Lands in Alaska— Applicability and Scope; Tongass National Forest Submerged Lands [Docket No.: FWS-R7-SM-2018-0013; FF07J00000-245-FXFR13350700640] (RIN: 1018-BC96) received August 16, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC-5334. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries — Greater Atlantic, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Fisheries; 2020 Fishing Quotas for Atlantic Surfclams and Ocean Quahogs; and Suspension of Minimum Atlantic Surfclam Size Limit [Docket No.: 200204-0043] (RIN: 0648-XX032) received August 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC-5335. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries — Southeast Region, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Coastal Migratory Pelagics Resources in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Region; Framework Amendment 6 [Docket No.: 190905-0022] (RIN: 0648-BI68) received August 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC-5336. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries — Southeast Region, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Shrimp Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Amendment 18 [Docket No.: 200123-0027] (RIN: 0648-B196) received August 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC-5337. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries — SER, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Fishery Off the Southern Atlantic Region; Regulatory Amendment 30 [Docket No.: 200128-0033] (RIN: 0648-BJ31) received August 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC-5338. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs,

NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries — Southeast Region, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Revisions to Sea Turtle Release Gear; Amendment 49 [Docket No.: 180427420-8420-02] (RIN: 0648-BH92) received August 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC-5339. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries — Southeast Region, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region; Regulatory Amendment 26 [Docket No.: 200220-0060] (RIN: 0648-BI33) received August 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC-5340. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries — West Coast Region, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries Off West Coast States; West Coast Salmon Fisheries; Management Measures To Limit Fishery Impacts on Sacramento River Winter-Run Chinook Salmon [Docket No.: 171031999-8355-02] (RIN: 0648-BH40) received August 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC-5341. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries — Alaska Region, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 630 in the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 180831813-9170-02] (RTID: 0648-XY071) received September 6, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC-5342. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries — WCR, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; Pacific Fishery Management Plan; Amendment 28; Correction [Docket No.: 191106-0077] (RIN: 0648-BI89) received September 6, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC-5343. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries-Alaska Region, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher Vessels Greater Than or Equal to 50 Feet Length Overall Using Hook-and-Line Gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 180831813-9170-02] (RIN: 0648-XY025) received September 6, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC-5344. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries-Alaska Region, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Chinook

Salmon Prohibited Species Catch Limits in the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 180831813-9170-02; RTID 0648-XY062] received September 6, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC-5345. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries-Alaska Region, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pollock in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands [Docket No.: 180713633-9174-02; RTID 0648-XY073] received September 6, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC-5346. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries-Alaska Region, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher Vessels Less Than 60 Feet (18.3 Meters) Length Overall Using Hook-and-Line or Pot Gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 180713633-9174-02] (RTID: 0648-XY064) received September 6, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC-5347. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries-Alaska Region, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher Vessels Using Trawl Gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 180713633-9174-02] (RTID: 0648-XY078) received September 6, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC-5348. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries-SERO, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; 2019 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for Gulf of Mexico Gray Triggerfish [Docket No.: 121004518-3398-01; RTID 0648-XS017] received September 6, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC-5349. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries-SERO, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Region; 2019-2020 Commercial Closure for King Mackerel in the Gulf of Mexico Western Zone [Docket No.: 160426363-7275-02; RTID 0648-XS016] received September 6, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC-5350. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries-Southeast Region, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic; 2019 Recreational Accountability Measure and Closure for the South Atlantic Deep-Water Complex [Docket No.: 100812345-2142-03; RTID 0648-XS018] received September 6, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec.

251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

EC-5351. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, Assistant Secretary for Financial Resources, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Annual Civil Monetary Penalties Inflation Adjustment (RIN: 0991-AC34) received August 13, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-5352. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Section, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final regulations — Plan-Specific Substitute Mortality Tables for Determining Present Value [TD 10005] (RIN: 1545-BQ67) received August 20, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. SMITH of Missouri: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 9076. A bill to reauthorize and modernize part B of title IV of the Social Security Act to strengthen child welfare services, expand the availability of prevention services to better meet the needs of vulnerable families, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 118-679). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 3800. A bill to codify Internal Revenue Service guidance relating to treatment of certain services and items for chronic conditions as meeting the preventive care deductible safe harbor for purposes of high deductible health plans in connection with health savings accounts; with an amendment (Rept. 118-680). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 455. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to fix a technical error in the definitions (Rept. 118-681, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WESTERMAN: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 5509. A bill to modernize permitting systems at the Department of the Interior, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 118-682). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. STELL: Committee on House Administration. H.R. 7764. A bill to establish a commission to study the potential transfer of the Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History to the Smithsonian Institution, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 118-683). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. STELL: Committee on House Administration. H.R. 9489. A bill to sunset the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress, and for other purposes (Rept. 118-684). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mrs. HOUCHIN: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 1455. A resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3724) to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to prohibit recognized accrediting agencies and associations from requiring, encouraging, or coercing institutions of higher education to meet any political litmus test or violate any

