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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

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



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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 SHERILL 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 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 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”; and

(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 longstanding 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.

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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 predeductible 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.

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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	McCaul
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
Ellzey	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
Cárdenas
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
Houlahan
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	Houlahan
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)
Cárdenas	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. PHIL-LIPS, 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-

pact 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 congres-

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.

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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.

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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.

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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-DE REMER, 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.

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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 DELLAURO, 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. TLAIB.
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.



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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, the center of our hope, You have given us this day for our use. From the rising of the Sun until the setting of the same, Your Name deserves our praise. Today, bless our lawmakers with Your guidance and peace. Give them hope and purpose as they work on Capitol Hill, reminding them that their steps are ordered by You and that You will supply their needs. Show them that right defeated is better than triumphant evil. Lord, encourage them to wisely use their time to contribute to peace and harmony in our Nation and world.

We pray in Your sovereign Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 17, 2024.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WARNOCK thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Mary Kathleen Costello, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

RIGHT TO IVF ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, there is perhaps no more personal a decision one can make than the decision of whether or not to start a family. For many people, starting a family is the greatest joy there is. It makes everything else secondary.

Yet for millions and millions of people, infertility can be a nightmare and a source of pain. Thankfully, we live in

a time when, thanks to treatments like IVF, infertility is not the end of the story.

Sadly, access to IVF can no longer be taken for granted. From the moment the MAGA Supreme Court eliminated Roe, the hard right made clear that they would keep going. As we saw earlier this year in Alabama, IVF has become the next target of ultra-conservatives, and access to this incredible treatment is more vulnerable than ever.

Today, the Senate will hold a simple and pivotal vote on whether or not to take up, once again, the Right to IVF Act. I thank Senator DUCKWORTH, as well as Senators MURRAY and BOOKER and all the others, who have championed this bill for months. They are great leaders on this issue.

If the Senate votes no today and strikes IVF protections down yet again, it will be further proof that Project 2025 is alive and well.

Remember: Donald Trump's Project 2025 is tied to the Heritage Foundation, one of the most important and extreme conservative think tanks in the country. And, earlier this year, they came out fiercely against today's bill protecting IVF. They were even against the fig-leaf fake IVF bill pushed by Senators CRUZ and BRITT. That is how extreme they are.

If people want to see how strong Project 2025's grip is on the GOP, the outcome of today's IVF vote will be very, very revealing.

And yet, by all accounts, there is every reason in the world for Senators to vote yes today. Today's vote is simply a motion to reconsider. We are merely asking whether or not this bill is worth debating. Democrats certainly think it is. We certainly think that if any issue is worth discussing in this Chamber, it is protecting Americans' reproductive freedoms. And we Democrats extend an open invitation to our Republican colleagues to join us.

Republicans regularly claim that they are the party that stands up for

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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families. Well, today's bill is about as pro-family as it gets. It helps create families—IVF does. It says that access to IVF should be a basic right for all. And it will make sure insurance companies cover IVF treatments in their plans.

The last point is key. Expanding insurance coverage for IVF is something the vast majority of Americans support. A survey from Pew Research from last month showed that even a majority of Republicans surveyed support it—even a majority of Republicans.

Nevertheless, 3 months ago, nearly every Senate Republican voted against protecting IVF in this Chamber. It was astounding to watch them. With a straight face, our Republican colleagues claimed that, of course, they cared about supporting families; of course, they supported IVF—just not enough to actually vote to protect it.

That makes no sense—no sense. Republicans can't just talk their way past an issue as personal as IVF. What ultimately matters is how they vote on the issue.

So to my Republican colleagues today, you get a second chance: Either stand with families struggling with infertility or stand with Project 2025, which aims to make reproductive freedoms extinct.

If the Republicans truly care about helping families, they should vote yes to protect IVF. If the Republicans truly reject the insanity and cruelty—cruelty—of Project 2025 and its extreme conservative agenda, they should vote yes to protect IVF.

On the other hand, if Senate Republicans vote no today and strike IVF protections down again, it is further proof that Project 2025 is alive and well.

So, again, we hope Republicans join us to do the right thing. We ask Republicans to join us because women's reproductive freedoms are in a time of crisis, and we need to push back.

It has been 2 years since the MAGA Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*. Today, 22 States have passed abortion restrictions—14 of them essentially full bans. Over one in three American women have lost access to reproductive care. Many of them have to drive hundreds of miles out of State to get the care they need, and that still often comes with long wait times. Doctors fear they will be jailed if they offer treatments. Women in need are at risk of being turned down at hospitals, and it can become a matter of life and death.

This week, America tragically learned of the first confirmed case of a woman dying because abortion bans prevented her from getting the care she needed. She was a young woman from Georgia, a 28-year-old and the mother of a 6-year-old. She had to travel out of State to get reproductive care, and when she needed emergency surgery after a rare complication, doctors in Georgia delayed giving her the care she needed because of the new restrictions

on the books. By the time she went into surgery, unfortunately, it was too late. She tragically passed away. The State declared that her death was preventable had she only gotten care sooner.

Worst of all, there are, undoubtedly, more cases like hers. These are the terrible and deadly consequences of restricting reproductive freedom. The tragedy that happened in Georgia, of a preventable death because of abortion bans, is why Project 2025 is so dangerous: deadly restrictions to reproductive care; monitoring women's pregnancies; banning mifepristone; laying the groundwork for a national abortion ban; putting IVF at risk.

To my Republican colleagues, the choice is yours. Americans are watching; families back home are watching; and couples who want to become parents are watching too. Republicans cannot say they are pro-family but vote against protecting IVF. They cannot say they reject Project 2025 but vote against protecting IVF. That is what is at stake today. I urge everyone to vote yes.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Now, Mr. President, on the CR, the clock is ticking for Congress to reach an agreement to keep the government open beyond the September 30 deadline. That is 13 days away. At this point in the process, the only way we can prevent a harmful government shutdown is by both sides working together to reach a bipartisan agreement. That is the only way.

Speaker JOHNSON is reportedly going to hold a vote on a 6-month CR tomorrow, but the only thing that will accomplish is to make clear that he is running into a dead end. We must have a bipartisan—a bipartisan—plan instead.

Now, I will say this: For all of its faults, I am heartened about one thing that Speaker JOHNSON is doing. Speaker JOHNSON's plan preserves the essence of the Schumer-Johnson agreement that set top-line funding levels for the current fiscal year, 2024. It is encouraging to see that Speaker JOHNSON, at least for now, is resisting the hard-right choices in his party and not pushing across-the-board cuts that would be so harmful to the American people. I hope it is a sign that the Speaker realizes that these bipartisan funding levels must be part of any solution moving forward.

But, beyond that, the Speaker's CR is too unworkable. I urge him to drop his plan and to work together to reach a bipartisan agreement with the other leaders: Leader MCCONNELL, Leader JEFFRIES, and myself as well as the White House. We do not have time to spare.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

HONORING SHERIFF'S DEPUTY JOSH PHIPPS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, unfortunately, I need to begin this morning with some tragic news from Kentucky.

Late last night, Sheriff's Deputy Josh Phipps, of Russell County, was killed in the line of duty. His sacrifice is a sober reminder of the debt we owe our courageous law enforcement officials. They are the first to run toward fire and the first to put themselves in harm's way to keep us safe.

Today, I know the entire Commonwealth is holding Sheriff's Deputy Phipps in our thoughts and our prayers. So I would ask my colleagues to join me in sending our deepest sympathy to Russell County and the Phipps family as they mourn his loss.

JUDICIAL ETHICS

Mr. President, on another matter, free speech has been an animating principle for my entire career here in the Senate. I am second to no one in my defense of the First Amendment. So I have found the recent habit of the Federal judiciary's bureaucracy to try and abridge its protections alarming, to say the least.

The courts are where citizens go to have their free speech rights vindicated against censorious government officials. I know this from experience. I sued to stop the anti-speech campaign finance rules signed into law by President Bush, and I took it all the way to the Supreme Court.

But where do people go when the courts decide to behave like any other branch of government? When they put other interests over the First Amendment? Even having to ask the question is troubling.

Two of my colleagues and I recently wrote to the head of the Standing Committee on Federal Rules to express our opposition to the proposed amendment to the rules governing appellate courts. The amendment is the result of persistent bullying of the Senate Democrats, and it would force parties seeking to be heard as friends of the court to disclose their donors in certain instances.

The forced disclosure of donors is a longstanding offense against the First Amendment. This has been abundantly clear since Justice Harlan eloquently explained it in *NAACP v. Alabama*. The courts only tolerate forced disclosure in cases of actual candidate electioneering to ensure election integrity. But court cases aren't elections, and friends of the court are not candidates. The fact that the Appellate Rules Committee doesn't understand this and wants to chill free speech by mandating donor disclosure is a shocking reversal of *NAACP v. Alabama*.

That is why my colleagues and I encouraged the Standing Committee, the Judicial Conference, and the Supreme Court to scrap—scrap—this unconstitutional amendment.

Unfortunately, there is even more. Another committee in the judiciary bureaucracy, the Codes of Conduct Committee, recently amended one of its advisory opinions to prevent law clerks from seeking political employment. This is the same committee that tried to ban Federal judges from joining the nonpartisan Federalist Society while allowing them to join the highly partisan and leftwing American Bar Association. The committee reversed itself on that boneheaded decision after an uproar, an uproar from the judges of all political stripes.

In its new advisory opinion, the committee concluded that clerks could seek employment from law firms, impact litigators, elected officials, and the government, but they cannot even talk to political parties or candidates for office about a job. Doing so, they conclude, “risks linking the judge’s chambers to political activity, which could compromise the independence of the judiciary.”

Consider just how absurd this is. First, political activity is at the core of freedom of speech. To single it out for a special disability among clerks seeking employment turns the First Amendment on its head. Prohibiting a clerk from discussing employment options with the Harris campaign because it might make “the judiciary” look bad hurts the clerk’s constitutional rights in order to preserve some theoretical, attenuated interest.

Second, it is indeed a special disability and one that has no correspondence to the real world. Why is the “link” any more problematic when a clerk wants to talk to a Republican campaign, which is prohibited, but not when she wants to talk to an elected Republican, which is allowed? What about seeking employment as a political appointee in a highly partisan Garland Justice Department? Do the large law firms to which the Democratic Party outsources its campaign litigation not provide a “link” to the judiciary?

Indeed, one prominent law firm, the Elias Law Group, explicitly claims that its goal is to elect Democrats. And yet a clerk can presumably seek employment there but not from the Democratic National Committee? These are distinctions without differences.

But wait, there is more. Last week, the Judiciary Conference, in its zeal to take a hard line against misconduct in the workplace, referred a disgraced former judge to the House for impeachment. Yes, that is right. They referred a private citizen for impeachment.

Without getting into the merits of the allegations against the former judge—other than to note that they caused him to resign in disgrace—this was a remarkable action by the Federal bureaucracy. They were surely

aware that whether or not you can impeach a former official is hotly disputed, but they referred it anyway.

In other words, while trying to make a point about one political issue—workplace misconduct in the judiciary—they ended up making a point about another one—the impeachment of former officials. And for what? Forty sitting Senators have already said that you can’t do this as a matter of constitutional law, thereby making the conviction all but impossible.

The judiciary itself is under increasing attack from Democrats who want to destroy it as an independent branch of government, and the judicial bureaucracy seems desperate to appear apolitical. It has been taking affirmative steps to virtue signal on issues that matter to Democrats, from Federalist Society membership to single-judge divisions to amicus disclosure.

It would be one thing if this were empty virtue signaling, but we are talking about behavior increasingly in tension with constitutional provisions, including First Amendment rights.

So my advice to the Judicial Conference is this: The way to avoid getting involved in politics is to avoid getting involved in politics.

TOBACCO-FREE USE ACT

Now, on another matter, Mr. President, I would like to end on something the walls of this Chamber don’t hear enough of—some good news. According to an annual survey conducted by the CDC and the FDA, the number of young people in America smoking e-cigarettes dropped to its lowest level in the last decade. Let me say that again. E-cigarette use among America’s youth is now roughly one-third of the alltime high it hit just 5 years ago.

There are a lot of factors at play in this downward trend, but one powerful tailwind originated right here in the Senate.

In 2019, youth e-cigarette use was at its peak. That is the year that I wrote and introduced the Tobacco-Free Use Act with my good friend Senator KAINE from Virginia. Our bipartisan bill raised the minimum age to purchase tobacco products, including e-cigarette devices, from 18 to 21.

We didn’t try to reinvent the wheel. We knew that nearly all smokers—roughly 95 percent of them—started by the age of 21. By raising the age limit, less tobacco winds up in high schools, which means less opportunity for children to get their hands on addictive vaping devices.

This issue hits close to home. Kentucky has the highest cancer rate in the country. In years past, we have even topped the list for higher proportion of cigarette-related cancer deaths.

Now as the senior Senator from Kentucky, my decision to spearhead this litigation surprised some people. My home State has a close connection to tobacco. But as I pointed out in the past, Kentucky farmers don’t want their children forming nicotine addictions any more than any other parent.

If we have learned anything in the fight against addiction is that families are right to be worried. At this critical stage of development, nicotine products can be the first step in a life marigned by serious health problems.

So while more work remains, I am proud that the Senate stepped up to address this public health crisis, and I am grateful to see this legislation is actually making a difference.

I suggest the absence of a quorum. The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRUMP ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, before I begin, I just want to say how grateful I am that President Trump is safe after what appears to be a second attempt on his life in the space of 2 months.

The trend this election cycle has taken toward violence is disturbing to say the least, and I hope this weekend’s events will prompt reflection on our political discourse and the importance of not letting our disagreements lead to the dehumanization of our opponents.

I am grateful for all the law enforcement personnel who responded and helped prevent another tragedy, and I look forward to seeing a thorough investigation.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. President, perhaps the most important thing we do here in Congress is to provide for our Nation’s defense. I have said it before, and I will say it again: If we don’t get national security right, the rest is just conversation. Everything else we do in government and our very existence as a nation depends on our getting security right.

National security, Mr. President, is not a one-and-done kind of a situation. We can’t rely on a one-time military buildup or the reputation we have earned as a superpower to keep our Nation safe. Tactics change, technology changes, weapons change, and reputations—even strong ones—eventually change if they are not backed up with substance. Maintaining a robust national defense has to be a permanent focus, year in and year out. There is no time in which we can afford to put national security on the back burner or underfund our Nation’s military—which brings me to where we are today.

Mr. President, in July of this year, the Commission on the National Defense Strategy released its report. It had this to say:

The Commission finds that the U.S. military lacks both the capabilities and the capacity required to be confident it can deter and prevail in combat.

Let me just repeat that.

The Commission finds that the U.S. military lacks both the capabilities and the capacity required to be confident it can deter and prevail in combat.

Another quote from the Commission's report said this:

The Commission finds that, in many ways, China is outpacing the United States and has largely negated the U.S. military advantage in the Western Pacific through two decades of focused military investment. Without significant change by the United States, the balance of power will continue to shift in China's favor.

Mr. President, from the Strategic Posture Commission report:

Today the United States is on the cusp of having not one, but two nuclear peer adversaries, each with ambitions to change the international status quo, by force, if necessary: a situation which the United States did not anticipate and for which it is not prepared.

Let me again say that: "a situation which the United States did not anticipate and for which it is not prepared."

In short, we have work to do. We are not where we should be when it comes to our national defense. While our preparedness lags, the world isn't getting any safer. If anything, it is getting more dangerous.

Over the course of the Biden-Harris administration, we have seen Russia invade the sovereign nation of Ukraine, China growing increasingly aggressive in the Pacific, a brutal terrorist attack on Israel that left more than 1,000 dead, terrorists threatening shipping in the Middle East—and the list literally goes on and on.

This summer alone, Russian and Chinese bombers for the first time sortied together 200 miles off the coast of Alaska—an alarming display of the growing ties between those two nations. Taiwan reported 305 airspace violations by Chinese aircraft in the month of June—the second highest monthly total on record. The Chinese continue to swarm and even collide with ships from the Philippines. Just 2 weeks ago, Japan for the first time reported an incursion of a Chinese aircraft into its airspace. In the Middle East, U.S. military members have continued to combat terrorists on land and Houthi attacks on U.S. ships and international shipping in the Red Sea.

Hamas still holds upwards of 100 hostages in Gaza, including 7 Americans. Iran has sent close-range ballistic missiles to Russia, presumably for use against the Ukrainian people. A Pakistani national with ties to Iran was charged with plotting the assassination of multiple U.S. politicians.

I could go on.

Given all of this, you would think Democrat leadership here in the Senate would have made our yearly Defense bills—the National Defense Authorization Act and our Defense appropriations bills which fund that act—a priority, but you would be wrong. We are 2 weeks away from the end of the fiscal year, and we haven't touched the National Defense Authorization Act since it was passed by the committee, much less touched the Defense appropriations bills.

And it is not because we have been passing a bunch of other substantive

pieces of legislation. Aside from the Kids Online Safety and Privacy Act, we have basically spent the entire summer confirming Biden nominees and taking show votes selected by the Democrat leader. As a result, the fiscal year will close and the new one begin without a Defense authorizing bill and without Defense appropriations bills. Instead, our military will have to continue operating under inadequate 2024 funding levels. Existing modernization projects will be delayed, and urgent new programs will be put off.

I haven't even talked about the message these delays send to our enemies. Anyone who thinks our enemies aren't emboldened by this careless attitude toward our national security needs to think again.

For that matter, what message do these delays send to our allies? I recently returned from a trip to Japan and South Korea, led by my colleague Senator HAGERTY, to build relationships and enhance trilateral cooperation. We stressed the imperative of investing in our mutual defense cooperation—a message that will be undercut by our putting defense legislation on the back burner. Likewise, our message to allies and partners around the world that they should take more seriously their own defense investments will be juxtaposed against our own inaction.

Needless to say, it didn't have to be this way. If the Democrat leader had been more interested in meeting Congress's basic responsibilities than in conducting show votes he hopes may win Democrats a few votes in November, we could have already passed not only the National Defense Authorization Act but the Defense appropriations bill that funds that act as well. As it is, thanks to the decisions of the Democrat leader, our military will have to wait at least until after the election. Meanwhile, our adversaries' efforts continue.

Mr. President, this isn't the first time in the Biden-Harris administration that Democrats have chosen to put our national defense on the back burner. While we don't know what the Senate or the Presidency will look like next year, I hope—I sincerely hope—that we will have leaders who take our national security a little more seriously because I suspect that if we don't, we will have cause—great cause—to regret it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PADILLA). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 778, Mary Kathleen Costello, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Laphonza R. Butler, Benjamin L. Cardin, Mazie Hirono, Chris Van Hollen, Ben Ray Lujan, Brian Schatz, Thomas R. Carper, Margaret Wood Hassan, Christopher Murphy, Tammy Duckworth, Tina Smith, Jack Reed, Patty Murray, Amy Klobuchar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Mary Kathleen Costello, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) would have voted "yea."

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 54, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 241 Ex.]

YEAS—54

Baldwin	Hassan	Reed
Bennet	Heinrich	Romney
Blumenthal	Helmy	Rosen
Booker	Hickenlooper	Sanders
Brown	Hirono	Schatz
Butler	Kaine	Schumer
Cantwell	Kelly	Shaheen
Cardin	King	Sinema
Carper	Klobuchar	Smith
Casey	Lujan	Stabenow
Collins	Markey	Tester
Coons	Merkley	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Murkowski	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Fetterman	Ossoff	Welch
Gillibrand	Padilla	Whitehouse
Graham	Peters	Wyden

NAYS—42

Barrasso	Ernst	Moran
Blackburn	Fischer	Mullin
Boozman	Grassley	Paul
Braun	Hagerty	Ricketts
Britt	Hawley	Risch
Budd	Hoehn	Rubio
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Tuberville
Cruz	Marshall	Wicker
Daines	McConnell	Young

NOT VOTING—4

Manchin Tillis
Rounds Vance

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). On this vote, the yeas are 54, the nays are 42.

The motion is agreed to.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:38 p.m. recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. LUJÁN).

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

RIGHT TO IVF ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session and resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 4445, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 413, S. 4445, a bill to protect and expand nationwide access to fertility treatment, including in vitro fertilization.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT—S. 4368

Mrs. BRITT. Mr. President, I am proud today to be joining my colleague from Texas in support of the IVF Protection Act. I am grateful to Senator CRUZ for his leadership on this important topic.

Both Senator CRUZ and I are parents. We can both attest to the fact that there is no greater blessing in life than our children. For many Americans, building a family, becoming a mom or a dad—that is their American dream.

IVF makes the difference in achieving that dream for millions of Americans who are facing infertility. IVF helps aspiring parents to start families, to grow their family. In the United States, nearly 200 babies are born a day, so nearly 2 percent of all babies born are because of IVF.

This treatment is really a game changer for so many families; that is why I strongly support continued nationwide access to IVF. IVF is legal and available from coast to coast, in every single corner of America, and in all 50 States.

That includes my home State of Alabama, where Governor Ivey and the Alabama legislature acted quickly to protect IVF access.

Today, we have an opportunity to act quickly and overwhelmingly to protect continued nationwide IVF access for loving American families.

Our IVF Protection Act would do just that: It would give aspiring parents nationwide the certainty and peace of mind that IVF will remain legal and

available in every State. Our bill is the only bill that protects IVF access while safeguarding religious liberty.

It also could get 60 votes in the U.S. Senate, and isn't that the point? Yet we are going to have a show vote when we have been talking and saying that we want to protect access to IVF, but yet no one is working to actually get to the 60-vote threshold, which makes me wonder how serious my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are about this.

In an era of hyperpartisanship, this bill, the IVF Protection Act, should be the one that is on the floor today. This is the bill that will give aspiring parents confidence and continued hope that their dreams of bringing life into this world can come true.

Look, as I talk to families across Alabama and parents who are hopeful they can bring a child into this world, making sure that this process is protected and available is critically important.

However, this bill is not the one the Democrats are putting on the floor. This is not drafted in that way. It is drafted to be a partisan scare tactic in what we are going to see today. For example, it is not written in a way to narrowly cover IVF; it includes completely separate treatments and technology, even including human cloning.

Democrats are choosing to spread misinformation rather than fostering hope. The American people deserve better. The path forward is Senator CRUZ and my IVF Protection Act. Again, I want to applaud my colleague from Texas for his unwavering and continued support for nationwide IVF access.

While Democrats prioritize scaring families, Republicans will continue to fight for them. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I want to thank my friend Senator BRITT for her powerful and passionate defense of in vitro fertilization. Senator BRITT has been an incredible partner as she and I have worked to pass landmark Federal legislation protecting IVF for every American.

I am proud to rise once again to speak on an issue that is personal and vital to millions of American families: the protection of in vitro fertilization. IVF is a medical miracle that has brought the joy of parenthood to millions of families who otherwise might never have experienced it.

I am an unequivocal supporter of protecting IVF, and I am grateful that IVF has given so many parents struggling with infertility the gift of finally holding a child, a baby, in their arms, finally having the opportunity to be a mother or a father and to raise a son or daughter and to give all of the love in a family that they so desperately want to give.

Today, unfortunately, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are staging an empty show vote on what they call an IVF bill in order to stoke base-

less fears about IVF and push their broader political agenda.

Let's be clear, there is not a single Senator in this Chamber, on either side of the aisle, who wants to ban IVF. All 100 Senators, to the best of my knowledge, support IVF. Not a single one has called for banning it.

And yet I previously voted against the Democrats' partisan legislation because it is not an IVF bill. It is designed to backdoor and federalize broad abortion legislation, which I understand is the Democrats' partisan position, but it is contrary to the views of a great many Americans.

And the partisan Democrat bill also deliberately overturns the conscious protections of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. You know, it is unfortunate that Democrats have abandoned what used to be a bipartisan commitment to religious liberty and they are now more than willing to overturn religious liberty protections.

Instead of pushing a partisan and, frankly, cynical agenda, I invite my Democratic colleagues to actually do what they claim they want to do, which is work with me today and stand together to pass clear Federal legislation protecting IVF.

IVF is profoundly pro-family. Over 8 million babies have been born through IVF, providing millions of American families the chance to embrace the joy of raising a child. It is an avenue of hope for those struggling with infertility.

Misconceptions and deliberate scare tactics from the Democrats about the legal standing of IVF will only serve to hurt families who are desperately trying to welcome a child into their lives.

What the American people deserve is straightforward, pro-IVF legislation. That is why my colleague Senator BRITT and I have introduced the IVF Protection Act, legislation that offers ironclad, Federal statutory protection for IVF.

Our bill does not engage in backdoor politics. It does not infringe on the deeply held beliefs of individuals or organizations. It simply does what needs to be done: safeguarding the right of couples to grow their family if they choose to use IVF. Because this should not be a political issue; instead, it is a deeply human issue.

Our bill unequivocally prohibits any State or local government from banning IVF, ensuring that no family will be caught in the crossfire of State-level judicial interpretations. It provides peace of mind to parents and to aspiring parents, while still allowing States to implement reasonable health and safety standards.

It ensures that access to IVF is fully protected by Federal law so that every family praying to have a child will be fully protected in their right to pursue parenthood.

This isn't just policy. It is a promise to honor and support your desire to welcome a new baby into your family.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bill. This is a

moment for us to unite political divides and affirm our shared belief in the sanctity of family and the promise of life.

In just a moment, I will propound a unanimous consent request to take up and pass the Cruz-Britt bill. Because if we truly stand with families, we must act now to ensure that IVF remains protected today and for generations to come.

Now, for those of you in the gallery, those of you at home, there are times when Senate procedure can sound confusing. I want to explain what you are about to see. I am going to ask this body for unanimous consent to pass Senator BRITT's and my legislation protecting IVF, putting it into Federal law, a clear Federal statutory protection for IVF.

After I ask for consent, we are going to see a Democrat Senator stand up and begin speaking. When she begins speaking, you should listen to two magic words: "I object."

If the Democrats say those words, "I object," it will defeat this bill. And I want you to understand all that is necessary is for the Democrats not to say those words, "I object." We could have Democrat Senators stand up and give speeches about all of their policy priorities, but understand, the show vote this afternoon is not about IVF, because if the Democrats wanted to protect IVF, this bill would pass 100 to nothing right now.

What the show vote this afternoon is about is Democrats want to spend hundreds of millions of dollars running TV ads in an election season falsely claiming that Republicans oppose IVF.

So listen carefully, if you hear the words "I object" from Senate Democrats, then you will understand the only reason that IVF is not protected with strong, ironclad protection in Federal statute is because Senate Democrats cynically object to protecting IVF.

And I would note to the members of the media who are writing on this, the Democrats are staging the show vote to get the headlines. They want you to write headlines: Every Republican opposes IVF.

Well, if you are going to write those false headlines, at least include the facts that today the Senate would have passed 100 to nothing strong, clear Federal protection of IVF for every mom and dad, every parent in America but for the fact that Senate Democrats cynically object while they claim to support IVF.

Well, let's listen and see what happens. Let's hear if we hear the words "I object."

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Finance Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 4368 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object. I have been perfectly clear about the glaring issue with this Republican bill. The cold, hard reality is this Republican bill does nothing to meaningfully protect IVF from the biggest threats from lawmakers and anti-abortion extremists all over this country.

It would still allow States to regulate IVF out of existence. And this bill is silent on fetal personhood, which is the biggest threat to IVF. It is silent on whether States can demand that an embryo be treated the same as a living, breathing person or whether parents should be allowed to have clinics dispose of unused embryos, something that is a common, necessary part of the IVF process.

Talk to the experts who provide this care. Talk to the families who are seeking it. And that question looms large in their mind.

What are we supposed to do if our State says these embryos are living, breathing people? Do we have to do this process in another State? What is our legal risk here?

That uncertainty is at the core of the chaos Republican bans have caused. The last time Republicans offered this hollow gesture of a bill, I asked the junior Senator from Texas point-blank: Do you support letting parents have unused embryos disposed of? And a funny thing actually happened: He said on the floor "I will answer that question," but he never did. He spoke about what the laws in some of our States are, but he never actually said what he supported; he never said what he believes should be Federal law; he never mentioned that he once pledged to support a constitutional amendment to establish fetal personhood as the law of the land.

So I ask all of my Republican colleagues once again: As a matter of national policy, should parents be allowed to dispose of unused embryos? If so, why is that key provision missing from your bill? Well, we all know why. If not, how can you look the American people in the eye and say you support IVF? It doesn't compute.

Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I would note there is one reason and one reason only that the Senate has not passed 100 to nothing a clear, unequivocal Federal protection of IVF: because Senate Democrats cynically chose to object.

The Senator from Washington raised all sorts of issues that are, frankly, red herrings. The issues she raised are current State law in multiple States, including Louisiana, including Missouri, including Georgia. Yet, IVF is fully protected and available in those States.

Senator BRITT and I very consciously focused this bill on issues that could

command bipartisan agreement. There is not a word in this bill that any Senator, Democrat or Republican, disagrees with.

Understand why the Democrats are objecting. The Democrats are objecting because they do not want to protect IVF in Federal statute. It is cynical because we are 49 days away from Election Day, and they intend to try to scare voters in elections across the country by misleading the voters—I will point out, at the same time that we have a Presidential election.

Many of us served with the Vice President, KAMALA HARRIS. I remember Vice President HARRIS voting again and again and again against border security, against a border wall. Yet, right now, Vice President HARRIS is spending millions of dollars running ads with pictures of Donald Trump's border wall. It is deeply cynical, and it is because she is running away from her open borders record.

The same is true here. The Democrats are going to spend millions of dollars arguing that Republicans are opposed to IVF and ignoring the fact that it is Democrats standing up and objecting that prevent it from being protected in Federal law.

The Democrats don't want to protect IVF because if we pass this law, do you know what? They couldn't run their misleading campaign commercials. So from a partisan perspective on the Democrat side, it is far better to block strong Federal legislation protecting IVF than to actually come together in a bipartisan way and pass this. I wish we had done that, but this is an election season, and perhaps that is asking too much from my colleagues.

Mr. CORNYN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. CRUZ. I would happily yield to Senator CORNYN for a question.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. I am a little confused. If the Democrats sincerely want to pass a law relative to IVF, wouldn't they ordinarily work to have an amendment process where we can actually have debate and maybe achieve some consensus?

It seems to me that by introducing a bill that they know is bound to fail and blocking the bill that you and the Senator from Alabama have offered, they are guaranteeing there will be no Federal protection for IVF. Am I missing something?

Mr. CRUZ. As usual, my friend, the fellow Senator from Texas, you are not missing something. That is precisely what is going on. This is not lawmaking. This is politics. This is partisan politics. This is an election campaign commercial that the Democrats are engaging in.

To make clear, Leader SCHUMER knows the result of the vote this afternoon. Why? Because we had the same vote just a couple of months ago. He knows exactly the result. Why are we voting on it again? Because they want

reporters to write the same headlines again to deceive the voters.

Again, I invite my Democrat colleagues, this should be an easy bill to support if—and this is a big “if”—in good faith you actually want to protect IVF legislation.

If you want a campaign issue, the worst thing for Democrats is actually to pass the Cruz-Britt bill because then it takes the issue off the table because every mom and dad and every woman or man who wants to be a mother or father knows IVF is protected. The Democrats don't want that.

Mr. CORNYN. Would the Senator yield for one more question?

Mr. CRUZ. I am happy to yield to Senator CORNYN.

Mr. CORNYN. So if Senator SCHUMER and Senator MURRAY—the Senate Democrats who offered this bill—were actually serious about passing a bill to protect IVF, wouldn't the logical approach be to make sure there was an opportunity to offer and vote on an amendment? If they were to prevail in their version of the bill, well, 60 Senators could determine that and make that happen.

If, in fact, 60 Senators agreed with the bill that you and the Senator from Alabama have offered, then that bill would prevail and go to the House and then presumably to the President for his signature. But apparently they are afraid to allow the Cruz-Britt bill to even get a vote. They have so little confidence in the likely electoral outcome of their proposal that they don't even want a vote on the Cruz-Britt bill.

So, again, I just wanted to ask the Senator a couple of questions because I was wondering whether I was missing something. This seems like, as you said, a cynical show vote and certainly not one to accomplish a result. I appreciate your answering the question.

Mr. CRUZ. The Senator from Texas is exactly correct. As Senator CORNYN knows well, there are multiple ways to draft a bill. What the Democrats have drafted is a bill that is intended to force Republicans to vote no because that is the objective. They want the “no” vote. They deliberately have put poison pills in this bill. They call it an IVF bill, but it is a radical pro-abortion bill, and it is a radical anti-religious liberty bill. Their objective is they want their bill to fail because this is all about misleading campaign commercials.

The bill that Senator BRITT and I drafted—we worked very carefully to draft a bill that every Senator could agree with. There is not a word in our bill that the Democrats disagree with.

Look, abortion is an issue that divides this Chamber. There are some of us who are pro-life; there are others who are pro-choice. Senator BRITT and I recognized we were not going to resolve the disagreements on abortion on the floor today, so we deliberately drafted a bill that is focused on IVF specifically.

There are no poison pills in our bill. There is nothing designed to force the Democrats to vote no.

Senator CORNYN is exactly right that if our bill were on the floor, I believe it would pass. I believe any Democrat voting honestly would vote for it, but I think, at a minimum, we would get 60 votes and enough to pass it, which is why the Democrats object to taking it up—because they want their bill to fail in order to be misleading.

Mrs. BRITT. Would the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. CRUZ. I am happy to yield to the Senator from Alabama.

Mrs. BRITT. So it is my understanding, as the 2 of us came together, 49 Republicans-strong, sent a letter—a statement saying we strongly support IVF. Now, if the Democrats were serious about needing to protect IVF—which, by the way, is legal and accessible in every State—then wouldn't they have come to us to figure out a pathway forward? Yet, today, instead of taking our bill and, if they feel like it needs to be improved, working to do that, they are choosing to do a show vote just to give themselves something to campaign on.

Has anyone approached you about working together to find a pathway forward for IVF? Because I am a strong supporter of IVF. I am proudly here pro-family and believe that we need to find ways to make sure that people do have access and that it continues that way, and I think we have been very clear. But no one has approached me. And you have to get to 60.

So if you really believe that IVF is in trouble and in jeopardy, then wouldn't we be the first two people you would come talk to? And no one has talked to me. Yet this bill is going on the floor, which means they know they can't get to 60. There are only 51 of them. Maybe they have a few more.

My question is, has anyone approached you? Because if they authentically wanted to protect IVF, if they really cared about women and parents who are wanting to bring a child into the world and they want to give them certainty, they don't just want something to campaign on, I think we would be the first two people you would come talk to to figure out how to have a path forward. No one has spoken to me. It is so ingenuous. This body is supposed to be more than that. Has anyone spoken to you?

Mr. CRUZ. I thank Senator BRITT for that question. No, no Democrat has spoken to me.

I am, like you, unequivocally in support of IVF, but, understand, the Democrats do not want to pass legislation protecting IVF. If you are trying to pass legislation, you don't put poison pills in it. That is what the Democrats have done. Their objective, their goal, is to have their partisan bill fail so that they can use it for political campaigns across this country. It is designed to fail, and it is cynical. It is also predicated on, sadly, the failure of

the media—I would note there are no reporters that I see sitting in the Gallery. It is predicated on what they know the media will refuse to cover—that they are the ones blocking IVF. They are counting on the media to be partisan and to push their deceptive messaging.

We should be protecting IVF. We should be standing unequivocally. As Senator BRITT noted, all 49 Republicans stood and signed a joint letter saying we support IVF, we support protecting IVF.

I would note, the last time Senator BRITT and I came to this floor, we were joined by Senator ROGER MARSHALL from Kansas. Senator ROGER MARSHALL is a physician—he is an OB/GYN—who has performed IVF for years. He has helped hopeful parents become parents through IVF. And it is literally the cynical position of Democrats that an IVF doctor is opposed to IVF.

I want to repeat that for you because it is such an absurd statement. It is the partisan political position of Senate Democrats that an IVF doctor—ROGER MARSHALL has helped hundreds of parents conceive through IVF, and yet Senate Democrats claim he somehow opposes IVF. That is not true. Use your common sense.

This is cynical, and it is wrong. But for those of you at home about to be subjected to millions of dollars of false campaign ads from the Democrats, just understand that if they are telling you that there are Senators who are trying to ban IVF, they are deliberately misleading you, and they are doing it because they don't want to defend their actual position on the issues.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, by all accounts, a vote to protect something as basic and as popular as IVF shouldn't be necessary, but sadly it is very necessary thanks to attacks against reproductive care by Donald Trump and his Project 2025.

From the moment Donald Trump's MAGA Supreme Court reversed Roe, the hard right made clear that they would keep going. As we saw earlier this year in Alabama, IVF has become one of the hard right's next targets.

Today, Senate Republicans must answer a simple question: Do they support American families' access to IVF or not?

If they support it, the only option is to vote yes on the Right to IVF Act, but if Senate Republicans vote no today and block IVF protections yet again, it will be further proof they stand against the well-being of families. If Senate Republicans vote no today, it will be further proof that Project 2025 is alive and well when it comes to women's rights and reproductive rights as well.

Republicans cannot claim to care about supporting families while voting against IVF protections, but that is

precisely what they did 3 months ago. Today, Republicans get a second chance: Either stand with families struggling with infertility or stand against families and with Project 2025.

Kudos and great thanks to Senators DUCKWORTH and MURRAY and BOOKER and to everyone who has championed this bill. Thank you to all of my colleagues who have raised their voices on this most personal of issues. I urge everyone to vote yes.

MOTION TO PROCEED TO THE MOTION TO RECONSIDER

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to the motion to reconsider the vote by which cloture failed on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 413, S. 4445.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

MOTION TO RECONSIDER CLOTURE VOTE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote by which cloture was not invoked on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 413, S. 4445.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to reconsider.

The motion was agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 413, S. 4445, a bill to protect and expand nationwide access to fertility treatment, including in vitro fertilization.

Charles E. Schumer, Tammy Duckworth, Richard Blumenthal, Alex Padilla, Tammy Baldwin, Tim Kaine, Richard J. Durbin, Jeanne Shaheen, Benjamin L. Cardin, Debbie Stabenow, Patty Murray, Catherine Cortez Masto, Tina Smith, Elizabeth Warren, Sheldon Whitehouse, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Christopher Murphy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 413, S. 4445, a bill to protect and expand nationwide access to fertility treatment, including in vitro fertilization, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the

Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) would have voted "nay."

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 242 Leg.]

YEAS—51

Baldwin	Heinrich	Reed
Bennet	Helmy	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Sanders
Brown	Hirono	Schatz
Butler	Kaine	Schumer
Cantwell	Kelly	Shaheen
Cardin	King	Sinema
Carper	Klobuchar	Smith
Casey	Lujan	Stabenow
Collins	Markey	Tester
Coons	Merkley	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Murkowski	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Fetterman	Ossoff	Welch
Gillibrand	Padilla	Whitehouse
Hassan	Peters	Wyden

NAYS—44

Barrasso	Fischer	Mullin
Blackburn	Graham	Paul
Boozman	Grassley	Ricketts
Braun	Hagerty	Risch
Britt	Hawley	Romney
Budd	Hoeven	Rubio
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Tuberville
Cruz	Marshall	Wicker
Daines	McConnell	Young
Ernst	Moran	

NOT VOTING—5

Booker	Rounds	Vance
Manchin	Tillis	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WELCH). On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 44. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion on reconsideration is not agreed to.

The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

RIGHT TO IVF ACT

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to speak on the bill that recently failed, despite my colleagues' assertion that they support access to in vitro fertilization for all Americans.

You know, this morning I was able to pack my daughters' lunchboxes. It sounds mundane, I know, but when I spend just a second thinking about it, even that kind of everyday moment with my girls isn't mundane at all—it is a miracle.

Because after 10 years of struggling with infertility, after being wounded in combat, I was only able to have my two darling girls through the medical marvel that is in vitro fertilization.

The only reason there are PB&Js for me to make for their lunch, the only reason there are teeny sneakers for me to Velcro closed is because after I came home from war, I had the freedom to seek the healthcare I needed to make my dream of going from "TAMMY" to "mommy" a reality.

I was one of the lucky ones, because now, that freedom to get reproductive

care is at risk for millions of other women whose most desperate hope in the world is to have a little one of their own. Make no mistake, that isn't some future nightmare; this is our present reality.

Countless women already had their IVF treatments interrupted this year after an Alabama Supreme Court ruling painted women seeking fertility treatment as criminals.