right protected by the Constitution as a condition of accreditation; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4790) to amend the Federal securities laws with respect to the materiality of disclosure requirements, to establish the Public Company Advisory Committee, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5179) to require the maintenance of the country of origin markings for imported goods produced in the West Bank or Gaza, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5339) to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to specify requirements concerning the consideration of pecuniary and non-pecuniary factors, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5717) to provide that sanctuary jurisdictions that provide benefits to aliens who are present in the United States without lawful status under the immigration laws are ineligible for Federal funds intended to benefit such aliens; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 7909) to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide that aliens who have been convicted of or who have committed sex offenses or domestic violence are inadmissible and deportable; and providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 136) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to "Multi-Pollutant Emissions Standards for Model Years 2027 and Later Light-Duty and Medium-Duty Vehicles" (Rept. 118-685). Referred to the House Calendar.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on the Judiciary discharged from further consideration. H.R. 455 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. SMUCKER (for himself, Mr. BEYER, Mrs. RODGERS of Washington, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. STAUBER):

H.R. 9614. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make certain provisions with respect to qualified ABLE programs permanent; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ALLRED (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, Mr. VEASEY, and Ms. NORTON):

H.R. 9615. A bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to establish minimum notification requirements for voters affected by polling place changes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Ms. BARRAGAN:

H.R. 9616. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide for the prompt approval of drugs when safety information is added to labeling, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BIGGS (for himself, Mr. OGLES, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. CRANE, Mr. ROSENDALE, Mr. GOOD of Virginia, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. HARRIS, Ms. BOEBERT, Mr. CLYDE, Mr. BURCHETT, and Mrs. MILLER of Illinois):

H.R. 9617. A bill to prohibit grants provided under section 106 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 from being used to assist persons who are neither a national of the United States nor lawfully admitted for permanent residence, and for

other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. CARAVEO:

H.R. 9618. A bill to require the Director of the Federal Insurance Office to submit an annual report to the President and certain Congressional committees with respect to the automobile insurance industry, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. CASTRO of Texas (for himself and Mr. FOSTER):

H.R. 9619. A bill to amend the International Organizations Immunities Act to extend certain privileges and immunities to the European Organization for Nuclear Research; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 9620. A bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to authorize a grant program to assist State and local law enforcement agencies in purchasing body-worn cameras and securely storing and maintaining recorded data for law enforcement officers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. CRAIG (for herself and Mr. FINSTAD):

H.R. 9621. A bill to award career pathways innovation grants to local educational agencies and consortia of local educational agencies, to provide technical assistance within the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education to administer the grants and support the local educational agencies with the preparation of grant applications and management of grant funds, to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to support community college and industry partnerships, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. DINGELL (for herself, Mr. THANEDAR, Ms. NORTON, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania, Ms. SALINAS, and Mr. COHEN):

H.R. 9622. A bill to improve access to oral health care for vulnerable and underserved populations; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, the Judiciary, Natural Resources, and Veterans' Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HARDER of California (for himself and Mr. MORAN):

H.R. 9623. A bill to amend the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 1998 to reauthorize the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas Program and modify the Program with respect to promising practices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, and Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HORSFORD (for himself and Mr. NORCROSS):

H.R. 9624. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to eliminate the separate minimum wage for tipped employees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ISSA (for himself, Mr. NEHLS, Mr. NADLER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. LEE of Florida, Mr. BACON, Mr. VAN DREW, Mr. VALADAO, Ms. MALOY, Mrs. HINSON, Mrs. KIM of California,

Mr. LALOTA, Mr. OWENS, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. BENTZ, Mrs. BICE, Mr. OBERNOLTE, Ms. DE LA CRUZ, Mr. CISCOMANI, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. HUNT, and Mr. WEBER of Texas):

H.R. 9625. A bill to authorize additional district judges for the district courts and convert temporary judgeships; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KHANNA:

H.R. 9626. A bill to direct the Department of Defense to develop a plan for the establishment of a secure computing and data storage environment for the testing of artificial intelligence trained on biological data, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. KHANNA:

H.R. 9627. A bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to develop a biotechnology roadmap to guide the efforts of the Department of Defense relating to biotechnology, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. KHANNA:

H.R. 9628. A bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to collaborate with a federally funded research and development center to assess the biotechnology capabilities of adversaries of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. KHANNA:

H.R. 9629. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to expand the exception to the licensure requirement for certain health care professionals providing certain examinations to members of the reserve components; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia:

H.R. 9630. A bill to extend Federal recognition to the Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) Indian Tribe of Virginia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. LEE of California:

H.R. 9631. A bill to provide for the establishment or expansion of Food and Medicine programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LUCAS:

H.R. 9632. A bill to require certain entities to clearly disclose to small business concerns key information about factoring facility agreements prior to entering such agreements with such concerns, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. LUCAS:

H.R. 9633. A bill to codify the Strategic Hub for Innovation and Financial Technology of the Securities and Exchange Commission and LabCFTC of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MACE (for herself and Ms. MALLIOTAKIS):

H.R. 9634. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit the National Institutes of Health from conducting or supporting research that causes significant pain or distress to a nonhuman primate, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. NORCROSS (for himself, Mr. COSTA, Mr. BACON, Ms. NORTON, Mr. TONKO, and Mr. FITZPATRICK):

H.R. 9635. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to au-

thorize a grant program to support students who have epilepsy or a seizure disorder; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. PAPPAS (for himself, Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia, Mr. MOORE of Utah, and Mr. MOLINARO):

H.R. 9636. A bill to allow States to require payment of State fees related to boating as a condition for issuance of a vessel number and to collect such fees in conjunction with other fees related to vessel numbering; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. PHILLIPS (for himself and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina):

H.R. 9637. A bill to improve defense cooperation between the United States and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SABLAN (for himself and Mrs. RADEWAGEN):

H.R. 9638. A bill to amend the definition of State in title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHIFF (for himself, Ms. NORTON, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. CARSON, Mr. DELUZZIO, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. TONKO, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. BROWNLEY, Mr. AUCHINCLOSS, Mr. THANEDAR, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Ms. SCHOLTEN, Ms. HOULAHAN, and Mr. KILDEE):

H.R. 9639. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to clarify that the prohibition under such Act against the fraudulent misrepresentation of campaign authority and the fraudulent solicitation of funds includes misrepresentation through the use of content generated in whole or in part with the use of artificial intelligence (generative AI), and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. VARGAS (for himself, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. PETERS, Ms. JACOBS, and Mr. LEVIN):

H.R. 9640. A bill to provide for the water quality restoration of the Tijuana River and the New River; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Natural Resources, Foreign Affairs, and the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ (for herself, Mr. MORAN, Mr. SOTO, and Mr. MOSKOWITZ):

H.R. 9641. A bill to reauthorize the PROTECT Our Children Act of 2008, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WEBSTER of Florida (for himself and Mr. CARBAJAL):

H.R. 9642. A bill to amend title 46, United States Code, to require applicants for grants that propose to use digital infrastructure or a software component to certify the applicant has an approved security plan that addresses the cybersecurity risks of such digital infrastructure or software, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. WILD (for herself, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. DELAURO, and Mr. LARSEN of Washington):

H.R. 9643. A bill to protect and expand nationwide access to fertility treatment, including in vitro fertilization; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs, Armed Services, Education and the Workforce, Ways and Means, and Oversight and Accountability, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GUTHRIE (for himself, Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. PALMER, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. PENCE, Mr. BALDERSON, and Mr. ALLEN):

H.J. Res. 204. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to "Review of Final Rule Reclassification of Major Sources as Area Sources Under Section 112 of the Clean Air Act"; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. COHEN:

H. Res. 1452. A resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2708) to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities who need long-term services and supports, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules.

By Ms. BONAMICI (for herself, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mrs. MCBATH, and Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania):

H. Res. 1453. A resolution expressing support for the designation of September 2024 as "National Workforce Development Month"; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. GREENE of Georgia:

H. Res. 1454. A resolution censuring Representatives Bennie Thompson, Troy Carter, Barbara Lee, Frederica Wilson, Yvette Clarke, Bonnie Watson Coleman, Jasmine Crockett, Joyce Beatty, and Steve Cohen for inciting violence, including two assassination attempts, against President Donald Trump; to the Committee on Ethics.