And in this perilous moment for our country, as we stare down November and all the uncertainties that come with it, there is no telling how many more will follow.

Look, I doubt that Donald Trump even knows what the acronym IVF stands for, and half the time I wonder if he can even spell IVF. But despite the incoherent, delusional, and, frankly, embarrassing rambling that came out of his mouth last week, the reality is that he is the reason that IVF is at risk in the first place.

The Dobbs decision is what led us to today's nightmare, taking the power to decide how and when to start families from us women and handing it to politicians in statehouses across the country.

Donald Trump is the one who brags about taking down Roe. Donald Trump is the one who acts like that is something to be proud of. He is like a bank robber who steals cash out of the till and flees the scene and then still expects a reward for calling the police to report a crime.

So while it may now be convenient for him to claim that his support of IVF is as huge as the made-up crowd sizes at his rallies, we know the truth. He is the reason that IVF is in danger. He is to blame. He and every other Republican who cares more about staying good with Trump than about doing good for the Americans they are supposed to be serving.

Many—too many—of those Republicans are in this very Chamber. I know that because today marked the third time in the past 7 months that I have come to the floor begging my Republican colleagues to help me pass legislation I wrote that would protect every American's right to IVF, regardless of what State they live in—a bill that would ensure no doctor or hopeful mom could be criminalized for trying to start a family; one that would permit all health insurers to cover the treatments; and one that would require the Federal health insurance plan to cover reproductive technologies, allowing our troops to preserve their sperm or eggs before deploying to a combat zone.

When I tried to pass it in February, it took the junior Republican Senator from Mississippi what seemed like not even one full Mississippi second to block its passage. Then when I tried to pass it again in June, nearly every GOP Member voted it down.

Today it was the same old cynical story, as Republican after Republican voted no, no, no. And at this point, it is obvious, despite whatever talking

points they force through gritted teeth on cable news, when the rubber hits the road and the vote is called, Republicans will do anything to get out of actually passing legislation that would protect women's right to access reproductive healthcare.

Women in this country have been through enough. What women don't need is a man who was found liable for sexual abuse controlling what we can or cannot do with our bodies. What we don't need are politicians who have sworn fealty to a convicted felon treating us like we are the ones who are criminals.

It is tragic. Republicans only seem to care about protecting life when it supposedly consists of some cells in a medical lab freezer. But what about when that life is a fifth grader whose school day gets shattered by a man with an AR-15 who wants to turn their math class into a massacre?

What about when that life is their neighbor's, who is yet one more woman to bleed out on the delivery table, as the maternal mortality crisis among women of color rages on? Well, then those same Republicans couldn't seem to care less about defending the sanctity of life.

Listen, I am sure that some of my colleagues will try to slink away from taking any accountability here. Per usual, they will shout some ridiculous excuse, like this bill would allow for human-animal hybrids, as if anyone would ever believe that. And, for the record, it would not.

Well, to those folks I say that this afternoon's vote was your chance to put your vote where your mouth is. It was your chance to prove that you believe that every woman in this country deserves the chance to be called "Mom" without also being called a criminal. Instead, your true policy beliefs, your hypocrisy, your misogyny showed through.

Look, I went to war to defend this Nation's rights and freedoms. I did it because I believed so deeply in the importance of that mission. I wasn't asking my GOP colleagues to head into combat to show that they cared deeply too. I wasn't asking them to do anything hard at all, actually. All I was asking them to do was to simply support a bill that could have represented millions of women's only chance of starting families.

All I was asking of them was to vote in a way that reflected the position they claim to have when they were spouting talking points on FOX News. They couldn't even do that. So on behalf of every woman who has faced a heart-shattering struggle of infertility, all I can say to my Republican colleagues this afternoon is: Shame on you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I first want to thank our colleague Senator DUCKWORTH from Illinois for her

leadership. Anyone that sees the beautiful pictures of her two girls with their different personalities, both of whom would not be here without these procedures, would understand once you see those kids. As we all know people in our families, our friends, our neighbors who, literally, their families are there because of this procedure, we understand how disappointing this vote was. That is a Minnesota euphemism for what happened in just the last hour, where we only had two of our Republican colleagues—the same two who voted with us last time—who were willing to stand up for IVF.

IVF is a miracle medical treatment for families who couldn't otherwise have children. Over the last four decades, 8 million babies—8 million babies—have been born around the world thanks to IVF. Yet today we are moving backwards.

The right to IVF is under attack because 2 years ago, the Supreme Court decided to shred half a century of legal precedent and strip away women's right to make their own healthcare decisions.

Now American women are at the mercy of a patchwork of State laws, as my colleague from Illinois just described, which governs their access to reproductive care, including fertility treatment. What has happened in Minnesota now is way different than what happened in our neighboring States of South Dakota and North Dakota where, in fact, women have crossed the border to get the kind of healthcare they need instead of, as my colleague noted, what has happened in Oklahoma and other States—bleeding out in parking lots because they have no choice.

We saw it happen, of course, when it comes to IVF in Alabama. Their February Supreme Court decision brought IVF procedures in the State to a halt, leaving more than 2 million women in that State without access to this treatment.

Whatever happens legally, court cases and the like that change things, that go back and forth, it really is the same thing, all of this. All of this angst, all of this actual disastrous effect on women's rights could have been prevented. But instead, we have a group of people—which does not reflect where 70 to 80 percent of the American people are—who have decided that politicians should make these decisions about women's health; that politicians should be the ones who are going to decide about IVF or are going to decide about whether or not people can get abortions or the kind of birth control that they want or even have access to mifepristone.

I used to think that the people who were opposing us on this wanted to bring us back to the 1950s, but now it looks like it is the 1850s. The people of this country deserve better.

I am thinking of Meta, a woman from Minnesota, who became a mom thanks to IVF. In her own words:

I am the proud mother of twin girls, but without IVF and my ability to access treatment, they would not be here today.

Our twins are . . . almost 8 years old and I cannot imagine my life without them. They are incredible humans who are already bringing so much love, joy, and hope into this world.

Every parent deserves that hope. No court, no politician should interfere with that hope. But right now that hope is under attack, and today many of my colleagues chose to deny that hope to women across the country. In doing so, they are working against the will of 86 percent of Americans who believe IVF should be protected and legal.

Attacks on reproductive freedom and freedom in general is not what today should be about. I refuse to settle for a reality in which my daughter has fewer rights than I did or her grandmother did. And I will never stop fighting for a future where women—and not politicians—are in charge of their own healthcare decisions.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BUDD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to use a prop during my speech.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Mr. BUDD. Mr. President, today, I have the distinct honor of recognizing my alma mater, Appalachian State University, on the 125th anniversary of its founding.

Established in Boone, NC, as Watauga Academy in 1899, App State began as a teachers college with 53 students.

Today, it enrolls over 21,000 students, employs more than 3,500 employees, and boasts more than 150,000 living alumni who exemplify the Mountaineer spirit every day.

This strong and steady growth has established App State as a premier public institution and one of the largest in the UNC System.

Given its worldwide reputation, App State has remained true to its mission as a rural institution known for service to its local and regional communities. App State is committed to increasing enrollment of students from North Carolina's rural populations and ensuring timely graduation with as little debt as possible.

The university's regional impact is undeniable, contributing nearly \$2.2 billion to our State's economy. App State continues to maintain a low student-to-faculty ratio and offers more than 150 undergraduate and 80 graduate majors at its campuses in Boone, Hickory, and online.

The university is committed to supporting the workforce needs of North Carolina as one of our State's leading producers of graduates in business, education, and healthcare.

Moreover, App State has stepped up to meet the growing needs in the areas

of veterinary technology, health sciences, and cyber security.

App State's successes reach beyond the classroom to competitive sports, with more than 400 Mountaineer student athletes in 17 NCAA Division 1 varsity sports. These student athletes earned a cumulative GPA above 3.0 for the 12th consecutive year during the spring semester of 2024.

Since joining the Sun Belt Conference in 2014, Mountaineer athletics programs have won 13 conference championships. Four of those titles belong to the nationally ranked football team—the legendary triumphs of which are known from Ann Arbor, MI, to College Station, TX.

On behalf of the citizens of the State of North Carolina, I congratulate Appalachian State University on 125 years of service to our State and our region.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

FARM BILL

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, last week, hundreds of farmers and ranchers, from all regions of our country, representing operations of all sizes and all the major crops, traveled to the Capitol to encourage us to pass a strong, farm-focused farm bill before the end of this year.

I met with many of these individuals, and I am grateful they took the time away from their families and their farms and ranches to tell us what is at stake if Congress fails to pass a farm bill this year.

For these farmers, this trip came with the additional stress of being away from the farm at the height of harvest season. Their visits clearly articulated the anxiety gripping farm country at this crucial moment.

For the past few months, farmers, ranchers, the organizations that represent them, and the agricultural banking sector have all warned of an impending crisis in farm country.

Producers are struggling to make ends meet in an environment where costs for farm inputs have ballooned from inflation; interest rates have doubled; and market prices are far below the cost production.

Coupled with consecutive years of losses, the financial stress borne—particularly by our row crop farmers—is now being revealed. The reality is, there will be fewer farmers in 2025 if Congress does not respond.

We have been warned that many farmers will struggle to secure operating loans for next year. This is a devastating realization. The outdated farm safety net they are operating under is doing nothing to address these realities. That is why the Senate needs to take two immediate actions.

First, we need to provide emergency assistance to address the economic losses that farmers are facing associated with the 2024 crop. Even with record yields, farmers are still not breaking even. This is not a crisis that they can handle, in any way insure

themselves, or conserve their way out of it. Farmers across the country need a bridge to help their family farmers survive in the next year.

We have seen previous ad hoc assistance programs established in a period of weeks, as demonstrated by then-Secretary Perdue when the COVID-19 pandemic created disruptions for producers. That level of timely and urgent response by Congress and the administration is once again warranted.

In Southern States like Arkansas, in Mississippi, and Texas, many producers have harvested their 2024 crop, and many are losing hundreds of dollars per acre of ground they farm. That same experience is beginning to creep into the Midwest and Northern States as harvest begins in these regions.

What do losses of this magnitude actually translate to? Not only are producers not able to pay their bills, but they won't be able to secure an operating loan for next year's crop, let alone have any income at all to survive on. This has a devastating ripple effect on rural businesses and communities.

Now, let me be clear, emergency assistance does not reduce the need to make meaningful investments to the commodity and crop insurance titles of the next farm bill. In fact, the clear necessity of providing ad hoc assistance for economic losses demonstrates how inadequate the 2018 farm bill has become.

The next farm bill is the appropriate place to make the necessary long-term corrections to our farm safety net, but farmers need timely support addressing the 2024 losses as they enter the winter months when they make planting decisions and secure financing for the upcoming crop year, which leads me to this second action Congress must take.

We must redouble our efforts and pass a farm bill before the end of the calendar year—one that meets this moment, one that provides the support our farmers desperately need to stay in business.

I am committed to sitting down with my counterparts for as long as it takes to hash out a deal that our Members can support. I was encouraged to see House Ag Committee Ranking Member DAVID SCOTT make a similar appeal last week. I know our respective chairs are eager to pass a bill this session of Congress, but the window to make this happen is closing quickly. Our family farmers are staring down a crisis that is growing more dire by the day, and many fear that the Senate simply doesn't care about their plight.

The Presiding Officer and I both know, as the Presiding Officer is one of our stellar members on the Ag Committee, that that is far from the truth. I know that our colleagues—all of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle—want to make sure our farmers can continue to produce the safest, most affordable, and most abundant supply of food, fuel, and fiber in the world, but without action, it is an understandable sentiment. We have been sounding the

alarm on this brewing crisis for months. It is the very reason we have been adamant about the need for more farm in the farm bill.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 669

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, across our country, more than 3 million female high school and college athletes compete, practice, and train every day to achieve athletic success. For many of these young women and girls, their sports are more than just a game; they are a lifelong passion that improves their physical health, boosts self-confidence, and teaches them the leadership skills to succeed on and off the field.

In short, women's athletics have done incredible things for women, which is why it is so deeply disturbing to see the Biden-Harris administration wage a war on women's sports—in their crosshairs: title IX, the landmark civil rights law that codified protections on the basis of sex by requiring equal resources for training, recruitment, and scholarships for female athletic programs.

Title IX led to an explosion of women's participation in sports. In fact, since 1972—the year title IX became law—the number of female college athletes has increased by a factor of seven while the number of female high school athletes has increased by more than tenfold. Yet, for years, we have seen this administration undermine the very title IX protections that have enabled greater women's participation in sports.

In 2022, on the 50th anniversary of title IX, the Department of Education announced new rules that forced schools to allow biological males to play on female teams; and just in April, the administration redefined "discrimination" to allow biological men to use women-only locker rooms and bathrooms.

Are Tennesseans and the American people really expected to believe this is OK? You do not need to be a biologist to understand that there are fundamental, biological differences between men and women, and when it comes to sports, these differences undermine fair play, erase women's hard-earned achievements, and put female athletes in danger.

Thankfully, many young women are bravely speaking out against the Biden-Harris administration's radical agenda, including Tennessee's Riley Gaines. In 2021, Riley was forced to compete against and share a locker room with a biological male during the NCAA women's swimming and diving championships. During the 200-meter

competition, Riley tied for fifth with her male competitor, but when Riley went to the awards ceremony to pick up her trophy, officials told her that they were giving the fifth place trophy to the biological male. "Yours will be coming in the mail," they told her.

This should never happen in the United States. Now, more than ever, Congress should stand with the female athletes fighting for fair play and celebrate the incredible contributions women have made in the world of sports. That is why I am calling for unanimous consent for my resolution to establish October 10 as American Girls in Sports Day. Of course, we picked that date for a special reason. As the 10th day of the 10th month, October 10 is represented by the Roman numerals XX, the same numerals of the female sex chromosome.

In the last 50 years, female athletes have gone from the sidelines to the center stage of competition. As we continue to fight for women's participation in sports, we must keep in mind what is at stake, and the American Girls in Sports Day resolution will help to ensure that we all join together and celebrate our female athletes.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration and that the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 669; further, that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, in reserving the right to object, first of all, let me offer my thanks to the Senator from Tennessee for all the work that she has done with my colleague Senator BLUMENTHAL to protect our kids online. I am truly grateful for what they have done together, and although she and I have not worked closely together on legislation, I hope that we will be able to find partnerships to work together to further protections for our kids. I mean that sincerely. She and I may not agree on a lot—as you will hear, we don't agree on this particular resolution—but I do hope that we get the chance to work together. I mean that.

I also mean this with all due respect: Let's be clear about what this is. This isn't an effort to solve a problem. This whole obsession with transgender kids from the rightwing is just about picking on vulnerable kids so that adults can make themselves feel big—bullying and harassing kids because it makes adults feel powerful. As far as I am concerned, this whole effort is shameful.

It is important to understand that resolutions like this do not stand in isolation. It is part of a massive campaign by the right to convince Americans that they should fear immigrants,

that they should fear Muslims, that they should fear gay children, that they should fear transgender athletes.

The world in which Republicans want us to live is a world where the biggest problems are not low wages or expensive healthcare or addiction or loneliness, but the threats posed to us by people who are of a different race or speak a different language or are of a different sexual orientation or gender identity. It is a massive, coordinated attempt to marginalize people who aren't White, straight, and Christian, and it exists for a reason: to distract you.

I have a ton of close Republican friends in this Chamber whom I work with a lot, but let's be honest. The Republican Party's platform today is maybe the most unpopular agenda of any major political party in recent memory: ban abortion, cut taxes for corporations and millionaires, ban books, loosen gun laws. Nobody wants any of that.

So what do you do if the things you actually want to do if you achieve power are super, super unpopular? You distract them with giant, gross lies, like immigrants are eating our pets, or greatly exaggerated untruths, like our high school sports are under assault from transgender kids.

It is all an effort to hide the ball from the real agenda—abortion bans and millionaire tax cuts—by trying to make you believe that you should spend your entire day, that you should spend your entire life, just being afraid of people who are different from you.

Let me give you the facts, not the fearmongering, about high school transgender athletes, and I will let you decide whether this situation is worthy of hundreds of bills having been introduced by Republicans all across the country and whether it is worthy of debate continuously, over and over again, on the Senate floor.

There are over 6 million kids competing in high school sports today. For the problem of transgender girls competing in girls sports to be a national crisis, what percentage of that 6 million would be transgender girls? Ten percent? Is that a crisis? Five percent? One percent? It is none of those.

Let's take Florida as an example. More than 800,000 students in Florida participate in high school athletics. Before they enacted their ban, how many transgender athletes were in Florida of those 800,000 students? One hundred? Nope. Fifty? Nope. Over the course of 8 years in the entire State of Florida, before their ban, there were 13 transgender high school athletes—13. Those 13 girls were apparently waging a war against girls sports. That is a pretty small army to be waging a war.

You are more likely to be killed by a falling object in this country than to have your daughter compete against a transgender girl in high school sports, but what if she did? I think every State and every school district should decide these questions for themselves. I don't

think the Federal Government should get involved. But as a parent, personally, I celebrate those few transgender kids, who often spend their entire adolescence being shamed or marginalized by the kind of small people who push resolutions like this—I celebrate the fact that they get the experience of the comradery and the happiness that come with being part of a sports team. I think that is great. I don't think that is a threat to my kids. I don't think that is a threat to my community or the Nation.

I teach my kids to love everybody, to include everybody, to see people who are different from them—who are a different race, a different religion, even a different gender identity—as potential friends, not as enemies, waging war against them, to be shamed or bullied.

This is an absurd resolution. It is designed to distract Americans from Republicans' real agenda. It is designed to build a culture of fear and mistrust, a culture that I and, I am going to tell you, most Americans reject.

Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I would encourage my colleague to go read the Republican Party platform. It is very short, as a matter of fact. There is nothing in it about banning anything, believe you me. I know that. So I would encourage him to take the 15 or 20 minutes. It is not a long, lengthy document. It has 20 actions that we are going to take, and then it has some principles on which we stand and believe.

I also find it very interesting that he looks at a resolution that would celebrate women as something that should be feared, because it is not about fear. It is not about division. It is not about distraction. This is something that says to our young girls and these young athletes: We are proud of you. Keep it up.

I mean, here is some of the language from the resolution:

Athletic participation has an important, positive impact on young girls, improving their physical health, self-confidence, and discipline. . . . Women have been responsible for some of the greatest athletic feats in the sports history of the United States, from the Olympic games—

And we all cheered our young women who excelled and won those medals and those who were in competition in the Olympics—

[all the way] to professional competition. . . . [F]emale athletes have served as inspirations for generations of women and girls.

In Tennessee, I will tell you, there are young girls probably out in the driveway bouncing a basketball right now. They want to be a Lady Vol. That is one of their goals in life.

As for the number of titles and things that have been lost since 2003, biological men have displaced women and girls from over 950 championship titles, medals, scholarships, and

records that should have rightfully gone to these girls and at least 28 women sports titles in volleyball, swimming, mountain biking, track and field, weightlifting, and cycling.

This is a celebration of female accomplishments. This is a celebration of female accomplishments.

So while I enjoy the opportunity to work with my colleague, I am disappointed to hear him feel and express his opinion that celebrating women and giving a day to celebrate our female athletes would be something that would strike fear and would cause division. We should all be united around celebrating our female athletes.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

RIGHT TO IVF ACT

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, today we once again attempted to move forward on the Right to IVF Act, and Republicans once again stopped us.

Now, let's remember a few things about how we actually got here, because it is infuriating. Republicans have tried to claim the right to IVF is not under attack, but it was Republicans' own votes that killed this bill, and it was the Republicans' own efforts to overturn *Roe v. Wade* and champion fetal personhood—which treats an embryo like a living, breathing, person—that caused the chaos and uncertainty around IVF access. That caused women in Alabama to have IVF appointments canceled earlier this year, jeopardizing women's hopes of growing their families and lighting on fire the thousands of dollars some of these patients spent ahead of treatment.

And despite that hard lesson, to this day, there is still widespread Republican support for fetal personhood bills. To this day, in Republicans' own bills to supposedly protect IVF, they say nothing about fetal personhood and do nothing to make sure parents can dispose of unused embryos.

Now, Democrats came forward with a bill that would actually protect IVF. Our bill, the Right to IVF Act, protects the right to IVF nationally, and it lowers the cost of IVF for families with stronger insurance requirements. It also includes my bill to make sure more veterans and servicemembers can access IVF services.