By Mr. ADERHOLT (for himself, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. SALAZAR, Mr. EVANS, Mr. LATTA, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. ELLZEY, Mr. COHEN, Mr. KEAN of New Jersey, Mr. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. MOORE of Alabama, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Mr. LAWLER, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina, Mr. GUEST, Mr. SWALWELL, Mr. CALVERT, Ms. HOULAHAN, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. DELUZIO, Mr. BACON, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mrs. CAMMACK, Mr. NEGUSE, Mr. PFLUGER, Mr. THANEDAR, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mrs. BICE, Mr. PAPPAS, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. VAN DREW, Mr. CAREY, Ms. MALLIOTAKIS, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. FEENSTRA, Mr. BABIN, Mr. D'ESPOSITO, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. STRONG, and Mr. LOUDERMILK):

H. Res. 1456. A resolution expressing support for and honoring September 17, 2024, as "Constitution Day"; to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability.

By Mr. ARRINGTON (for himself, Mr. RESCHENTHALER, Mr. MEUSER, Mr. SELF, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. OGLES, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. BUCHANAN, and Mr. WEBSTER of Florida):

H. Res. 1457. A resolution strongly condemning Vice President Kamala Harris for

championing antilaw enforcement policies and, as a result, encouraging lawlessness across the country; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARSON (for himself, Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Mr. SMUCKER):

H. Res. 1458. A resolution Recognizing the contributions of medical research and observing "Medical Research Week" from September 16 through September 20, 2024; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. LOPEZ:

H. Res. 1459. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that States should reconsider implementing ranked choice voting systems; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. MOORE of Utah:

H. Res. 1460. A resolution strongly condemning "Kamalanomics", Vice President Kamala Harris' radical economic agenda that has increased inflation, kept unemployment levels painfully high, and raised prices on everyday goods and services for United States families; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. VEASEY (for himself, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. BALINT, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. BROWN, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. CARSON, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. CROCKETT, Ms. DELBENE, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. GOLDMAN of New York, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. NORTON, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE, Mr. KIM of New Jersey, Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania, Ms. MCCLELLAN, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. NEGUSE, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. SEWELL, Ms. STEVENS, Mr. TONKO, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, and Ms. WILSON of Florida):

H. Res. 1461. A resolution supporting the designation of September 2024 as "National Voting Rights Month"; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on House Administration, Science, Space, and Technology, Oversight and Accountability, Financial Services, Ways and Means, Natural Resources, Homeland Security, and Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY AND SINGLE SUBJECT STATEMENTS

Pursuant to clause 7(c)(1) of rule XII and Section 3(c) of H. Res. 5 the following statements are submitted regarding (1) the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution and (2) the single subject of the bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. SMUCKER:

H.R. 9614.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

This bill makes permanent three tax provisions relating to ABLE (Achieving a Better Life Experience) Accounts established to assist disabled individuals, specifically provisions allowing increased contributions to such accounts, the allowance of a retirement

savings contribution tax credit up to \$1,000, and allowing a tax-free rollover from a qualified tuition (529 plan) to an ABLE account

By Mr. ALLRED:

H.R. 9615.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 4, clause 1

The single subject of this legislation is:

This bill establishes minimum requirements for notifying individuals of a change in their polling place for a federal election. Specifically, the bill requires a state that changes an individual's polling place to notify the individual at least seven days before the federal election

By Ms. BARRAGÁN:

H.R. 9616.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 of the United States Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

To amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide for the prompt approval of drugs when safety information is added to labeling, and for other purposes.

By Mr. BIGGS:

H.R. 9617.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

The single subject of this bill is to prohibit grants under Section 106 of the Housing and Community Development Act from being used to assist persons who are neither a national of the United States nor lawfully admitted for permanent residence.

By Ms. CARAVEO:

H.R. 9618.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Constitutional Authority—Necessary and Proper Clause (Art. I, Sec. 8, Clause 18)

THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I, SECTION 8: POWERS OF CONGRESS

CLAUSE 18

The single subject of this legislation is:

This bill will require the Director of the Federal Insurance Office to submit an annual report to the President and certain Congressional committees with respect to the automobile insurance industry.

By Mr. CASTRO of Texas:

H.R. 9619.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, Article I, Section 8, Clause 3, and Article I, Section 2, Clause 2.

The single subject of this legislation is:

This bill amends the International Organizations Immunities Act in order to extend certain privileges and immunities to the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN)

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 9620.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

Law Enforcement Grants

By Ms. CRAIG:

H.R. 9621.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

The single subject of this legislation is:

workforce development.