And many of the same Republicans who have supported fetal personhood laws—the single greatest threat to IVF—are pretending this bill is unnecessary. Many of the same Republicans who are desperate to posture as pro-family and who constantly say they stand by our troops are saying: We can't afford to help more military families get IVF.

Funny how they are always game to shovel more money at tax breaks for billionaires, though. But I digress.

Mr. President, Republicans voted this bill down—again. They voted down protecting IVF—again. They voted down making IVF more affordable—again. They voted down helping servicemem-

bers and veterans grow their families—again. And they did it fresh off another round of pretending to support IVF. They did it just as Donald Trump, the man who kicked all of this off, the man who proudly boasted that he ended *Roe*, is trying to say he is the leader on IVF.

When Donald Trump says he is the leader on IVF, hear me on two things: First, he almost certainly doesn't understand what IVF is. Secondly, he doesn't understand what leadership is. You do not get credit for opposing a problem that you caused in the first place, especially when your party—the party you lead—won't let us solve it.

The entire country just saw, plain as day, that Donald Trump is lying again and that nothing has changed for Republicans since they overturned *Roe v. Wade*. Nothing has changed for Republicans since the absolute heartbreaking chaos their extremism caused in Alabama. Nothing has changed for Republicans despite Trump's imaginary leadership on IVF and despite all the families who are calling for action.

But Democrats are not going to stop pushing. And I have a message for my Republican colleagues who think they can talk about this issue, make big promises to desperate families—like Trump's promise to cover IVF treatment—and then fail to follow through. I would urge them to think again and tread lightly, because that promise may just be an empty sound bite to Donald Trump, but it is so personal to these families. It is personal to women who have been trying for years to start a family with no luck, women who, month after month, get their hopes up and face another heartbreak.

The last thing these families need is a broken promise. The last thing their heart can bear is false hope. So don't you dare breathe another word about helping them get IVF when you are not willing to put up the votes and make it happen. Don't you dare talk about protecting their chance to grow their family when you are not willing to stand clear and strong against fetal personhood laws.

Don't you dare raise your voice in more fake support when you won't lift a finger to actually help, because these families have been listening to your words. They saw how you voted today. And, Mr. President, they will not forget.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, here in this Chamber, it is your vote that counts—not your tweets, not your public statements, not your TV interviews. Your votes. And today for the second time in 3 months, Republicans voted against protecting IVF. Some of them claim to support IVF. All of them profess to be pro-life. But given a chance to be both, they failed.

Republicans are doing a lot of mental gymnastics to try to justify their cruel extremism on this issue. But let's be very clear about what the Right to IVF

Act does. It protects every American's right to access IVF and lower the cost of treatments for families who need it. That means anyone struggling to start or to grow a family can undergo IVF without fear of interference or punishment by the government.

And think about the fact that we have to make a law that says families should not be punished for trying to start a family. That is what this bill does. It says you should have access to this care and you cannot be punished for trying to start a family. It means providers can administer the treatment without worrying that they will be thrown in jail or have their license taken away just for doing their jobs. And it means insurers can cover IVF without implementing absurd restrictions and onerous requirements that would make it all but impossible to access this miraculous treatment.

This bill is a commonsense measure that is necessary precisely because of the environment Republicans created with the fall of *Roe*, an environment where over half of women of reproductive age in America now live in States that are hostile to abortion rights. And let's be clear, Republicans did that through their vessel of the U.S. Supreme Court.

And so they can pretend to be for IVF but vote against the bill that would actually protect it for good. They can pretend to be for life while also trying to restrict access to a miraculous treatment that creates life. They can pretend to have their own bill to support IVF when, in fact, that bill literally does the opposite. It literally does the opposite because here, it is your vote that counts. It is not your rhetoric. It is not your statement. It is not even your explanation. They voted no against IVF. And shame on them.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELMY). The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. I rise to join my colleagues and want to thank my colleague, Senator MURRAY, for her leadership on this important issue over many, many years.

I join my colleagues to say it is time to put partisan politics aside and stay out of family planning issues and leave that up to families in America.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle had an opportunity today to believe that women deserve the chance to start a family through IVF, the miracle for people who have been struggling with fertility challenges.

In 2022, more than 2,000 new babies were born in the State of Washington thanks to IVF. This is something we would like to see every year. But as the Court has struck down important issues and States have gone on various efforts to try to restrict women's access to healthcare and full reproductive care, IVF has even been questioned.

Practically everyone knows someone who overcame the challenge desperate to have a pregnancy and the sadness of

infertility. And that is probably why 86 percent of Americans say that IVF should be legal.

This afternoon, we voted on that right, the Right to IVF Act. That is what we were voting on, a straightforward vote. One of those that would just show the American people, the mainstream of America, that we agree with them. That is all we were trying to do, as people have punted around this very important right that now, because of actions by individual States, no longer seems to be guaranteed.

Yet we all here could have cast a vote saying we wanted to protect it in voting for this act. It was an opportunity for us to ask our colleagues who previously voted against this measure to say that they actually agreed this time on IVF; to show that they mean what they say, not some version of a bill that basically curtails and makes it impossible for somebody to run an IVF organization.

We have no time for that—no time for that. My colleagues' voting history shows that if you didn't support IVF before and you didn't support it today, I am not sure what it is you think you support.

Democrats are trying to guarantee the access, and Republicans are blocking us. Democrats tried to guarantee the right to contraception, which 81 percent of Americans say should be protected, and Republicans blocked us.

We tried to pass a law saying you can't put a woman in jail for trying to leave her State just to get abortion care, and that was blocked. And we tried to pass a law saying that you can't put a healthcare worker in jail for performing abortions in their State where the procedure is legal. Republicans blocked that, too. And today another block of just something very basic—the Right to IVF Act.

So reproductive freedoms of all sorts and family planning is under attack. We had a chance to speak as one voice and to talk about fertility treatments in the United States of America. Instead, families will continue to wonder whether IVF is going to be available in the United States of America. Americans should have the access to these reproductive rights. Americans should have the freedom to decide for themselves when and how to have children. And they should have the freedom to use IVF for their families and to plan to start a family.

This summer, I released a healthcare report, along with my colleagues, that talked about people who lived in red States where they were forcing people to travel to other States just to get healthcare. It was so sad and scary to find out that, basically, almost weekly, someone from Idaho was walking into a facility with a pregnancy complexity, only to be told: I am not going to see you. And then have them flown to a facility in Seattle. What kind of hardship are you putting on people?

Then, with great sadness, I read this article that came out late last night

about the death of a young woman from Georgia “who died after waiting 20 hours for a hospital to treat her complications from an abortion pill shows the consequences of [the actions that we passed] Donald Trump's actions.”

This is what we are doing to America. We are leaving reproductive choice up in the air. We are making women travel all over just to get care. And now we are telling Americans we don't even know if we believe in IVF. This nonsense has to stop. This is about families planning. This is about families planning for their future. It is not about politicians putting hardships on patients seeking healthcare and then turning them away and affecting their lives. And in this case, the tragedy of this young woman.

I thank my colleague, Senator MURRAY, for helping organize us. I ask our colleagues: We can do better than this. They need to do better than this for the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I want to thank Senator MURRAY for her leadership on reproductive freedom issues and my colleagues talking today about the IVF bill we just voted on.

Once again, today, our Republican colleagues have shown us where their priorities truly lie. Despite insisting time and again how much they support the right to in vitro fertilization, or IVF, they just voted again, nearly unanimously, to block a bill providing that very right.

For decades, IVF and other assisted reproductive technologies, or ART, have helped people who otherwise couldn't start families of their own. While some on the right like to depict IVF as some sort of new or untested technology, that is not so. The first baby delivered via IVF was more than 45 years ago. And since then, IVF have helped bring more than 10 million babies into this world.

In fact, as a State representative in Hawaii in the eighties, I led the passage of a bill making Hawaii one of the first States in the Nation to require health insurers to cover IVF treatment.

Earlier this year, I met Dr. Lori Kamemoto, an OB-GYN in Hawaii who, decades ago, helped deliver the first baby born in Hawaii via IVF.

But now, thanks to the chaos created by Dobbs, a whole range of reproductive rights, including the right to IVF, are on the chopping block. Look at Alabama where the State Supreme Court invoked a “fetal personhood” law to call into question the legality of IVF, effectively halting IVF treatment in that State.

Despite the fact that more than 85 percent of Americans support IVF, Republicans here in the Senate have now, on several occasions, blocked our attempts to pass a bill to protect IVF treatments. Apparently, Republicans'

obsessions with power and control over women's bodies and our lives knows no bounds.

Republicans insist that they support IVF but refuse to protect access to IVF. They insist access to contraception is safe and they support it, but when given the chance, refuse to codify that support into law.

Frankly, can anyone take Republicans at their word when they say they won't enact a nationwide abortion ban if given the opportunity? We can't. They have shown us who they are and just how wildly out of step they are with the American people.

As Republicans continue on their anti-freedom, anti-women crusade, Democrats will continue fighting to protect the right to IVF as we work to ensure people can make decisions about their bodies, their lives, and their futures free from government intrusion.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, actions speak louder than words. Actions always speak louder than words. For all their words, our Republican colleagues have acted today in a way that will speak for years and longer.

It will speak to Lisa, a constituent of mine in Connecticut. I ask my Republican colleagues to listen to Lisa and what she shared with me after the Alabama Supreme Court ruling and before she and her husband became parents to a healthy, happy baby girl as a result of IVF. She said:

If a woman is willing to go through the physical, emotional, and financial toll of IVF treatment to bring a new life into the world, you had better believe she is going to love that baby more than anything one can imagine. And we need more love like that in the world.

For Lisa, that Alabama Supreme Court ruling banning IVF treatment was “heartbreaking and infuriating.” Families like Lisa's wouldn't exist if it weren't for IVF.

I ask my Republican colleagues to listen to Kim and Tina, who were married in 2013 and immediately knew they wanted to start a family in Connecticut. As a gay couple, they needed to rely on reproductive technology, and they were forced to meet standards that their straight friends never encountered. And IVF worked for them. They are now proud parents to twins whom they call “the greatest gifts of our lives.” Interested in politics and government, trumpets and sailing, they are gifts to their community, their friends, and their school.

Listening to parents who have gone through the heartbreak and pain of infertility and who have found this miracle of IVF—it is not limited to Kim and Tina and Lisa; it is all of America who knows these stories in their own lives. Every American knows a couple that has tried year after year, and finally, if they are really lucky and can afford it, discovers the miracle of IVF.

Very simply, every one of those families, every American ought to have access to that miracle of life. Yet our Republican colleagues, even though their own constituents would tell them, if they were listening, about the reasons why IVF should be protected, have acted today, despite their words and their rhetoric, to block IVF protection.

This scientific miracle is so immensely important, it ought to be non-political, nonpartisan, noncontroversial. There ought to be unanimity.

And this vote is the second one. I believe in second chances. If we had wanted to be strictly political about this bill, we could have said: Well, no second chance here; we are going to take you on that first vote, because that would be the one politically advantageous. We gave them a second chance to get right on IVF, and they refused.

I am angry. I am disgusted. Most important, I am sad because this vote was an opportunity to tell American families: We are with you. We stand with you. We know how physically painful IVF is. We know how emotionally painful infertility can be. We know how great families want to build greater families with children who will serve our country, make it greater.

The callousness and cowardice of our Republican colleagues speak louder than words, and this vote will haunt them. It will haunt at the very least their consciences—or it should.

We have the courage to stand with the American families who need and deserve IVF.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, first, I am so grateful to be here with colleagues who care deeply about protecting our reproductive freedoms and supporting families all across America. I want to thank Senator **PATTY MURRAY**, who has been our leader on this for many years.

It is just incredible to me that in 2024, we are standing here even having to talk about this. It is really incredible.

I just want to take us back to it because this Congress, Republicans have had 16 chances to protect reproductive freedom—over 16 chances—and every time, they have voted no. So today, once again, they block a bill to protect access to IVF for thousands of American families.

Now, we had this vote before, and then the former President said he changed his mind and he wanted to make IVF free and he wanted to force insurance companies to cover IVF. I thought, well, that is great. Let's come together in a bipartisan way to be able to move forward and protect this really important part of reproductive freedom. So we bring the bill up again.

Now, I assume that the former President was on the phone all last night calling our colleagues, calling all of our Republican colleagues—I mean,

like he did for his effort to block and kill the bipartisan border security bill. When he wanted to make sure that didn't go forward and he had an issue to run on, he was burning up the phones.

Well, given what he said to the American people about his now support for IVF, I assume he was burning up the phones last night. Well, if he was, it wasn't very effective. And, Mr. President, we know he wasn't. We know, when he really wants something, what he does. When he really wants something, he is calling the Speaker of the House to say: Don't support a bipartisan bill to continue the government; shut it down.

But I bet there wasn't one phone call made last night to support this effort to protect a woman's reproductive freedom and the freedom of families to grow their families.

Since the fall of Roe, Republicans have continued their assault on reproductive freedom: IVF; questions about birth control; of course, abortion access; and then a whole range of privacy questions for women in terms of what happens during their pregnancies.

We know that IVF is about allowing the freedom to have children. If you struggle with infertility, it gives you a way, an effective way, to start or grow a family. It has helped thousands of Americans, thousands of American children, including my friend Ellen, who now has a beautiful little boy, Carter. He just had his first birthday party not long ago. I mean, how could you not love that face? Carter is incredible, and we are all so excited for Ellen and for Carter. That is the miracle of IVF.

IVF has also helped Brittany from Holly, MI, start her family. After being diagnosed with PCOS at 16, she experienced fertility issues when she was ready to start a family. After 3 years, six rounds of fertility treatments, countless tests, and two rounds of IVF, she gave birth to her beautiful baby girl, Eloisa, who is now 11 months old. What a blessing.

Despite the strain this journey put on her relationships, Brittany told me that every penny was worth it. "Every penny was worth it for our daughter. IVF has made our family complete."

She is not the only Michigander who has been able to start a family because of IVF. When her husband was serving our country in the U.S. Navy, Sue from Brighton, MI, used IVF to bring her son into the world. At the time, she was an elementary school teacher, and her husband was deployed for months at a time. Her entire salary went towards the seven rounds of IVF that were needed to have a successful pregnancy. With insurance only paying for some of the medication, she spent over \$100,000 out of pocket on treatment to be able to have that baby. This journey put an emotional and financial strain on Sue and her husband, and that is surely not surprising, and this situation is not unique.

Our veterans and servicemembers sacrifice so much for our country. They

shouldn't have to sacrifice their ability to start or grow a family because these treatments aren't covered and politicians tell them they don't have that choice.

Families shouldn't have to choose between going into debt to cover the enormous cost of treatment and having a baby just because it is not covered by insurance.

That is why voting for the Right to IVF Act was a no-brainer for me. We need to protect this freedom, access to this opportunity for families. We need to expand and protect fertility treatments for our servicemembers and our veterans and cover adoption assistance. We need to cover and lower the cost of IVF treatments for all. We need to make sure women have the freedom to make our own reproductive decisions, not rightwing politicians, not judges.

When I hear the former President say that this was all about sending the decision back to the States rather than the Federal Government—no. This is about having individual women and their families make a decision. It doesn't matter if it is a Federal politician or a State politician; the point is, there should be no politician. It should be the woman and her family making those decisions, the woman herself making that decision about what will happen for her.

So that is what we are fighting for, and we are not going to stop fighting for that. In America, we had that freedom for over 50 years, and it got ripped away by Donald Trump and the appointments he made to the U.S. Supreme Court. Now it has just unleashed all kinds of harm, all kinds of damage for women, and death, because of the fact that some folks think they can control women's lives.

I am incredibly disappointed that our Republican colleagues did not join us today in protecting this important freedom.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 700.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Rose E. Jenkins, of the District of Columbia, to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court for a term of fifteen years.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 700, Rose E. Jenkins, of the District of Columbia, to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court for a term of fifteen years.

Ron Wyden, Alex Padilla, Debbie Stabenow, Catherine Cortez Masto, Mark Kelly, Jack Reed, Tim Kaine, John W. Hickenlooper, Christopher Murphy, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Richard Blumenthal, Benjamin L. Cardin, Christopher A. Coons, Margaret Wood Hassan, Chris Van Hollen, Tammy Baldwin, Tina Smith.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call for the cloture motion filed today, September 17, be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on behalf of the majority leader, I ask the Chair to execute the order from yesterday with respect to the confirmation vote on the Costello nomination.

NOMINATION OF MARY KAY COSTELLO

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today the Senate will vote to confirm Mary Kay Costello to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

From 1986 to 1994, Ms. Costello served as a staff sergeant in the U.S. Air Force. She then earned her B.A. from Temple University and her J.D. from Temple University Beasley School of Law.

After completing law school, she began her legal career in private practice as a litigation associate with Saul Ewing LLP, then moved to Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld in 2004. While in private practice, she handled a range of commercial litigation matters.

Since 2008, Ms. Costello has served as an assistant U.S. attorney in the criminal division of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. She is currently assigned to the public corruption and civil rights unit, and she previously served in the healthcare fraud and government fraud unit and the consumer and commercial fraud unit. She has prosecuted criminal cases involving bribery, drug diversion schemes, and schemes to defraud the government, including successful prosecutions in several illegal drug distribution cases involving "pill mills."

Over the course of her legal career, Ms. Costello has tried 11 cases to verdict, all of which were before a jury.

Ms. Costello has the strong support of both of her home State Senators,

Mr. CASEY and Mr. FETTERMAN, and the American Bar Association unanimously rated her as "well qualified."

Ms. Costello is a highly accomplished litigator whose breadth of experience and dedication to service make her an outstanding nominee to the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting her nomination.

VOTE ON COSTELLO NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Costello nomination?

Mr. DURBIN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN), and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VANCE).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) would have voted "yea."

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 243 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Baldwin	Heinrich	Romney
Bennet	Helmy	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Sanders
Brown	Hirono	Schatz
Butler	Kaine	Schumer
Cantwell	Kelly	Shaheen
Cardin	King	Sinema
Carper	Klobuchar	Smith
Casey	Lujan	Stabenow
Collins	Markey	Tester
Coons	Merkley	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Murkowski	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Fetterman	Ossoff	Welch
Gillibrand	Padilla	Whitehouse
Graham	Peters	
Hassan	Reed	

NAYS—41

Barrasso	Fischer	Mullin
Blackburn	Grassley	Paul
Boozman	Hagerty	Ricketts
Braun	Hawley	Risch
Britt	Hoeven	Rubio
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Capito	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Thune
Crapo	Lummis	Tuberville
Cruz	Marshall	Wicker
Daines	McConnell	Young
Ernst	Moran	

NOT VOTING—7

Booker	Rounds	Wyden
Cotton	Tillis	
Manchin	Vance	

The nomination was confirmed.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the mo-

tion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The Senator from Texas.

SOUTHERN BORDER
TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2023

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, the Biden-Harris apparent strategy for handling the massive influx of migrants on the southern border has been to funnel them into allegedly temporary parole programs and act like the Biden-Harris border crisis has been resolved. Far from it.

There is little public data on the number of people who have actually been released into the United States under these programs, whether they are making asylum claims, or whether their claims were being evaluated in any way before they are being released, or whether they ever leave the country or remain indefinitely.

The administration has gone to great lengths to hide the ball when it comes to levels of illegal immigration. But the American people deserve to know exactly how many migrants are being released into the country and exactly on what terms.

That is why I led the Southern Border Transparency Act, which would shine a bright light on the catch-and-release policies of the administration by requiring the Department of Homeland Security to fully report on how it handles migrants encountered at the southern border.

This is the most basic of transparency measures—just the facts, that is all we are looking for. And anyone who supports securing the southern border can support this legislation.

I appreciate Senator GRASSLEY's leadership on this issue, and I hope the Senate can advance this bill today.

Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. 3187 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3187) to require the Department of Homeland Security to publish various publications and reports regarding the number of aliens seeking entry along the southern border of the United States.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. CORNYN. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 3187) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed as follows:

S. 3187

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 “Southern Border Transparency Act of 2023”.

SEC. 2. MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF PAROLE AT PORTS OF ENTRY.

Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and monthly thereafter, the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall publish on the U.S. Customs and Border Protection website, with respect to the applicable reporting period—

(1) the number of aliens granted parole under section 212(d)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(d)(5)) at each United States port of entry;

(2) the number of aliens encountered between land ports of entry who were subsequently granted parole, disaggregated by the U.S. Border Patrol sector;

(3) the citizenship or nationality of the aliens described in paragraphs (1) and (2); and

(4) the demographic category of the aliens described in paragraphs (1) and (2), including—

(A) accompanied minors;

(B) aliens granted parole as part of a family unit;

(C) single adults; and

(D) unaccompanied alien children.

SEC. 3. QUARTERLY REPORT ON PROCESSING ALIENS AT SOUTHERN BORDER PORTS OF ENTRY.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and quarterly thereafter, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall—

(1) submit a report containing the information described in subsection (b) to—

(A) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and

(D) the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives; and

(2) post such report on the Department of Homeland Security website.

(b) **CONTENTS.**—The report required under subsection (a) shall include, with respect to the applicable reporting period—

(1) the number of aliens apprehended or otherwise encountered—

(A) at each port of entry along the southern border of the United States; and

(B) within each U.S. Border Patrol sector along the southern border of the United States;

(2) the number of aliens described in paragraph (1), disaggregated by—

(A) citizenship or nationality;

(B) demographic categories, including accompanied minors, aliens granted parole as part of a family unit, single adults, and unaccompanied alien children;

(C) those who were granted voluntary departure;

(D) those who were placed into expedited removal proceedings; and

(E) those who entered into a process or outcome not described in subparagraph (C) or (D), including a description of such process or outcome;

(3) the number of aliens described in paragraph (2)(D), disaggregated by the number of such aliens who received a credible fear screening interview pursuant to section 235(b)(1)(B) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1225(b)(1)(B)) or a reasonable fear screening interview;

(4) the number of aliens described in paragraph (3), disaggregated by—

(A) the number of aliens determined to have a credible fear of persecution or a reasonable fear of persecution; and

(B) the number of aliens determined not to have a credible fear of persecution or a reasonable fear of persecution;

(5) the number of aliens described in paragraph (4)(A), disaggregated by the number of aliens detained pursuant to section 235(b)(1)(B)(iii)(IV) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1225(b)(1)(B)(iii)(IV));

(6) the number of aliens described in paragraph (4)(B), disaggregated by—

(A) those who were removed from the United States;

(B) those who were detained pending removal; and

(C) those who are not described in subparagraph (A) or (B); and

(7) a description of any actions taken against the aliens described in paragraph (6)(C).

SEC. 4. QUARTERLY REPORT ON PAROLE REQUESTS PROCESSED BY U.S. CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES.

Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and quarterly thereafter, the Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services shall publish, on the U.S. Citizenship and Immigrations Services website—

(1) the number of petitions for parole submitted to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services pursuant to section 212(d)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(d)(5)); and

(2) the number of such petitions that were granted by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, disaggregated by the nationality of the petitioner.

SEC. 5. ANNUAL REPORT ON ALIENS PAROLED INTO THE UNITED STATES.

Section 602(b) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1182 note) is amended to read as follows:

“(b) **ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 90 days after the end of each fiscal year, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit a report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives that identifies the number of aliens paroled into the United States pursuant to section 212(d)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(d)(5)), disaggregated by those who are—

“(A) of a particular nationality;

“(B) single adults;

“(C) traveling in a family group;

“(D) children accompanied by an adult family member; or

“(E) unaccompanied alien minors.

“(2) **CONTENTS.**—Each report required under paragraph (1) shall include—

“(A) the total number of aliens paroled into the United States during the fiscal year immediately preceding the fiscal year in which such report is submitted, disaggregated by—

“(i) citizenship or nationality; and

“(ii) demographic categories, including accompanied minors, aliens granted parole as part of a family unit, single adults, and unaccompanied alien children;

“(B) for each fiscal year for which the Department of Homeland Security reports the information described in subparagraph (A) regarding aliens described in such subparagraph—

“(i) the number of such aliens who were granted employment authorization;

“(ii) the number of aliens described in clause (i) who had valid employment authorization at the end of the previous fiscal year;

“(iii) the number of such aliens whose parole has not ended, including those who exited the United States during the previous fiscal year;

“(iv) the number of such aliens whose status was adjusted, disaggregated by status type;

“(v) the number of such aliens for whom parole was extended, including those who exited the United States;

“(vi) the number of such aliens for whom the duration of parole expired, including those who exited the United States; and

“(vii) the number of aliens who returned to Department of Homeland Security custody from which they were paroled, disaggregated by the categories listed in subparagraphs (A) through (E) of paragraph (1).”

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUESTS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, in the Biden-Harris America, children disappear every day. You won't see their faces on any milk cartons. Search parties aren't sent for them, and the AMBER alert almost never sounds.

According to the Justice Department's filings, some of these children reappear years later in emergency departments with injuries from physical or sexual abuse. Others resurface as underaged laborers working jobs that most adults won't even take, and many are never heard from again.

These forgotten children are overlooked because they are unaccompanied migrant children. These are the children who crossed into the United States without their families—without their moms or dads.

By February 2023, the New York Times reported the Biden-Harris administration could not reach 85,000 of the unaccompanied migrant children that had entered the United States since 2021.

Then, in August of 2024, the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General found the government failed to enroll 291,000 of these children in immigration proceedings over the last 5 years. Of those that were enrolled, 32,000 never showed up to the court. Many of them are missing.

Government employees working directly with these kids began to sound the alarm. The Biden-Harris administration responded by quietly, very quietly, suppressing attempts to save these missing children in order to avoid a politically inconvenient narrative. And the very same Democrats and members of the media who had actually decried Trump-era immigration policies stayed silent. The media didn't do their job of properly pointing out wrongs, except when you have a Republican President.

At least one whistleblower was actually walked offsite at a shelter for

these children for reporting that children were in danger to law enforcement. Other whistleblowers told my office they were denied access to records that might have raised concerns about children being trafficked.

The most consistent whistleblower complaint that I received was that law enforcement was not given the information needed to save missing children.

Desperate to find these kids, at least one Homeland Security agent asked a whistleblower to establish information-sharing channels on imperiled children because there was no formal channel in place for this information to be shared.

Now, we all know that denying law enforcement access to this lifesaving information was part of the Biden-Harris immigration plan. Three months into their term, the Biden-Harris administration tore up information sharing, an agreement between Homeland Security Investigations and the officials responsible for running the Unaccompanied Children Program.

They replaced that agreement with a watered-down agreement that deleted provisions requiring sponsors to be vetted and run through certain law enforcement checks before receiving custody of a child.

Today, law enforcement has significantly less involvement in vetting sponsors, even if the sponsor is a complete stranger to the child. Now, this is not family reunification, as the Biden administration wants the entire country to believe.

According to government statistics, between October 2021 and September 2022, over 18,000 children were given to distant relatives or unrelated adults.

Now, turning over custody of a child is one of the most consequential actions a caseworker can ever take. From there on out, every decision made for the child belongs to the sponsor—financial, housing, medical, you name it, the sponsor is in control of their decisions.

I can't imagine having every decision critical to my survival turned over to a complete stranger who the government hasn't even fully vetted, but child safety wasn't this administration's priority.

Now, thanks to whistleblowers, we have been provided records and disclosures that were so bad I had to refer the information to law enforcement way back in January to try and rescue kids. But given the poor vetting, it is much harder to find those same kids.

As illegal border crossings surged, pressure mounted from the top of the bureaucracy to process kids faster, to avoid accusations of "kids in cages." During a conference call, Secretary Becerra of HHS admonished his employees that they weren't moving kids out to sponsors fast enough.

That is the environment that I am talking about—getting things done quickly so you can't be politically criticized like Trump was criticized.

Secretary Becerra said:

This is not the way you do an assembly line.

Program operators knew this politically motivated rush could have dangerous consequences, but they proceeded anyway. One official said the quiet part out loud to a whistleblower trying to intervene to protect endangered kids. She was told:

We only get sued if we keep kids in care [of the government] too long. We don't get sued by traffickers.

Now, can you believe that approach to protecting kids? The Biden administration has published wave after wave of field guidance meant to push kids to sponsors faster and cover up the consequences of this haste.

They removed fingerprint requirements for sponsors claiming to be parents or legal guardians, even without sufficient verification; simply this, just "I am who I say I am."

They released kids to sponsors before background checks had been completed. They denied law enforcement access to photographs of children.

Now, during a Senate Finance hearing, Senator CORNYN asked Secretary Becerra who the Biden-Harris administration believes is responsible for making sure that these children aren't being trafficked. Secretary Becerra said it is "the communities where they enter," so just some community, anyplace in the United States, to be responsible, to make sure that these children are treated and not being trafficked.

I am not sure if the Biden-Harris administration ever stopped to wonder how local law enforcement looks after a child when this administration won't even give them a photograph of an endangered child.

I am told that law enforcement can't.

What resulted from this administration's disastrous policies almost inevitably was the systematic abuse and disappearance of migrant children. Whistleblowers fought in vain to prevent children from going to men who sexualized them, MS-13 gang-affiliated sponsors, and also sponsors who were mass applying for kids. We had an example where one address someplace, some city in this country, was used to get massive numbers of kids under that address. Just hearing that ought to scare anyone.

One whistleblower told my office they called a sponsor, only to hear a child's agonizing screams before the line then was quickly disconnected. Whistleblowers testified on all this in heartbreaking detail at an oversight roundtable that I led on this topic just this year in July.

I have lost count of the number of reports and letters sent by Congress to the unaccompanied migrant children's program actually sounding alarms that have gone unheeded, even ignored. Each highlighted program vulnerabilities, and there are plenty of those vulnerabilities. Each made recommendations that could have saved lives.

Now, I have been involved in this in a bipartisan way for a long period of

time. My decade of bipartisan oversight has revealed an unaccompanied migrant children program in which abuse and misconduct have become routine and tolerated.

For example, in 2021, Oregon Democratic Senator WYDEN and I warned of the rampant sexual abuse of unaccompanied migrant children in the care of contractors, especially Southwest Key. Now, remember that contractor's name is Southwest Key—not a very good place to put kids. The Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General also identified issues with Southwest Key's self-dealing and compensation.

Now, as part of my ongoing investigation, for months I have requested from Southwest Key and other contractors and grantees basic information on their care of unaccompanied children, including whether these contractors performed background checks of their employees before they had access to these kids. Southwest Key has failed to fully respond to this inquiry, actually thumbing their nose at the U.S. Congress. Still the government kept giving Southwest Key contracts to care for these unaccompanied minor kids.

What followed all these contracts? Do we know that the kids are safe or not safe? Well, a recent Justice Department lawsuit alleges "a pattern or practice of severe or pervasive sexual harassment of children in Southwest Key's care." So just think, this Justice Department has said that with this contractor, there is pervasive sexual harassment of children in their care. So we have to ask ourselves, if we are humanitarians, how many more children have to endure abuse before Congress finally says enough is enough? I say it shouldn't be even one more.

I am offering a bill, then—that is why I am here—that denies future contracts to bad actors who have been identified by the Justice Department as abusing unaccompanied migrant children. After applying due process, those government contracts would cease until the Justice Department certifies that the conditions leading to the abuse—that those conditions are taken care of, they are over.

I think this is a very commonsense solution that no politician, no Member of the Senate, Republican or Democrat, should stand against.

So I now make a request, Mr. President. As if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 5073, which is at the desk; further, that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid on the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KELLY). Is there objection?

The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I reserve the right to object. I will share a few of my thoughts on this, but first I wanted to note that my colleague from Iowa is celebrating his birthday today. So a very happy birthday to you.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Thank you.

Mr. MERKLEY. And I understand it is his 91st; is that correct?

We should all want to be able to engage in public policy and public debate and dialogue when we have reached the start of our 10th decade, so congratulations to you.

Mr. GRASSLEY. It is kind of you to say that. Thank you.

Mr. MERKLEY. This topic that you have brought up today is one that I have had deep engagement in because I share your concerns about these congregate care facilities.

Back in 2018, I was the first Member of the House or Senate to go down to the border and to witness the separation of children from their parents and then to go up the road to knock on the door of Casa de Padre, which was run by Southwest Key, where I had heard a rumor that perhaps a thousand boys were being warehoused. When I knocked on the door, they didn't want to let me in to see what was going on, so we did a live stream feed of the conversation. I was trying to get the manager to come out and brief me, and the manager said, yes, he would be out, but actually what he did was he called the police to have me arrested.

The police didn't arrest me, but they did tell me that Casa de Padre, run by this organization, Southwest Key, had no interest in letting a Member of Congress come inside, a Member of the Senate come inside; move on. But because this was live-streamed, it became national news. As a result of that, the press got in the following weekend, and I was able to go back with a group of legislators 2 weeks later.

So I very much understand the challenge in the congregate care system and undertook a deep dive with experts across the country on, how do we address this problem? The long and short of it is, those experts all came together, and they helped draft a bill called the Children's Safe Welcome Act, because the issues that exist at Southwest Key are not unique to Southwest Key. In fact, we have had really deep challenges in one congregate care facility after another. Putting children into large, mass settings just does not at all provide a foundation for them to thrive.

I will just note that this policy brief—and I ask unanimous consent that the policy brief by the Women's Refugee Commission be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

[Women's Refugee Commission, Aug. 2023]
DECREASING ORR'S DEPENDENCE ON CONGREGATE CARE: FOUR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRESS

POLICY BRIEF

Since its inception, the Unaccompanied Children Program under the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) has relied on congregate care for its custody of unaccompanied children. Congregate care is a catch-all term for group homes and larger institu-

tions that care for many children away from families (see below for more details). Over the past decade, while the domestic child-welfare system has drastically reduced the use of mass congregate settings and emphasized kinship settings and family-like placements that are better for children's well-being, ORR has increased its reliance on large settings. For example, as of 2019 more than 90 percent of unaccompanied migrant children have been held in facilities with more than 50 beds, despite evidence that congregate care risks harming children's long-term mental health. Experts concur that "any amount of time that a young person spends in an institutional placement is too long." Children averaged 30 days in ORR care in fiscal year 2022, while the length of stay was considerably longer for children placed in more restrictive settings.

It is critical that ORR engage in a long-term effort to move away from congregate care and toward more appropriate practices of community-based programs or family-like foster care placements. Until this happens, a critical step to limiting congregate care includes safe reductions of length of stay. Any guiding vision should include community-based programs that offer a high quality of care, minimal time away from family, and reunifications to safe, stable homes.

Based upon ongoing research that the Women's Refugee Commission conducted with current and former staff at congregate care facilities, post-release service providers, attorneys, and child advocates across the United States, this policy brief details concrete steps toward minimizing the use of congregate care for unaccompanied children. The brief also identifies four ways to enlist culturally sensitive, evidence-based, and trauma-informed approaches in working with young people within and beyond current ORR facilities. They are: (1) adopting geolocation in children's initial placements (i.e., placing children in a facility close to their family or sponsor); (2) building a pipeline of community-based care providers; (3) improving language access for non-Spanish-speaking children in custody; and (4) enhancing post-release services. Taken together, these efforts are critical to reducing ORR's reliance on congregate care, limiting children's length of stay in federal custody, and ensuring their safety following release.

What is congregate care?

Although congregate care is defined by the Department of Health and Human Services to include group homes with custody of as few as 7-12 children, in the ORR context, congregate care typically refers to "a licensed or approved child care facility operated by a public or private agency and providing 24-hour care and/or treatment typically for 12 or more children who require separation from their own homes or a group living experience."

ORR continues to rely predominantly on a network of very large facilities—50 beds or more—despite a precipitous shift away from institutional-based care for children nationally. ORR has a greater percentage of congregate care facilities in its provider network than states generally permit for domestic child-welfare placements. Similarly, ORR's congregate care facilities are larger than their counterparts in the domestic child-welfare systems. In 2021 and 2022, tens of thousands of unaccompanied children were held in emergency intake sites (EISs) and influx care facilities (ICFs) in converted convention centers, stadiums, and military bases. Ranging from 1,000 to 5,000 beds, EISs and ICFs are unlicensed by state child welfare authorities and not bound by conditions stipulated by the Flores Settlement Agreement.

Interviews with ORR stakeholders, including child psychologists, social workers, and family reunification specialists in ORR facilities, underscore the potential and actual harm that congregate care facilities can cause for children. Interviewees reported limited outdoor activity, restricted contact with parents and caregivers, and discriminatory treatment of LGBTQI+, Indigenous, and West African youth. Stakeholders described children simultaneously struggling to cope with the uncertainty of family reunification, procedural opacity, ongoing legal proceedings, and the possibility of deportation. Taken together, our research concludes that children should be reunified with family or sponsors as quickly as possible, while ensuring their safety and adequate support following release.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LIMITING CONGREGATE CARE AND BOLSTERING POST-RELEASE SERVICES

1. *In initial placement decisions, geolocation is a best practice.*

Stakeholders agreed unanimously that geolocation is a best practice and should be adopted as ORR policy. That is, when a child is transferred from U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to ORR custody, efforts should be made to place them in an ORR facility in the geographical area where the child's family (specifically, a Category 1 or Category 2 sponsor) is located. For children who may not know where family members live, the potential sponsor's area code can serve as a proxy, given that most children arrive with a family member's phone number.

Interviewees contended that geolocation is advantageous for several reasons. First, placement close to family facilitates communication with and support of the sponsor in completing the requisite paperwork, which can be cumbersome. Interviewees working with children in ORR custody believed that, in general, children are released sooner when placed near their parent or family member. Second, visitation with potential sponsors can reduce the stress of children who spend protracted time in ORR custody. This is especially applicable for children who are reunifying with parents or family members after prolonged separations. Third, family reunification specialists reported that observing the child with the potential sponsor can identify or alleviate safety concerns; if needed, specialists can more quickly turn to a more appropriate sponsor or placement. Fourth, geolocation allows legal service providers who have already prescreened children while in ORR custody to continue to provide legal representation following release. This additionally alleviates the considerable financial and logistical burden on children to find legal representation in a new location. Fifth, geolocation can aid with warm handoffs to area social service providers who provide key resources, such as information about state laws for securing health insurance and assistance with school enrollment. Lastly, geolocating children close to family members relieves travel costs for ORR and logistical burdens of transportation arrangements for facility staff.

2. *ORR must build a pipeline of community-based care providers.*

The ultimate goal of ending congregate care, including large-scale facilities, for unaccompanied children will not happen overnight. Despite repeated directives from Congress, ORR has failed to take adequate meaningful steps necessary to limit its reliance on congregate care. ORR must proactively invest in long-term, community-based programs for unaccompanied children. This includes launching a series of pilot programs that are culturally sensitive, evidence

based, and trauma informed. Over the long run, these community-based placements will prove cost-effective when compared to the daily cost of \$775 per bed in influx facilities and \$290 per bed in shelters and the nearly \$4.79 billion spent on emergency influx and intake facilities.

Networks of community-based care exist in the domestic child welfare system, including community-based placements, small group homes, and foster care. These programs provide trauma-focused, intensive care for children and youth in home-like environments that facilitate their healthy development. Children attend local schools and are integrated into the community. To establish a pipeline of providers, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and ORR should:

- provide technical training assistance to community-based organizations to navigate federal funding applications, operational requirements, and reporting;

- engage outside child welfare experts, subject matter experts, and impacted community members to conduct site visits and provide consultation and recommendations to community-based organizations;

- create a public plan to transition to 100 percent small-scale facilities with attention to the known challenges across contracting and grant-making, staffing limitations, availability, outreach, recruitment of potential providers, program officer oversight, and organizational reporting;

- improve handoffs to community service providers in areas where unaccompanied children reunite with family; and

- prescreen sites and secure contracts of a variety of models of care in advance, rather than identifying out-of-network placements on a case-by-case basis.

3. Rectify problems of children's language access in care.

ORR and its subcontractors are required by law "to take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access" to interpretation. According to interviewees, however, children's rights to use their primary language and their access to interpreters are regularly sidestepped within ORR facilities. The primarily affected children are Indigenous children from Central America who are presumed to speak Spanish, but whose primary languages are often Indigenous languages. When asked why language lines are not used, facility staff described the inconvenience of scheduling telephonic interpreters when they can "get by" in Spanish, that interpretation prolongs meetings with children amid high caseloads, and a lack of awareness of children's language rights due to high staff turnover within facilities. Further, several respondents reported that children are dissuaded from using their native language with other children, and are even separated to different pods or during activities to ensure that staff can understand the conversations. According to researchers, the deliberate separation of children from the same linguistic communities is a form of linguistic racism. Legal advocates said that children are misidentified as potentially trafficked and, conversely, not flagged as trafficked or vulnerable to trafficking because of mistakes in the intake and family reunification processes when an interpreter is not used.

Language-proficiency problems negatively impact the quality of children's care in ORR custody and likely lengthen the time that children spend apart from their families. ORR should expressly prohibit practices that prevent children from using their chosen language; incorporate training guidance for facility staff; provide translated signage in all facilities of many of the dominant languages

of children in their custody; and provide regular monitoring that facilities are complying with children's consistent and meaningful access to interpretation. In addition, at time of intake, ORR should direct facility staff to ask children their first language and to use language access lines when completing all required intakes. For children, the use of their own language relieves stress, provides cultural familiarity, and enhances communication. While more time and cost intensive, the use of interpretation ensures greater accuracy of information and safety of the child's eventual placement.

4. Provide localized, wrap-around services for unaccompanied children released to a non-relative sponsor.

Post-release services (PRS) are contracted, social-service support provided to children following their release from ORR custody. PRS currently operate via bridging and referral programming in which a PRS worker connects the child and sponsor to critical mental health, medical, legal, and educational resources in their local community via a series of phone calls, mailings, or emails. Depending on the need, in-person visits are conducted. Stakeholders interviewed for this study, including PRS providers, affirmed the importance of localized services for children following release from ORR custody and called for expanded, in-person services for all children.

One stakeholder explained how teenagers are commonly prohibited from enrolling in public schools despite their legal right to attend school: "They need someone knowledgeable about the US to accompany and advocate for them when school administrators are unlawfully turning them away." Others emphasized that PRS should be provided by local service providers who are knowledgeable of the nuances of state law and educational practices that may obstruct school enrollment, and who have up-to-date information regarding service availability. One stakeholder explained, "The flyers provided are out of date or organizations on the forms are maxed out; kids really need people who have relationships with a community of providers." As one PRS provider stated, "They need accompaniment, not more flyers."

One challenge is that current PRS schemes are insufficient to meet the diverse needs of unaccompanied children. An ideal approach is to align PRS to a localized, wrap-around service model. Interviewees emphasized, however, that PRS should never be used to delay the reunification of a child and sponsor and that families should continue to be allowed to decline the services.

Given renewed concerns about the labor exploitation of unaccompanied children, ORR should:

- offer PRS to all children released to a non-relative sponsor ("category 3" sponsors);

- offer PRS if requested by the child, family, or sponsor;

- include an immediate, individualized needs assessment for child, sponsor, and family (as relevant) following release in all levels of PRS;

- ensure that PRS needs assessments result in local, in-person social-service brokerage rather than remote referrals; and

- eliminate the PRS backlog—which, at the time of writing, stands at well over 10,000 cases—with a goal that PRS appointments be in place when reunification occurs.

In contrast to traditional PRS services, which are service driven and problem based, wrap-around services enlist a strengths-based, needs-driven approach that builds on individual and family strengths. Wrap-around services are evidence-based, culturally responsive accompaniment practices that promote child and family involvement

in setting goals to ensure children's well-being. These services are also more effective in ensuring children are safe given the close and trusting relationship children have with their care team. Engaging in local, community-based partnerships to provide wrap-around services simultaneously will strengthen ORR's network for placing children in the least restrictive environment and move the US toward ending congregate care for all children.

This policy brief was written by Lauren Heidbrink, PhD, associate professor of human development at California State University, Long Beach, and consultant for the Women's Refugee Commission. It was reviewed and edited by Katharina Ober, Mario Bruzzone, Dale Buscher, Joanna Kuebler, and Diana Quick of the Women's Refugee Commission.

For more information, contact Mario Bruzzone.

Women's Refugee Commission

The Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) improves the lives and protects the rights of women, children, and youth who have been displaced by conflict and crisis. We research their needs, identify solutions, and advocate for programs and policies to strengthen their resilience and drive change in humanitarian practice. Since our founding in 1989, we have been a leading expert on the needs of refugee women, children, and youth and the policies that can protect and empower them. womenrefugeecommission.org.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, it is called "Decreasing ORR's Dependence on Congregate Care: Four Recommendations of Progress," written by the Women's Refugee Commission. But I assure you, this document is not alone. There is commission after commission, expert after expert who has weighed in to say that we have to eliminate these congregate care facilities, which is exactly what the Children's Safe Welcome Act does.

You know, these are children who are going through the process of claiming refugee status, and they are going to go through an adjudication of that status, and they are either going to be able to stay in the United States—and that is eventually adjudicated—or they are going to be sent back home.

If they are going to stay in the United States, we want a strong foundation for them to thrive as residents of our Nation. If they go back home, we want a strong foundation for them to thrive back home in the country they left.

In either case, we have a moral responsibility to these children. That moral responsibility compels us to eliminate these congregate care facilities that are not the right setting. Children should be quickly sent to small settings, to homes. They should be in school. They should be with host families. When there isn't a host family that is related, they should be with a host family that is providing a foundation for them. They shouldn't be in a mass congregate care facility—the name sounds much nicer than the reality.

So I am not going to take the time tonight to go through all of these various reports on how bad congregate care is for the children because I think

you have already touched on how bad it is with one provider. But shutting down one provider and sending them to other congregate care facilities now means the system is maxed out, which means the children coming in not only go to the remaining beds in a system that is maxed out, it also means that now we have to create temporary influx facilities, which are far worse than congregate care.

So this plan I know is so well-intentioned, and I certainly share the criticisms of the particular company you are addressing, but this is not the right answer. The right answer isn't to max out congregate care and create temporary influx facilities that are even worse; the answer is to get rid of these congregate care facilities and do what report after report, recommendation after recommendation has said will provide a foundation for these children to do well.

The National Center for Youth Law said that these influx facilities that would have to be created "placed children's safety and welfare at risk."

The Customs and Border Patrol facilities, which are the other option if we don't create the influx facilities, are described as so dangerous that children have died.

It goes on and on and on.

So given your deep interest in this topic and, really, desire for the children to be well-treated, I wanted to invite you to join me in this structure, this bill, the Children's Safe Welcome Act. Experts have said this is the right thing to do for the children.

For that reason, I will do the formal request, but the informal is, I know your heart is in the right place. I know you are pointing out flaws that are very, very real and that I have been personally witnessing since 2018. But the answer isn't more congregate care for these kids or influx facilities or Customs and Border Protection; it is eliminating these congregate facilities and doing what expert after expert, panel after panel has suggested.

So I am following up here. I ask that you, Senator GRASSLEY, modify your request and that the Merkley amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I would like to speak to this issue a little bit and point out some of the shortcomings of what Senator MERKLEY is trying to accomplish by amending my motion.

I see this amendment merely cementing into place the Biden-Harris policy that lost more than 85,000 migrant children. Can you believe that? If there was any question whether Democrats prioritize speed over safety when it comes to pushing migrant kids out the door, this partisan amendment lays that question to rest.

I think I made very clear, in giving reasons for my legislation, how this is really a big problem. Now, the text of what Senator MERKLEY is asking me to do mandates that the government make a placement determination for a child not later than 7 days after the government receives a sponsored application. Fingerprint-based background checks aren't required. And even the criminal record of a sponsor isn't necessarily disqualified.

Now, a question: What if a sponsor has no preexisting relationship to the child? Think of that. Well, that is not a problem for this proposal. The fact that a sponsor has no preexisting relationship to a child cannot be the sole basis for denying sponsorship under this Democrat-led solution.

This amendment just willy-nilly turns over children to sponsors who foot-drag on providing the documents needed to verify sponsor identity and safety. I can't imagine a loving parent or guardian slow rolling the paperwork needed to reunite with their child.

To most folks, that would be a very clear red flag, but not to Democrats. For them, it is just an administrative inconvenience.

So just understand, this Democratic solution allows the government to release children to sponsors even if there is a risk of harm to that child. According to this text, that is fine, so long as post-release services are in place. In fact, those are the only conditions under which post-release services are required according to this modification presented to me.

After directing the government to make what could be life-or-death decisions for a child on virtually no information, the bill restricts the ability to share lifesaving information with law enforcement.

Let's go back to what I laid down. I came to the floor tonight to offer a commonsense solution to deny bad actors access to kids. My bill would put contractors on notice that they can't willfully blind themselves to child abuse in order to get rich off taxpayers' dollars. Democrats couldn't even take that blindness seriously.

I encourage my colleagues to read the Justice Department's recent complaint against Southwest Key. I referred to the same Justice Department action in my opening remarks. This is what Justice found out, among other horrors: That complaint describes the repeated sexual abuse of a 5-year-old girl, the prostitution of a 15-year-old boy, and acts of a contractor desperate to even cover up all those wrongdoings.

So thanks to this Democrat-led effort, Congress won't prevent contractors like them from getting access to more kids and more taxpayers' dollars.

So, Senator MERKLEY, I am sorry to say that your modification doesn't do what I am trying to accomplish and leaves in place too much the status quo; so I have to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Is there an objection to the original request?

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I would just like to note that this bill, put together by the best child welfare experts across the country, has in it a requirement under section 223 requiring background checks to be conducted for each resident of a foster care placement for a noncitizen child. It prohibits children from being placed in a home if a resident has a conviction for child abuse or trafficking or convicted of any offense that has a direct and immediate impact on the safety of a child.

I know that these sorts of dialogues—our staff worked quickly to try to prepare responses. But your actual criticisms are inaccurate. And, indeed, what these experts say is that a child should be put in the least restrictive setting that approximates a family in which the child's needs can best be met consistent with the best interests and special needs of that child.

The experts know congregate care is not the place to do that. The problems that exist in one mass setting are bad, but they exist in the other mass settings. So I do invite you—because I know you want to do the best for the children—to meet with the same experts who live this, night and day, seeking to have a system that creates a safe welcome for children and allows them to thrive so that when they get to that point of that asylum hearing, whether they head back to their home country or whether they become residents of the United States, they will be in a great place, not the sort of terrible place that congregate facilities put them. And, unfortunately, your approach continues to rely upon those very congregate facilities experts say need to be eliminated.

So for that reason, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

OFFICE OF REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, when President Biden and Vice President HARRIS took office, we had the lowest rate of illegal immigration in nearly 50 years. But instead of maintaining strong border policies inherited from President Trump, the Biden-Harris administration rushed to overturn them. They ended "Remain in Mexico," reimposed so-called catch-and-release, and exempted unaccompanied children from title 42.

The result was predictable. The Biden-Harris open border policies encouraged the worst rates of illegal immigration ever, including over 500,000 unaccompanied migrant children. In fact, the month after migrant children were exempted from title 42, we saw the highest monthly total of unaccompanied children crossing the southern border in history.

The influx of migrant children under the Biden-Harris administration overwhelmed the Office of Refugee Resettlement, also abbreviated the ORR. This is the Agency responsible for unaccompanied children apprehended at the border and responsible for releasing them to thoroughly vetted sponsors.

ORR responded to this influx by sending children to hastily constructed emergency care facilities with untrained, unvetted staff and poor living conditions. The Agency also removed key sponsor-vetting requirements after senior Biden-Harris officials directed ORR to expedite the process of releasing migrant children to outside sponsors.

It is so easy to interpret this as a means to shield the White House from the political embarrassment of facilities overrun with unaccompanied children crossing the border that they had just opened.

In fact, as early as July 21, ORR staff warned superiors that ORR leadership had dismantled sponsor-vetting policies and that these changes weakened ORR's ability to protect children from risk such as trafficking and exploitation. Despite this, ORR left these policies in place for years while hundreds of thousands of children were released to poorly vetted sponsors.

You know, sometimes, it is easy to think this is partisan. Sometimes, it is easy to lose track as Republicans and Democrats talk about issues. But now, we are talking about kids—children that could be our children—who are being released to people who are not being vetted. It is easy to forget that. This is not partisan. This is something which should concern us all.

As a ranking member of the Senate HELP Committee, I am investigating the administration's failure to protect these migrant children from exploitation and abuse. I have learned that some of these children were forced into dangerous working conditions and exploited for illegal labor. At one such facility currently under investigation, a child was pulled into a meat processing machine.

By the way, again, we are not making this up. We have testimony from witnesses who speak to all of these facts. We have the whistleblowers who came to a roundtable. We have got the transcripts.

I have also learned that ORR's weakening of sponsor-vetting requirements directly led to children being put in harm's way. And in one instance, ORR neglected to verify whether the sponsor's claimed address was even a real home, and they sent this child to an address nothing more than open field. In another case, a 16-year-old was released to a sponsor who posted sexually explicit photos of the child on social media, including a photo with the sponsor touching the child inappropriately.

In addition to my investigation, I joined Senators GRASSLEY and JOHNSON earlier this summer in hosting a Sen-

ate roundtable to examine ORR's failures and identify steps Congress could take to reform the Agency. We learned that due to failure at ORR, some unaccompanied children have been forced into drug trafficking, sex trafficking, and other criminal activity to pay off the cartels who brought them. All of this—according to whistleblowers—without followup or meaningful oversight from the Biden-Harris administration.

I repeat: This is not rhetoric, not fiction. This is what we are hearing from whistleblowers.

This exploitation also seemingly occurs while migrant children are still in ORR custody. In July, the Department of Justice filed a lawsuit against Southwest Key Programs, the largest ORR contractor housing unaccompanied children, alleging that for nearly a decade, its employees have committed sexual abuse and harassment against unaccompanied children as young as 5 years old.

DOJ alleges that Southwest Key not only failed to take sufficient action to prevent sexual abuse but actively discouraged children from officially reporting these incidents.

Once more, this is not rhetoric. This is as a result of whistleblowers. This should not be partisan.

In August, I called on the HELP Committee chair to hold a hearing with Southwest Key and ORR officials to answer how these shocking allegations of sexual abuse went undetected for so long. So far, HELP Committee Democrats have not committed to a hearing or any effort to investigate.

And, by the way, Southwest Key still receives hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars to operate shelters for migrant kids. If ORR will not take action in the wake of these allegations, Congress should. That is why I worked with Senator GRASSLEY on legislation that would prohibit the use of Federal funds for Southwest Key or any other ORR grantee facing suspension and debarment procedures for allowing illegal sexual abuse or harassment of children in its care. I appreciate Senator GRASSLEY's leadership.

The problems with ORR and the exploitation of children have been well-documented for years. Yet there has been no substantive effort by Biden or HARRIS to fix their open border policies—which caused these problems to begin with—or reform ORR to protect unaccompanied children from harm.

The exploitation of children should not be partisan. This is not a Republican or Democratic issue. When vulnerable children are harmed or die at the expense of bad policies or bad procedures or bad process, everyone should be outraged and everyone should be demanding change.

Unfortunately, it is clear that Republicans are taking this problem more seriously than Democrats.

It is not a messaging issue. It is an issue that challenges the humanity within us. It is something we should

address whether or not it is an election year.

I wish that my Democratic colleagues would join Republicans tonight to pass this commonsense bill to hold ORR contractors accountable for the abuse and exploitation of children under their watch. We should protect these vulnerable children from harm as if they were our own.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

CLOTURE MOTION WITHDRAWN

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture motion with respect to the Pennell nomination be withdrawn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT "BOB" SUNSHINE

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I rise to acknowledge the service of an extraordinary public servant who is retiring at the end of next week, Robert "Bob" Sunshine.

Congress depends on the expertise and hard work of our valued staff and supporting agencies. After 48 years of exemplary service to the Congressional Budget Office, spanning virtually the entirety of the agency's existence, few staffers have done more to serve this institution and the American people than Bob Sunshine. As President pro tempore of the Senate, as well as the chair of the Appropriations Committee and former chair of the Budget Committee, I thank and commend Bob for his many decades of excellent public service to CBO and the Congress and wish him and his family all the best in his much-deserved retirement.

I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Bob for his dedication and service to us and the American people.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATIONS

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is still available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications that have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such an annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Washington, DC.

Hon. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(5)(A) of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), as amended, we are forwarding Transmittal No. 0N-23. This notification relates to enhancements or upgrades from the level of sensitivity of technology or capability described in the Section 36(b)(1) AECA certification 22-11 of May 26, 2022.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL F. MILLER,
Director.

Enclosure.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 0N-23

Report of Enhancement or Upgrade of Sensitivity of Technology or Capability (Sec. 36(b)(5)(A), AECA)

(i) Purchaser: Government of Egypt.

(ii) Sec. 36(b)(1), AECA Transmittal No.: 22-11; Date: May 26, 2022; Military Department: Army.

Funding Source: Foreign Military Financing (FMF).

(iii) Description: On May 26, 2022, Congress was notified by Congressional certification transmittal number 22-11, of the possible sale under Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act of twenty-three (23) CH-47F Chinook Helicopters; fifty-six (56) T-55-GA-714A Engines (46 installed, 10 spares); fifty-two (52) Embedded Global Positioning System (GPS) Inertial Navigation Systems (INS) (EGI) (46 installed, 6 spares); twenty-nine (29) AN/AAR-57 Common Missile Warning Systems (CMWS) (23 installed, 6 spares); and seventy-five (75) M-240 Machine Guns (69 installed, 6 spares). Also included was Common Missile Warning System (CMWS) classified software; AN/APR-39 Radar Warning Receivers (RWR); AN/AVR-2B Laser Detecting Sets (LDS); High Frequency (HF) radios; Aircraft Survivability Equipment (ASE) (including 25.4mm decoy cartridges, impulse cartridges for cable cutters and aircraft cartridges); AN/ARN-147 Very High Frequency (VHF) Omni Directional Radio Range/Instrument Landing System (VOR/ILS) receivers; AN/ARN-153 Tactical Airborne Navigation System (TACAN) radios; AN/APN-209 radar altimeters; AN/AVS-6 Night Vision Devices (NVD); 7.62mm ammunition; items and services to support the mission equipment; hardware and services required to implement additional aircraft options such as: rescue hoists; external cargo slings and nets; Bambi fire buckets; Fast Rope Insertion Extraction Systems (FRIES); Cargo On/Off Loading Systems (COOLS); Extended Range Fuel Systems (ERFS); upgrade to the maintenance hangar and additional parking pads; special tools and test equipment; ground support equipment; airframe and engine spare parts; technical data; publications; Maintenance Work Orders/Engineering Change Proposals (MWO/ECPs); technical assistance; transportation; training; and other related elements

of logistics and program support. The total estimated program cost was \$2.6 billion. Major Defense Equipment (MDE) constituted \$1.725 billion of this total.

This transmittal notifies the following MDE articles that were previously reported as non-MDE: eighty-one (81) AN/ARC-231A (RT-1987) radios. This transmittal also reports replacing the previously notified fifty-two (52) Embedded Global Positioning System (GPS) Inertial Navigation Systems (INS) (EGI) (46 installed, 6 spares) with fifty-two (52) Embedded Global Positioning System (GPS) Inertial Navigation Systems (INS) (EGI) with M-Code (46 installed, 6 spares). The following non-MDE items will also be included: AN/APX-123A Identify Friend or Foe (IFF) Transponders; KY-100 Encryptor Terminals; KIV-77 Crypto Appliques; AN/VRC-100 Advanced High Frequency Ground Transceivers; AN/PYQ-10 (C) Simple Key Loaders; AN/ARC-220 High Frequency (HF) Radios; and the Automated Communication Engineering Software (ACES) Package. Although the estimated additional MDE value is \$12 million, the estimated total MDE value will remain \$1.725 billion. The total estimated case value will remain \$2.6 billion.

(iv) Significance: This notification is being provided to add MDE articles that were added to the program due to the obsolescence of the items they will replace and to report the AN/ARC-231A as MDE. The proposed articles and services will support Egypt's ongoing effort to modernize its armed forces and increase its capacity to detect threats and control its borders, contributing to the maintenance of regional stability and security. This will contribute to the Egyptian military's effort to update their capabilities and enhance interoperability with the United States and other strategic allies.

(v) Justification: This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States by helping to improve the security of a Major Non-NATO Ally that continues to be an important force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East.