By Mrs. DINGELL:

H.R. 9622.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

This bill covers areas aimed at ending the dental crisis in America by expanding coverage, creating new access points, enhancing the workforce, improving education, and funding new research.

By Mr. HARDER of California:

H.R. 9623.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Constitution, Article 1, Sec. 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

This bill amends the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 1998 to reauthorize the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas Program and modify the Program with respect to promising practices, and for other purposes.

By Mr. HORSFORD:

H.R. 9624.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Constitutional Authority—Article 1 of the U.S. Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

Single Subject Statements—The TIPS Act has two major provisions: eliminating federal income taxes on tips and eliminating the country's sub-minimum wage for tipped employees.

By Mr. ISSA:

H.R. 9625.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 18 allows Congress to make all laws "which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution" any "other" powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States

* Note According to the Supreme Court, the Necessary and Proper Clause gives Congress the "power to make laws for carrying into execution all the Judgments which the Judicial department has power to pronounce" (Wayman v. Southard, 10 Wheat 1, 22 (1825)), and, thereby, Congress has "undoubted power to regulate the practice and procedure of federal courts" See Sibbach v. Wilson & Co., 312 U.S. 1, 9 (1941).

The single subject of this legislation is:

To authorize additional district judges for the district courts and convert temporary judgeships.

By Mr. KHANNA:

H.R. 9626.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 14 of the United States Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

Armed Services

By Mr. KHANNA:

H.R. 9627.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 14 of the United States Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

Armed Services

By Mr. KHANNA:

H.R. 9628.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 14 of the United States Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

Armed Services

By Mr. KHANNA:

H.R. 9629.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 14 of the United States Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

Armed Services

By Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia:

H.R. 9630.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The bill is enacted pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution, which provides Congress with the power to regulate commerce and relations between the United States and Indian Tribes.

The single subject of this legislation is:

This bill will provide federal recognition to the Cherokeehaka (Nottoway) Tribe.

By Ms. LEE of California:

H.R. 9631.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

article 1 section 8 of the United States constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

This bill aims to treat, prevent, and reverse chronic health conditions and address food insecurity.

By Mr. LUCAS:

H.R. 9632.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

The single subject of this legislation is:

To require certain entities to clearly disclose to small business concerns key information about factoring facility agreements prior to entering such agreements with such concerns.

By Mr. LUCAS:

H.R. 9633.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

The single subject of this legislation is:

This bill codifies the Strategic Hub for Innovation and Financial Technology of the Securities and Exchange Commission and LabCFTC of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

By Ms. MACE:

H.R. 9634.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

to prohibit the National Institutes of Health from conducting or supporting research that causes significant pain or distress to a nonhuman primate.

By Mr. NORCROSS:

H.R. 9635.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Necessary and Proper Clause (Art. 1, Sec. 8, Cl. 18)

The single subject of this legislation is: Seizures

By Mr. PAPPAS:

H.R. 9636.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

To allow States to require payment of State fees related to boating as a condition for issuance of a vessel number and to collect such fees in conjunction with other fees related to vessel numbering.

By Mr. PHILLIPS:

H.R. 9637.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

The single subject of this legislation is:

To improve defense cooperation between the United States and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

By Mr. SABLAN:

H.R. 9638.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

To amend the definition of State in title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, and for other purposes.

By Mr. SCHIFF:

H.R. 9639.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

Artificial Intelligence

By Mr. VARGAS:

H.R. 9640.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

(1) To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the U.S. Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

This bill establishes programs that address water pollution along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Specifically, the bill requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish the Tijuana River Public Health and Water Quality Restoration Program Under the program, the EPA must

By Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ:

H.R. 9641.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

The single subject of this legislation is:

Reauthorizes the PROTECT Our Children Act of 2008.

By Mr. WEBSTER of Florida:

H.R. 9642.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

Transportation safety and security

By Ms. WILD:

H.R. 9643.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section VIII

The single subject of this legislation is:

To protect and expand nationwide access to fertility treatment, including in vitro fertilization.

By Mr. GUTHRIE:

H.J. Res. 204.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

The single subject of this legislation is:

Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to "Review of Final Rule Reclassification of Major Sources as Area Sources Under Section 112 of the Clean Air Act".

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

- H.R. 617: Ms. MALLIOTAKIS.
H.R. 709: Mr. LALOTA and Mr. ARMSTRONG.
H.R. 736: Mrs. HOUCHIN.
H.R. 841: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 847: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 923: Mr. LOPEZ.
H.R. 982: Ms. KAPTUR.
H.R. 1088: Mr. CLINE.
H.R. 1277: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. TONKO, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, and Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia.
H.R. 1492: Mr. LOPEZ.
H.R. 1526: Mrs. CAMMACK and Mr. BILIRAKIS.
H.R. 1572: Mr. KENNEDY and Mr. BALDERSON.
H.R. 1584: Mr. CARSON.
H.R. 1610: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 1649: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 1705: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, and Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK.
H.R. 1764: Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER.
H.R. 1822: Ms. GARCIA of Texas.
H.R. 2407: Mr. TORRES of New York and Mr. WALBERG.
H.R. 2474: Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. CISCOMANI, and Mr. D'ESPOSITO.
H.R. 2480: Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 2584: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 2672: Mrs. GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN.
H.R. 2700: Mr. CLINE and Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 2742: Mr. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida and Mr. PERRY.
H.R. 2743: Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 2892: Mrs. GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN.
H.R. 2897: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 3183: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 3380: Mr. CARTER of Louisiana.
H.R. 3381: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 3428: Mr. PHILLIPS.
H.R. 3498: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 3600: Ms. GARCIA of Texas.
H.R. 3611: Ms. VAN DUYNÉ.
H.R. 3619: Mrs. DINGELL.
H.R. 3620: Mrs. DINGELL.
H.R. 3621: Mrs. DINGELL.
H.R. 3622: Mrs. DINGELL.
H.R. 3646: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 3649: Mr. WITTMAN.
H.R. 3808: Mr. LANDSMAN.
H.R. 3850: Mr. RYAN and Mr. CARTER of Louisiana.
H.R. 3859: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 3882: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina and Ms. STEFANIK.
H.R. 3955: Mr. MOLINARO.
H.R. 3962: Mr. MENENDEZ and Mr. MORELLE.
H.R. 3970: Ms. SEWELL.
H.R. 4157: Mr. MOLINARO and Ms. SPANBERGER.
H.R. 4184: Mr. MENENDEZ.
H.R. 4189: Mr. BERA.
H.R. 4221: Mr. PAPPAS.
H.R. 4297: Mr. LOPEZ.
H.R. 4303: Mrs. RAMIREZ.
H.R. 4326: Ms. BUDZINSKI and Ms. UNDERWOOD.
H.R. 4333: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.
H.R. 4335: Mr. GROTHMAN.
H.R. 4340: Ms. ADAMS.
H.R. 4392: Mrs. DINGELL and Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 4426: Mr. CASAR.
H.R. 4721: Mr. RULLI.
H.R. 4731: Mr. LIEU.
H.R. 4889: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 4897: Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK and Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
H.R. 4986: Mr. KHANNA.
H.R. 5025: Mrs. RAMIREZ.
H.R. 5029: Mr. KENNEDY and Ms. SALINAS.
H.R. 5030: Mr. NEWHOUSE and Mr. PANETTA.
H.R. 5041: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 5044: Mr. MOLINARO.
H.R. 5074: Mr. CARTER of Louisiana.
H.R. 5103: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 5141: Ms. KUSTER, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, and Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.
H.R. 5169: Mr. LOPEZ and Mr. COSTA.
H.R. 5266: Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 5480: Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 5560: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 5568: Mrs. TRAHAN and Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 5696: Mr. SORENSEN.
H.R. 5808: Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 5840: Mr. RULLI.
H.R. 5847: Mr. PHILLIPS.
H.R. 6031: Mr. RYAN.
H.R. 6063: Mr. LYNCH.
H.R. 6083: Mrs. GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN.
H.R. 6199: Mr. MOLINARO.
H.R. 6271: Mrs. CAMMACK.
H.R. 6348: Ms. SCANLON and Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 6394: Mr. MEUSER.
H.R. 6435: Mrs. GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN.
H.R. 6441: Mr. MOLINARO.
H.R. 6581: Mrs. DINGELL.
H.R. 6592: Mr. CARBAJAL.
H.R. 6600: Mrs. DINGELL.
H.R. 6720: Ms. PETTERSEN.
H.R. 6773: Mr. RUIZ and Ms. BARRAGÁN.
H.R. 6805: Ms. SCHOLTEN.
H.R. 6871: Mr. MOLINARO.
H.R. 6872: Mr. MOLINARO.
H.R. 6997: Mrs. GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN.
H.R. 7039: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 7108: Mr. MOLINARO.
H.R. 7138: Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida.
H.R. 7198: Mr. BEAN of Florida.
H.R. 7227: Mr. MOLINARO.
H.R. 7233: Mrs. HOUCHIN.
H.R. 7234: Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota.
H.R. 7258: Mr. PHILLIPS and Mr. CUELLAR.
H.R. 7288: Ms. JAYAPAL.
H.R. 7292: Ms. VAN DUYNÉ.
H.R. 7297: Mrs. TORRES of California.
H.R. 7308: Mr. KHANNA.
H.R. 7365: Mr. MOONEY.
H.R. 7380: Mrs. WAGNER.
H.R. 7384: Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK, Mr. KILMER, and Mr. RUTHERFORD.