(vi) Sensitivity of Technology: The AN/ARC-231A (RT-1987) radio is a multi-mode software defined radio providing line of sight very high frequency (VHF)/ultra high frequency (UHF) secure and non-secure voice and data communications over the 30,000-941,000 MHz frequency and Satellite Communications (SATCOM) beyond line of sight secure and non-secure voice and data, including Demand Assigned Multiple ACCESS (DAMA) communications from the 240-320 MHz frequency range on manned and unmanned aviation platforms. ARC-231A includes improved type-1 cryptographic algorithm and processing capabilities, Civil Land Mobile Radio, Single Channel Ground and Airborne Radios System (SINCGARS) capabilities, HAVE QUICK (HQ), Second Generation Anti-Jam Tactical UHF Radio for NATO (SATURN) wave form, 8.33 kHz channel spacing for Global Air-Traffic Management (GATM) compliance, and capability for Mobile User Objective System (MUOS) wave form through possible future hardware and software updates.

The AN/APX-123A Transponder is an IFF digital transponder set that provides pertinent platform information in response to an IFF interrogator. It provides this cooperative capability using full diversity selection, as well as Mode Select capability.

The KY-100 is a radio encryptor that has sensitive technology. This device is a self-contained terminal and provides for secure voice and data communications in tactical airborne/ground environments.

The KIV-77 is a Common Crypto Applique for Identification, Friend or Foe (IFF) that provides Mode 4/5 capability.

The AN/VRC-100 is the ground version of the AN/ARC-220 HF radio, which provides embedded Automatic Link Establishment (ALE), serial tone data modem, text messaging, and GPS position reporting functions.

The AN/PYQ-10 (C) Simple Key Loader (SKL) is a ruggedized, portable, hand-held fill device used for securely receiving, storing, and transferring electronic key material and data between compatible end cryptographic units (ECU) and communications equipment. It supports both the DS-101 and DS-102 interfaces, as well as the Crypto Ignition Key and is compatible with existing ECUs.

The AN/ARC-220 HF airborne communications system provides embedded ALE, serial tone data modem, text messaging and GPS position reporting functions.

The Sensitivity of Technology Statement contained in the original notification applies to the other items reported here.

The highest level of classification of defense articles, components, and services included in this potential sale is SECRET.

(vii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: September 12, 2024.

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT GENERAL JONATHAN STUBBS

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate U.S. Army LTG Jonathan Stubbs on his promotion to director of the Army National Guard.

General Stubbs was appointed by Arkansas Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders to serve as adjutant general of the Arkansas National Guard in January 2023 after a long and distinguished career in the National Guard.

He first enlisted in the Army National Guard in Tennessee, but very quickly made his home in the Natural State and spent nearly three decades serving and leading citizen soldiers in Arkansas. In fact, he held every leadership position within the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team and deployed to Iraq twice during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

As an Active-Guard Reserve officer from 1997-2021, Stubbs completed numerous trainings and assignments, which culminated in his promotion as chief of staff for the Arkansas Army National Guard.

His entire service in uniform has been characterized by bravery and skill, earning him decorations to include the Combat Infantryman Badge, Valorous Unit Award, three Legion of Merit citations, two Bronze Star Medals, and the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, among many others.

His leadership potential and experience led to his appointment as vice director for operations for the National Guard Bureau in 2021, and the next year, he was assigned as the deputy director of Operations, Readiness, and Mobilization at Department of the Army Headquarters, based at the Pentagon.

As head of the Arkansas National Guard, General Stubbs was a driving force of remarkable progress and growth. He connected communities to the Guard and enhanced relationships between servicemembers, families, veterans, businesses, and local leaders;

elevated recruiting and retention efforts that had struggled amid the pandemic through innovative approaches, including partnership with skills and vocational initiatives; ensured guardsmen's preparedness to not only deploy in defense of our country to Europe and the Middle East, but also around the State of Arkansas and to the U.S. southern border; built and expanded partnerships, particularly with National Guard State Partnership Program counterpart Guatemala; and helped inspire confidence in the Arkansas Guard's capabilities and personnel through excellent communication, professionalism, and unmistakable passion.

It was a special pleasure and honor to work alongside General Stubbs to secure a new flying mission at Ebbing Air National Guard Base and help guide necessary preparations for the Active Duty-Air Force bed down in advance of the formal arrival of the Foreign Military Sales Program in Fort Smith. His expertise and diligence were indispensable to the success of this incredibly consequential opportunity for the State of Arkansas that will also greatly benefit U.S. national security.

As he begins this new chapter leading our Army National Guard, we are tremendously grateful for all his contributions to our State and stewardship of the Arkansas Guard for so many years. General Stubbs will undoubtedly continue to make the Natural State proud through his exceptional leadership, steadfast commitment to the guardsmen under his command, and dedication to the defense of the United States, its allies, and interests. We wish him well in this new role.

RECOGNIZING THE 555TH PARACHUTE INFANTRY BATTALION, "TRIPLE NICKLES"

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I recognize and honor the legacy of the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion, known as the "Triple Nickles," a unit that exemplified the highest standards of excellence and professionalism in the U.S. Army. As the first all-Black parachute infantry battalion in the U.S. Army, the Triple Nickles made extraordinary contributions to our Nation. Formed in the face of adversity and prejudice, the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion was composed of highly skilled and dedicated soldiers who demonstrated exceptional courage and resolve, breaking barriers and laying the groundwork for the integration of our Armed Forces. The Triple Nickles forged a legacy of bravery, skill, and dedication that continues to inspire us.

In 1945, the Triple Nickles were assigned to a unique and critical mission known as Operation Firefly, where they parachuted into the rugged terrain of the American Northwest to extinguish forest fires started by Japanese incendiary balloon bombs during World War II. This mission was both dangerous and essential, as these brave

soldiers helped protect our homeland from a new and insidious form of warfare. Their skills and bravery during these operations set the standard for future military smokejumpers and left an indelible mark on the history of airborne operations.

The legacy of the Triple Nickles extends beyond their military achievements. Their success challenged the prevailing attitudes of the time and contributed to the eventual desegregation of the U.S. military. When the battalion was integrated into the 82nd Airborne Division, it marked a significant step towards the equality of treatment and opportunity for all servicemembers, regardless of race.

Today, as we reflect on the contributions of the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion, we honor their service and sacrifice. They were more than just soldiers; they were trailblazers who fought for their country and the right to serve it with dignity and respect. Their courage continues to inspire generations of soldiers and reminds us of the progress we have made as a nation. Their contributions to our Nation's history are immeasurable, and their legacy endures in the freedoms we enjoy today.

It is with great pride that I recognize the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion, the Triple Nickles, and ensure that their story of service and excellence is remembered and celebrated in our Nation's history.

RECOGNIZING THE BLUE ANGELS 2025 OFFICER SELECTIONS

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I recognize the newest selectees for the U.S. Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron, the Blue Angels, as they prepare to join this esteemed team for the 2025 air show season. The Blue Angels are a symbol of naval aviation excellence and a vital part of Florida's rich military heritage, with their home base at Naval Air Station Pensacola.

Each year, the Blue Angels inspire millions of spectators with their precise and daring aerial performances, showcasing the skill and professionalism of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps. The team's presence in Florida is a source of immense pride, reinforcing the deep connection between our State and the military.

This year, after a highly competitive selection process, five outstanding officers have been chosen to join the Blue Angels for the 2025 show season: Maj. Brandon Wilkins, from Beaufort, SC; Maj. Scott Laux, from Chantilly, VA; Lcdr. Lilly Montana, from Vienna, VA; Maj. Joshua Horman, from Smithville, MO; and Cmdr. Jen Murr, from Jackson Center, OH.

Their selection is a testament to their extraordinary skill, dedication, and commitment to the values of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps. The Blue Angels are more than just a demonstration team; they are ambassadors of goodwill, fostering a sense of com-

munity and patriotism across Florida and the Nation. Their performances inspire future generations of aviators and remind us all of the critical role our military plays in safeguarding our freedoms.

I congratulate Maj. Brandon Wilkins, Maj. Scott Laux, Lcdr. Lilly Montana, Maj. Joshua Horman, and Cmdr. Jen Murr on their selection. I look forward to the 2025 show season and the continued success of the Blue Angels, a team that embodies the very best of our Nation's Armed Forces.

TRIBUTE TO MARY LOUISE QUINBY

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise today to wish a very happy birthday to Mary Louise Quinby, a wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and great-great-grandmother, from Ocosta, WA. Mrs. Quinby turned 100 years old on August 26, and she continues to be the driving force within her family, which now consists of 8 children, 30 grandchildren, 56 great-grandchildren, and 5 great-great-grandchildren.

Born August 26, 1924, Mary grew up on a small family farm. In 1942, during World War II, she married her high school sweetheart Robert, and while he served in the Navy, Mary worked as a Rosie the Riveter in a local shop in Aberdeen.

After the war, Mary and Bob settled in Bremerton, where Bob worked in the shipyards as a machinist. In 1948, Mary's uncle, a cranberry grower in Grayland, encouraged her husband and brother Jack to try their hand at farming cranberries. They bought their first bog of two acres from her uncle and moved their small family to Grayland.

During the years after their first cranberry bog purchase and until the early 1970s, they bought about 23 acres of bogs. Mary supported her husband while he worked his second job as a machinist in a local plant by weeding, irrigating, and doing frost protection when necessary.

In the early 1970s, Bob became ill, and they started selling portions of their bogs to their oldest son, Robert P. Quinby. During this time, Mary—mostly by herself—farmed about eight acres. She raised a bumper crop, and it topped the highest yield on that acreage. She never let her husband forget it.

Her husband was the West Coast director for Ocean Spray for many years, during which time Mary played an instrumental role in teaching other farmers about Ocean Spray and cranberry farming.

During all of that time, and through today, her family has remained her top priority, and the legacy of that 1948 decision to become a cranberry farmer has been passed down in her family. Today, two sons, one daughter, and eight grandchildren grow cranberries.

From their first purchase in 1948 of two acres, Mary's descendants have

amassed close to 275 acres in the Grayland area and are busy training the next generations of cranberry owners.

Mary is a shining example of the American dream and beloved by all who know her. Her dedication to her family, her community, and her farms is obvious, and I wish her the happiest of birthdays.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE 100-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEVADA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

• Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize the 100-year anniversary of the Nevada Association of Counties, also known as NACO. NACO was established in Reno, NV, in 1924 under the name of Nevada County Commissioners' Association. NACO was established when Nevada had a total population of 84,000 residents. Today, NACO represents all 17 counties in Nevada, from Clark County with a population of over 2,000,000 residents, to Esmeralda with a population of less than 1,000 residents. Every year, I make a dedicated effort to visit all 17 Nevada counties because I know how important each community is to our State's economy and culture.

Counties serve as a vital administrative arm of Nevada's State government. Their work is critical, as they play a key role in maintaining records, overseeing courts and law enforcement, supporting fire protection, administering health and welfare assistance, assessing property, collecting taxes, building roads, and conducting elections. Nevada counties perform these important functions and many others through their elected representatives who serve as general purpose government for both unincorporated and incorporated areas, thereby servicing all people within Nevada.

Since 1924, Nevada counties have grown in population, experienced urbanization, and undergone economic evolutions. Over the past 100 years of Nevada's development, NACO has helped county governments to meet this change. NACO's initiative, leadership, and proactive problem solving have helped counties across Nevada act and usher in positive change.

Today, Nevada counties face unique challenges and opportunities. Even though Nevada is one of the most urbanized States in the Nation, the State has a large rural population. NACO continues their legacy of ensuring Nevada county governments have the best opportunity to make positive change and can lead all Nevada communities into the future, no matter their size.

As a representative of all 17 counties in Nevada, NACO plays a large role in ensuring all people within Nevada benefit from local, regional, State, and national decisions. This is accomplished through their continued nonpartisan

efforts to provide county governments with educational and support services, advocacy at a State and Federal level and opportunities to make legislative change in the State. I know that our Nevada congressional delegation appreciates working directly with this hard-working organization and its members.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing NACO's 100 years of dedicated service to all people within Nevada and NACO's efforts to meet the challenges and opportunities facing Nevada's counties. We look forward to continuing the legacy by working collaboratively for the next hundred years.●

RECOGNIZING FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF WHITE HALL

• Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, the First Baptist Church of White Hall is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. The White Hall Baptist Mission was organized on July 24, 1924, by Dr. J. D. Sayers, Brother J. L. Lee, and the deacons of First Baptist Church of Pine Bluff. There were 11 charter members.

The new church shared a school building with the First Methodist Church of White Hall until Mrs. Clara Pinkington donated the property at 8203 Dollarway Road for a new building in October 1924. In 1925, a church building was erected and the name was changed to Lee Memorial Baptist Church in memory of Brother J.L. Lee. It was completed debt-free in 1926. In 1985, under Brother Jack Ramsey, members voted to change the church name to its present-day name, the First Baptist Church of White Hall.

While additional structures were added to the facilities throughout the years, the older buildings are still used today for educational space, children and youth ministries, and other fellowships. First Baptist Church of White Hall has had 18 pastors in the last 100 years. And remarkably, the tenure of the last two pastors Brothers Bob Harper and Paul Williams have spanned 36 of those 100 years. I join the church members, White Hall community, and State of Arkansas in recognizing First Baptist Church of White Hall in this milestone.●

RECOGNIZING SCE

• Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, as ranking member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize an outstanding Iowa small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. This week, it is my privilege to recognize SCE of Cherokee, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

Upon graduation from Iowa State University in 2003, Cory Bouchard began working as an operations supervisor for Schoon Construction, Inc. He worked at the company for 11 years until the owner was looking to sell part of the business. Cory knew he was interested, and his wife Maria recognized the need for reliable excavation

and construction services in Cherokee and throughout western Iowa. They purchased part of Schoon Construction, Inc., and created SCE.

Since its founding in 2015, SCE specializes in providing commercial and residential site utility services, cementing their reputation as the go-to company in fixing the city's water, sewage, or utilities. Today SCE employs seven local community members who are all committed to upholding SCE's service standards.

During the severe floods in Iowa this summer, SCE played an instrumental role in saving the city from potentially irreversible damage. The team worked around the clock alongside the Cherokee Volunteer Fire Department to pump out water and sewage, fix main water lines, and operate the city's vital water pumps. During the floods, the Cherokee sewage lift station that moves wastewater, nearly collapsed, prompting SCE to jump in and get it back on track. Once the flooding receded, SCE and local volunteers continued their work by focusing on clean-up and recovery.

Beyond their operational contributions, SCE has a deep-rooted presence in the Cherokee community. The company is committed to helping local schools and community groups receive needed resources through their sponsorships. For example, SCE sponsors the Cherokee County Fair and the Cherokee County Rodeo. SCE is also a member of both the Cherokee Chamber of Commerce and the Better Business Bureau. In 2016, the Cherokee Chamber recognized SCE as the Small Business of the Year. Early next year, SCE will celebrate its tenth business anniversary.

SCE's commitment to reliable construction and excavation servicing is clear. I would like to thank the Bouchard family and the team at SCE for their dedication and incredible commitment to Cherokee County and the western Iowa area. I look forward to seeing their continued development and achievements in Iowa.●

RECOGNIZING LOS TIGRES DEL NORTE

• Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, this week, as they are honored with the 2024 Medallion of Excellence Award, the highest accolade awarded by the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, I rise to celebrate the over five-decade career of California-based norteño band, Los Tigres del Norte.

While they would eventually go on to become one of the most successful Latin music groups of all time, few people would have guessed it when they booked their first trip north to the United States to perform at a State prison in northern California—without even having a band name.

Raised in the town of Rosa Morada, Mocorito, in the Mexican state of Sinaloa, 3 of the 11 Hernandez children grew up playing music together in

local parades. In 1965, when their father, a rancher, injured his legs and couldn't work, Jorge, Raul, and Hernan recruited their cousin Oscar and began traveling the region as a band, earning money at local clubs to support their family.

In 1968, just teenagers at the time, they traveled north of the border to perform alongside mariachis, dancers, and even mimes for the inmates of a State prison south of San Jose, CA. It was then that an immigration official first labeled them the "Little Tigers." What came after was five decades of norteño-style music that resonated with people across the continent, tens of millions of albums sold, multiple Grammy and Latin Grammy awards, and the Latin Recording Academy's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Los Tigres del Norte, who would later add Eduardo and Luis Hernandez, have helped popularize norteño music in the United States, a genre that combined the music of Mexican laborers with the accordion-laced polka music of Czech and German immigrants.

True to their genre, Los Tigres embraced storytelling, sharing stories of hardship back in Mexico; of immigrants' long, difficult journeys; and of life in America. At first, they gave a voice to Mexican day laborers living in America. But soon enough, they began growing alongside a blossoming Latino population throughout the United States to become titans of the music industry.

They have filled theaters and stadiums, even released their own Netflix documentary as a 50th anniversary tribute to Johnny Cash's historic concert at Folsom Prison in California. From "America" to "La Jaula de Oro," Los Tigres' music continues to tell the story of the Latino experience in America today.

On a personal note, as the proud son of Mexican immigrants and as a child who grew up in the working-class community of Pacoima, CA, I remember their music filling our home and blasting out of speakers at neighborhood parties growing up. And in the mid-1990s, when immigrants and the children of immigrants in California rose up against the hateful, anti-immigrant proposition 187, Los Tigres' music was integrated into the soundtrack of our struggle.

Today, as a lifelong fan, I am proud to say their music now echoes in the Halls of Congress.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:16 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1425. An act to require any convention, agreement, or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response reached by the World Health Assembly to be subject to Senate ratification.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 2:26 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

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 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.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

At 3:45 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 5613. An act to require a review of whether individuals or entities subject to the imposition of certain sanctions through inclusion on certain sanctions lists should also be subject to the imposition of other sanctions and included on other sanctions lists.