H.R. 7438: Ms. LOFGREN and Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 7450: Mr. VALADAO and Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 7489: Mr. GOTTHEIMER.
H.R. 7542: Ms. TLAI.
H.R. 7596: Mr. MOLINARO.
H.R. 7597: Mr. SHERMAN.
H.R. 7618: Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas.
H.R. 7629: Mr. LARSEN of Washington and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 7634: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 7635: Mr. TORRES of New York.
H.R. 7656: Mr. LOPEZ.
H.R. 7747: Mr. SHERMAN.
H.R. 7769: Mr. MOLINARO.
H.R. 7770: Ms. PELOSI, Mr. GIMENEZ, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. CARTER of Louisiana.
H.R. 7779: Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, and Mr. FONG.
H.R. 7821: Mr. BERA.
H.R. 7829: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, and Mr. KHANNA.
H.R. 7849: Ms. TOKUDA.
H.R. 7866: Mr. WILLIAMS of New York.
H.R. 7890: Mr. GUEST.
H.R. 7891: Mr. WOMACK, Ms. CRAIG, Mr. CISCOMANI, Mr. MFUMBE, Ms. VAN DUYNÉ, Mr. LOPEZ, Mr. GUEST, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. YAKYM, and Mr. DELUZIO.
H.R. 7921: Mr. LANDSMAN, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, and Mr. MAGAZINER.
H.R. 8011: Ms. VAN DUYNÉ.
H.R. 8028: Ms. JAYAPAL.
H.R. 8040: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 8061: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. WILLIAMS of New York, Ms. McCLELLAN, and Ms. TOKUDA.
H.R. 8119: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 8137: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 8193: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 8205: Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 8231: Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Mr. MOULTON, and Mrs. HOUCHIN.
H.R. 8301: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 8358: Mr. DELUZIO.
H.R. 8413: Ms. BOEBERT.
H.R. 8420: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 8504: Mr. PANETTA.
H.R. 8505: Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. BURCHETT, Mr. EDWARDS, and Mr. KELLY of Mississippi.
H.R. 8545: Mr. KEAN of New Jersey.
H.R. 8653: Mr. CRANE, Mr. JACKSON of Texas, Mr. VEASEY, and Mrs. RODGERS of Washington.
H.R. 8698: Mr. CLEAVER and Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 8714: Mr. RUIZ.
H.R. 8715: Mr. MOULTON, Mrs. TRAHAN, Mr. MORELLE, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. ADAMS, and Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 8728: Mr. MOYLAN and Mr. CARTER of Louisiana.
H.R. 8734: Mrs. HINSON and Mr. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida.
H.R. 8758: Mr. CASTRO of Texas.
H.R. 8784: Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 8796: Ms. WATERS.
H.R. 8821: Mr. BERGMAN.
H.R. 8827: Mr. D'ESPOSITO.
H.R. 8855: Mr. CLINE and Mr. CRANE.
H.R. 8932: Mr. WALBERG.
H.R. 8945: Mr. VASQUEZ.
H.R. 8957: Mr. FITZPATRICK, Ms. TOKUDA, Mr. MAST, Mr. OWENS, Mr. GOLDEN of Maine, Mr. BENTZ, and Mr. CROW.
H.R. 8963: Mr. MEUSER.
H.R. 8995: Mr. CARTER of Louisiana.
H.R. 9001: Ms. TOKUDA.
H.R. 9015: Mr. DONALDS.
H.R. 9082: Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Ms. TRTUS, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. LAWLER, Mr. MOSKOWITZ, and Mr. HUIZENGA.
H.R. 9096: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia and Mr. WESTERMAN.
H.R. 9101: Mrs. DINGELL and Mr. PANETTA.
H.R. 9121: Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota.
H.R. 9125: Mr. PFLUGER.
H.R. 9137: Ms. WATERS and Mr. MAGAZINER.
H.R. 9144: Mr. LAWLER and Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina.
H.R. 9164: Mr. MORELLE.
H.R. 9211: Ms. CARAVEO, Ms. ESHOO, and Ms. TENNEY.
H.R. 9218: Mr. GREEN of Tennessee.
H.R. 9226: Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 9266: Mr. TORRES of New York and Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois.
H.R. 9275: Mr. D'ESPOSITO and Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 9277: Mr. GUTHRIE.
H.R. 9324: Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 9363: Ms. TOKUDA.
H.R. 9369: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
H.R. 9383: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 9449: Mr. WILLIAMS of New York.
H.R. 9462: Mr. PENCE, Mr. WILLIAMS of New York, and Mr. LAWLER.
H.R. 9488: Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 9496: Mr. LALOTA.
H.R. 9503: Mr. BRECHEEN.
H.R. 9518: Mrs. LUNA and Mr. VAN DREW.
H.R. 9523: Mr. CLINE.
H.R. 9525: Mr. RUTHERFORD.
H.R. 9535: Mr. BERGMAN, Mr. CORREA, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Ms. BROWNLEY, and Mr. COSTA.
H.R. 9539: Mr. SUOZZI.
H.R. 9549: Ms. SALINAS and Mr. BENTZ.
H.R. 9553: Ms. LOFGREN and Ms. SÁNCHEZ.
H.R. 9555: Mr. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida and Mrs. HINSON.
H.R. 9574: Mr. MANN.
H.R. 9581: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 9586: Mr. BIGGS and Mr. NORMAN.
H.R. 9589: Ms. LEE of California.
H.J. Res. 8: Mr. FONG and Mr. ZINKE.
H.J. Res. 13: Ms. STEVENS.
H.J. Res. 117: Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina.
H.J. Res. 133: Mr. FONG.
H.J. Res. 136: Mr. FONG and Mr. LOPEZ.
H.J. Res. 152: Mrs. HARSHBARGER.
H.J. Res. 163: Mr. HUNT.

H.J. Res. 166: Mr. LATTA.
 H.J. Res. 181: Mrs. HOUCHIN.
 H.J. Res. 193: Mr. THANEDAR and Ms. TITUS.
 H. Con. Res. 13: Mr. KENNEDY.
 H. Con. Res. 118: Mrs. TRAHAN.
 H. Con. Res. 122: Mr. CRENSHAW and Mr. ROSE.
 H. Res. 277: Mrs. DINGELL and Mr. MRVAN.
 H. Res. 439: Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. PANETTA, Ms. JACOBS, Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. DELAURO, and Ms. MCCOLLUM.
 H. Res. 821: Mr. CLINE.
 H. Res. 1012: Mr. CALVERT.
 H. Res. 1272: Mr. BURCHETT, Ms. SALAZAR, Mr. RESCENHALER, Mr. WILLIAMS of New York, Mr. GOODEN of Texas, Mr. MOLINARO, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. KEAN of New Jersey, Mrs. CHAVEZ-DEREMER, and Mr. GUEST.
 H. Res. 1286: Mr. DESAULNIER.
 H. Res. 1382: Mr. D'ESPOSITO.
 H. Res. 1421: Mrs. KIM of California.
 H. Res. 1425: Mr. BRECHEEN.
 H. Res. 1435: Mrs. KIM of California.
 H. Res. 1437: Mr. DIAZ-BALART.
 H. Res. 1447: Mrs. KIM of California, Ms. LETLOW, Mr. BOST, and Mr. FLOOD.
 H. Res. 1448: Ms. WATERS, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. DELAURO, and Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE.

H. Res. 1449: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. MOSKOWITZ, Mr. LAWLER, and Mr. SHERMAN.

H. Res. 1451: Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. JORDAN

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on the Judiciary in H.R. 5717, the No Bailout for Sanctuary Cities Act, do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MRS. RODGERS

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Energy and Commerce in H.J. Res. 136, Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to "Multi-Pollutant Emissions Standards for

Model Years 2027 and Later Light-Duty and Medium-Duty Vehicles", do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

DELETION OF SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 9255: Mr. D'ESPOSITO.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

PT-53. The SPEAKER presented a petition of Mr. Gregory D. Watson, relative to requesting enactment of Federal legislation that would prohibit persons who are in the United States, in violation of laws of the United States, from contributing funds into — or from drawing disbursements of funds out of — the Social Security program; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.