At 7:05 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 9468. An act making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1425. An act to require any convention, agreement, or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response reached by the World Health Assembly to be subject to Senate ratification; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

H.R. 5613. An act to require a review of whether individuals or entities subject to the imposition of certain sanctions through inclusion on certain sanctions lists should also be subject to the imposition of other sanctions and included on other sanctions lists.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-5862. A communication from the Acting Regulations Specialist of Subsistence Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Subsistence Management Regulations for Public

Lands in Alaska - 2024-25 and 2025-2026 Subsistence Taking of Wildlife Regulations" (RIN1018-BG72) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-5863. A communication from the Chief of the Regulations and Standards Branch, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Oil and Gas and Sulfur Operations in the Outer Continental Shelf - High Pressure High Temperature Updates" (RIN1014-AA49) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2024; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-5864. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "American Society of Mechanical Engineers 2021-2022 Code Editions" (RIN3150-AK21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5865. A communication from the Chief of Bird Conservation, Permits, and Regulations, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Migratory Bird Hunting; Final 2024-2025 Frameworks for Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations" (RIN1018-BG63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5866. A communication from the Chief of Bird Conservation, Permits, and Regulations, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Migratory Bird Hunting; Final 2024-2025 Seasons for Certain Migratory Game Birds" (RIN1018-BG63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5867. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Review of Final Rule Reclassification of Major Sources as Area Sources Under Section 112 of the Clean Air Act" (FRL No. 4908.1-02-OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5868. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances Data Reporting and Recordkeeping under the Toxic Substances Control Act; Change to Submission Period and Technical Correction" ((RIN2070-AK67) (FRL No. 7902.1-02-OCSPP)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5869. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances Data Reporting and Recordkeeping under the Toxic Substances Control Act; Change to Submission Period and Technical Correction" ((RIN2070-AK67) (FRL No. 7902.1-02-OCSPP)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5870. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection

Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; California; South Coast Air Quality Management District" (FRL No. 11442-02-R9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5871. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Phasedown of Hydrofluorocarbons: Correction to Address Vacated Provisions" ((RIN2060-AW15) (FRL No. 11597-01-OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5872. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "North Carolina: Final Authorization of State Hazardous Waste Management Program Revisions" (FRL No. 11972-03-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5873. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "National Priorities List" (FRL No. 12163-02-OLEM) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5874. A communication from the Director of the Regulations and Disclosure Law Division, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Extension of Import Restrictions Imposed on Certain Archaeological Material of Algeria" (RIN1515-AE90) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5875. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Updated Procedures for Requesting Approval to Use Substitute Mortality Tables" (Rev. Proc. 2024-32) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5876. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a social security totalization agreement with Romania, titled "Agreement on Social Security between the United States of America and Romania" and the accompanying legally binding administrative arrangement titled "Administrative Arrangement between the Competent Authorities of the United States of America and Romania for the Implementation of the Agreement on Social Security between the United States of America and Romania"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5877. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Termination Under Section 506(a)(1) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (FAA) to Provide Military Assistance to Ukraine"; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-5878. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of defense articles, including technical data and defense services in the

amount of \$100,000,000 for the manufacture of significant military equipment abroad to Canada (Transmittal No. DDTC 24-030); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-5879. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of defense articles, including technical data and defense services in the amount of \$100,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 24-039); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-5880. A communication from the Executive Secretary, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), transmitting, pursuant to law, five (5) reports relative to vacancies in the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-5881. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Intercountry Adoption: Regulatory Changes to Accreditation and Approval Regulations in Intercountry Adoption" (RIN1400-AE39) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-5882. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Food Additives Permitted in Feed and Drinking Water of Animals; Pichia Pastoris Dried Yeast" (Docket No. FDA-2024-F-3882) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2024; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-5883. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Office of Population Affairs, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Public Health Policies on Research Misconduct" (RIN0937-AA12) received during in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2024; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-5884. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "World Trade Center (WTC) Health Program; Expanded Eligibility for Pentagon and Shanksville, Pennsylvania Responders" (RIN0920-AA86) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2024; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-5885. A communication from the Chair, National Endowment for the Arts, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Endowment's fiscal year 2023 Federal Activities Inventory Reform (FAIR) Act submission of its commercial and inherently governmental activities; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-5886. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Secretariat Division, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "General Services Administration Acquisition Regulation (GSAR); Updates to References to GSA Sustainable Leasing" (RIN3090-AK82) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-5887. A communication from the Director of Acquisition Policy, General Services

Administration, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2024-07, Introduction" (FAC 2024-07) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2024; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-5888. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's fiscal year 2023 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-5889. A communication from the Director, Congressional, Legislative, and Intergovernmental Affairs, Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Congressional Budget Estimate Submission for fiscal year 2026; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC-5890. A communication from the Senior Advisor for Oversight, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Veteran Readiness and Employment Program: Delegation of Concurrence for Entitlement Extensions" (RIN2900-AS14) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2024; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-5891. A communication from the Senior Advisor for Oversight, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Bar to Approval" (RIN2900-AQ99) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2024; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-5892. A communication from the Director of Rulemaking Operations, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards; Occupant Crash Protection" (RIN2127-AL90) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5893. A communication from the Director of Rulemaking Operations, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Record Retention Requirement" (RIN2127-AL81) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5894. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Administrator, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 10, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5895. A communication from the Branch Chief, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2024 Commercial Closure for Gag in the South Atlantic" (RIN0648-XE065) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5896. A communication from the Branch Chief, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Atlantic Highly Migratory Species;

Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries; Closure of the Angling Category Southern New England Area Trophy Fishery for 2023" (RIN0648-XD039) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5897. A communication from the Branch Chief, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska; Longnose Skates in the Eastern Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska" (RIN0648-XD057) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5898. A communication from the Biologist, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Taking of Marine Mammals Incidental to Commercial Fishing Operations; Amendment to the Atlantic Pelagic Longline Take Reduction Plan" (RIN0648-BN14) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 9, 2024; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Ms. CANTWELL, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 3348. A bill to amend the Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 to address harmful algal blooms, and for other purposes.

S. 4212. A bill to amend the Visit America Act to promote music tourism, and for other purposes.

S. 4343. A bill to establish and maintain a coordinated program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that improves wildfire, fire weather, fire risk, and smoke related forecasting, detection, modeling, observations, and service delivery, and to address growing needs in the wildland-urban interface, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. HAWLEY, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 5060. A bill to reauthorize the PROTECT Our Children Act of 2008, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. SMITH:

S. 5061. 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 Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself and Mr. OSSOFF):

S. 5062. A bill to address sexual harassment and sexual assault of Bureau of Prisons staff in prisons, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 5063. A bill to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to establish a program to allow small business concerns to purchase certain commodities futures, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. PETERS):

S. 5064. 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 Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BOOKER:

S. 5065. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to authorize a grant program to support students who have epilepsy or a seizure disorder; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. 5066. A bill to require the approval of Congress for the President to impose duties on the importation of articles into the United States; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 5067. A bill to improve individual assistance provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. SULLIVAN:

S. 5068. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to modify the organization and authorities of the Assistant Secretaries of Defense with duties relating to industrial base policy and homeland defense; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. WELCH, and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 5069. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, and title 39, United States Code, to provide the United States Postal Service the authority to mail alcoholic beverages, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

S. 5070. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to remove certain age restrictions on Medicaid eligibility for working adults with disabilities; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KING (for himself and Mr. MORAN):

S. 5071. A bill to amend the Housing Act of 1949 to permit certain grants to be used for accessory dwelling units, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 5072. A bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to establish additional requirements for dealers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 5073. A bill to limit the use of funds for entities that care for unaccompanied alien children and have been identified as engaging in misconduct toward children; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Mr. WICKER, Mr. DAINES, Mr. TUBERVILLE,

Mrs. BLACKBURN, Ms. ERNST, Mr. RICKETTS, Mr. BUDD, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. GRASSLEY, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. TILLIS, and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. 5074. A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide to Congress quarterly briefings on budgetary shortfalls of the Department of Veterans Affairs and to prohibit the provision of bonuses to Department of Veterans Affairs employees in Senior Executive Service positions in fiscal years with budgetary shortfalls, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. PADILLA (for himself and Ms. BUTLER):

S. 5075. A bill to provide for the water quality restoration of the Tijuana River and the New River, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. CARDIN:

S. 5076. A bill to require periodic updates to the comprehensive strategy to promote Internet freedom and access to information in Iran, to authorize grants to support and develop programs in Iran that promote or expand an open, interoperable, reliable, and secure internet, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. KING, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. KAINE, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. CASEY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. BUTLER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WARNER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. REED, Mr. LUJAN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. SMITH, Mr. CARPER, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. Res. 822. A resolution designating September 2024 as "National Voting Rights Month"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CASSIDY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. BUTLER, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Mr. KELLY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. LUJAN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. OSSOFF, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. REED, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. SINEMA, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. HELMY, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. COONS, Ms. SMITH, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. SCOTT (of Florida)):

S. Res. 823. A resolution recognizing Hispanic Heritage Month and celebrating the heritage and culture of Latinos in the United States and the immense contributions of Latinos to the United States; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 141

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 141, a bill to amend title

38, United States Code, to improve certain programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs for home and community based services for veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 265

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 265, a bill to reauthorize the rural emergency medical service training and equipment assistance program, and for other purposes.

S. 549

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 549, a bill to require enforcement against misbranded milk alternatives.

S. 633

At the request of Mr. PADILLA, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 633, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Everett Alvarez, Jr., in recognition of his service to the United States.

S. 652

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 652, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to require a group health plan or health insurance coverage offered in connection with such a plan to provide an exceptions process for any medication step therapy protocol, and for other purposes.

S. 711

At the request of Mr. BUDD, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from Missouri (Mr. SCHMITT) were added as cosponsors of S. 711, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the invaluable service that working dogs provide to society.

S. 930

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 930, a bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to provide public safety officer benefits for exposure-related cancers, and for other purposes.

S. 956

At the request of Mr. KELLY, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 956, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to improve dependent coverage under the TRICARE Young Adult Program.

S. 1206

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1206, a bill to amend the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 to protect civil rights and otherwise prevent meaningful harm to third parties, and for other purposes.

S. 1474

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1474, a bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to establish a dairy nutrition incentive program, and for other purposes.

S. 1839

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1839, a bill to improve Federal population surveys by requiring the collection of voluntary, self-disclosed information on sexual orientation, gender identity, and variations in sex characteristics in certain surveys, and for other purposes.

S. 2311

At the request of Mr. PADILLA, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2311, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Los Angeles, California.

S. 2315

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2315, a bill to provide for the creation of the missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel Records Collection at the National Archives, to require the expeditious public transmission to the Archivist and public disclosure of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records, and for other purposes.

S. 2377

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2377, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve coverage of audiology services under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 2801

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2801, a bill to improve the reproductive assistance provided by the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to certain members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their spouses or partners, and for other purposes.

S. 3439

At the request of Mr. COONS, the names of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG), the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) were added as cosponsors of S. 3439, a bill to strengthen and enhance the competitiveness of cement, concrete, asphalt binder, and asphalt mixture production in the United States through the research, development, demonstration, and commercial application of technologies to reduce emissions from cement, concrete, asphalt

binder, and asphalt mixture production, and for other purposes.

S. 3575

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3575, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to give a preference, with respect to project grants for preventive health services, for States that allow all trained individuals to carry and administer epinephrine, and for other purposes.

S. 3751

At the request of Mr. OSSOFF, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3751, a bill to expand and modify the grant program of the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide innovative transportation options to veterans in highly rural areas, and for other purposes.

S. 4075

At the request of Mr. HAGERTY, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4075, a bill to prohibit payment card networks and covered entities from requiring the use of or assigning merchant category codes that distinguish a firearms retailer from a general merchandise retailer or sporting goods retailer, and for other purposes.

S. 4163

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4163, a bill to require a report on the United States supply of nitrocellulose.

S. 4425

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4425, a bill to support democracy and the rule of law in Georgia, and for other purposes.

S. 4503

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4503, a bill to prevent exploitative private equity practices, and for other purposes.

S. 4510

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4510, a bill to amend the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 to delay implementation of the inclusion of oral-only ESRD-related drugs in the Medicare ESRD prospective payment system.

S. 4815

At the request of Mr. ROMNEY, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4815, a bill to prohibit the mass cancellation of student loans.

S. 4888

At the request of Mr. WELCH, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S.

4888, a bill to include Czechia in the list of foreign states whose nationals are eligible for admission into the United States as E-1 nonimmigrants if United States nationals are treated similarly by the Government of Czechia.

S. 5021

At the request of Mr. WELCH, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 5021, a bill to ensure the accessibility of drugs furnished through the drug discount program under section 340B of the Public Health Service Act.

S. 5051

At the request of Mr. FETTERMAN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 5051, a bill to amend the National Trails System Act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study on the feasibility of designating Washington's Trail—1753 as a national historic trail, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 103

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. RICKETTS) and the Senator from Alabama (Mrs. BRITT) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 103, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Federal Communications Commission relating to "Safeguarding and Securing the Open Internet; Restoring Internet Freedom".

S. RES. 669

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. ROMNEY) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 669, a resolution designating October 10, 2024, as "American Girls in Sports Day".

S. RES. 821

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 821, a resolution expressing support for designation of the week of September 15 through 21, 2024, as "National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week".

AMENDMENT NO. 2880

At the request of Mr. MULLIN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2880 intended to be proposed to S. 4638, a bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 5072. A bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to establish additional re-

quirements for dealers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 5072

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 "Puppy Protection Act of 2024".

SEC. 2. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR DEALERS.

(a) HUMANE TREATMENT OF DOGS BY DEALERS.—Section 13(a) of the Animal Welfare Act (7 U.S.C. 2143(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(9) In addition to the requirements under paragraph (2), the standards described in paragraph (1) shall, with respect to dealers, include requirements—

"(A) that the dealer provide adequate housing for dogs that includes—

"(i) completely solid flooring;

"(ii) indoor space sufficient to allow the tallest dog in an enclosure to stand on his or her hind legs without touching the roof of the enclosure;

"(iii) with respect to dogs over 8 weeks in age, primary enclosures that, with the length of the dog measured from the tip of the nose to the base of the tail, provide at least—

"(I) 12 square feet of indoor floor space per each dog measuring not more than 25 inches long;

"(II) 20 square feet of indoor floor space per each dog measuring more than 25 but less than 35 inches long; and

"(III) 30 square feet of indoor floor space per each dog measuring not less than 35 inches long;

"(iv) enclosures that are not stacked or otherwise placed on top of or below another enclosure; and

"(v) temperature control that—

"(I) is appropriate for the age, breed, and condition of each dog in the enclosure; and

"(II) is between 45 and 85 degrees Fahrenheit, when dogs are present in the enclosure;

"(B) that appropriate and nutritious food be provided to each dog at least twice per day, in an amount sufficient to maintain the good health and physical condition of each dog;

"(C) that each dog has continuous access to potable water that is not frozen and is free of feces, algae, and other contaminants;

"(D) that each dog has adequate exercise, including, for each dog over the age of 12 weeks—

"(i) except as provided in clause (ii), unrestricted access from the primary enclosure of the dog during daylight hours to an outdoor exercise area that—

"(I) is at ground-level;

"(II) is a solid surface;

"(III) is enclosed by a fence or other structure;

"(IV) is properly controlled for the safety of the dog; and

"(V) allows the dog to extend to full stride, play, and engage in other types of mentally stimulating and social behaviors; or

"(ii) if the dealer obtains a certification from the attending veterinarian stating that a dog should not have unrestricted access to an outdoor exercise area for a specific medical reason, an alternative exercise plan pre-

scribed by the veterinarian for the dog that meets the applicable requirements under section 3.8 of title 9, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations);

"(E) that each dog has meaningful socialization with humans and compatible dogs for at least 30 minutes each day that—

"(i) includes positive interaction with a human such as petting, stroking, grooming, feeding, playing with, exercising, or other touching of the dog that is beneficial to the well-being of the dog; and

"(ii) does not include time spent in veterinary care;

"(F) that each dog receives adequate veterinary care, including—

"(i) prompt treatment of any disease, illness, or injury by a licensed veterinarian;

"(ii) a thorough, hands-on examination by a licensed veterinarian at least once each year, which shall include a dental exam;

"(iii) core vaccinations recommended by the latest version of the American Animal Hospital Association Canine Vaccination Guidelines; and

"(iv) medications to prevent intestinal parasites, heartworm disease, fleas, and ticks that are approved by a licensed veterinarian for canine use;

"(G) with respect to safe breeding practices for dogs, including—

"(i) a screening program for known prevalent inheritable diseases that may be disabling or likely to significantly affect the lifespan or quality of life of the mother or the offspring;

"(ii) prohibiting breeding, unless each dog bred—

"(I) has been screened by a licensed veterinarian prior to each attempt to breed; and

"(II) is found in the screening under subclause (I) to be free from health conditions that may be disabling to, or likely to significantly affect the lifespan or quality of life of, the mother or the offspring;

"(iii) prohibiting the breeding of a female dog to produce—

"(I) more than 2 litters in any 18-month period; or

"(II) more than 6 litters during the lifetime of the dog;

"(iv) that a female dog of any small breed (having a maximum weight range at maturity that is less than 40 pounds) not be bred—

"(I) before reaching the age of 18 months;

or

"(II) after reaching the age of 9 years;

"(v) that a female dog of any large breed (having an expected weight range at maturity that includes 40 or more pounds) not be bred—

"(I) before reaching the age of 2 years; or

"(II) after reaching the age of 7 years; and

"(vi) that any canine caesarian section be performed by a licensed veterinarian;

"(H) that dogs be housed with other dogs, unless health or behavioral issues make group housing unsafe; and

"(I) to make all reasonable efforts to find humane placement for retired breeding dogs—

"(i) such as with an adoptive family, rescue organization, or other appropriate owner for that dog; and

"(ii) not including selling at auction or otherwise placing a retired breeding dog with another breeder for breeding purposes."

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 13(a)(2)(B) of the Animal Welfare Act (7 U.S.C. 2143(a)(2)(B)) is amended by inserting "subject to paragraph (9)," before "for exercise of dogs".

(c) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall issue final regulations establishing the standards for the care

of dogs by dealers, as required by this section and the amendments made by this section.

By Mr. PADILLA (for himself and Ms. BUTLER):

S. 5075. A bill to provide for the water quality restoration of the Tijuana River and the New River, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I rise to introduce the Border Water Quality Restoration and Protection Act. This bill aims to reduce pollution along the U.S.-Mexico border and improve water quality of the Tijuana River and New River.

The bill would designate the Environmental Protection Agency as the lead Agency to coordinate all Federal, State, Tribal, and local agencies to build and maintain needed infrastructure projects to decrease pollution along the border.

The Tijuana River watershed is in the midst of an environmental crisis, as stormwater flows from the upper watershed, originating in Tijuana, Mexico, and carries pollutants such as bacteria, trash, and sediment that severely affect water quality.

In just the last 5 years, more than 100 billion gallons of toxic sewage, trash, and unmanaged stormwater has flowed across the United States-Mexico border into the Tijuana River Valley and neighboring communities, forcing long-lasting beach closures and creating significant negative impacts on water quality, public health, and the environment.

This transboundary pollution crisis has disproportionately harmed underserved communities along San Diego's southern border for decades. U.S. military personnel, Border Patrol agents, and the local environment and economy have also suffered harmful impacts from waterborne and airborne transboundary sewage flows.

This bill will build upon the past several years of work I have undertaken alongside the late Senator FEINSTEIN to bolster the resources of the Environmental Protection Agency and the International Boundary and Water Commission to repair, rehabilitate, and expand the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant, including securing \$300 million in the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement and more than \$100 million through fiscal year 2024 appropriations legislation.

Establishing a program for the Tijuana and New Rivers is critical for the EPA to integrate and coordinate water quality restoration and protection activities by stakeholders across the region and will facilitate better coordination by Federal, State, Tribal, local, public, nonprofit, and other relevant stakeholders.

California communities have suffered the impacts of transboundary sewage for too long, and this legislation will facilitate long-awaited solutions to manage stormwater flows to reduce negative impacts to nearby commu-

nities and the regional economy and restore water quality and ecosystems throughout these watersheds.

I want to thank my colleagues, especially Congressman JUAN VARGAS, for introducing this bill with me. I hope my colleagues will join me to pass the Border Water Quality Restoration and Protection Act to address this public health and environmental crisis.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 822—DESIGNATING SEPTEMBER 2024 AS “NATIONAL VOTING RIGHTS MONTH”

Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. KING, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. KAINÉ, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. CASEY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. BUTLER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WARNER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. REED, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. SMITH, Mr. CARPER, and Mr. MERKLEY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 822

Whereas voting is 1 of the single most important rights that can be exercised in a democracy;

Whereas, over the course of history, various voter suppression laws in the United States have hindered, and even prohibited, certain individuals and groups from exercising the right to vote;

Whereas, during the 19th and early 20th centuries, Native Americans and people who were born to United States citizens abroad, people who spoke a language other than English, and people who were formerly subjected to slavery were denied full citizenship and prevented from voting by English literacy tests;

Whereas, since the 1870s, minority groups such as Black Americans in the South have suffered from the oppressive effects of Jim Crow laws that were designed to prevent political, economic, and social mobility;

Whereas Black Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, Native Americans, and other underrepresented voters were subject to violence, poll taxes, literacy tests, all-White primaries, property ownership tests, and grandfather clauses that were designed to suppress the right of those underrepresented individuals to vote;

Whereas, as of 2022, 4,400,000 people in the United States were disenfranchised from voting because of a felony conviction, including 1 in 16 Black adults, due to the shameful entanglement of racial injustice in the criminal legal system and voting access in the United States;

Whereas members of the aforementioned groups and others are currently, in some cases, subject to intimidation, voter roll purges, and financial barriers that act effectively as modern-day poll taxes;

Whereas, in 1965, Congress passed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10301 et seq.) to protect the right of Black Americans and other traditionally disenfranchised groups to vote, among other reasons;

Whereas, in 2013, in the landmark case of *Shelby County v. Holder*, 570 U.S. 529 (2013), the Supreme Court of the United States in-

validated section 4 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10303), dismantling the preclearance formula provision in that Act that protected voters in States and localities that historically have suppressed the right of minorities to vote;

Whereas, since the invalidation of the preclearance formula provision of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10301 et seq.), gerrymandered districts in many States have gone unchallenged and have become less likely to be invalidated by the courts;

Whereas gerrymandered districts in many States have been found to have a discriminatory impact on traditionally disenfranchised minorities through tactics that include “cracking”, diluting the voting power of minorities across many districts, and “packing”, concentrating the power of minority voters into 1 district to reduce their voting power in other districts;

Whereas the courts have found the congressional and, in some cases, State legislative district maps in Texas, North Carolina, Florida, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Wisconsin, Alabama, and Louisiana to be gerrymandered districts that were created to favor some groups over others;

Whereas these restrictive voting laws encompass cutbacks in early voting, voter roll purges, placement of faulty equipment in minority communities, requirement of photo identification, and the elimination of same-day registration;

Whereas these policies could outright disenfranchise or make voting much more difficult for more than 80,000,000 minority, elderly, poor, and disabled voters, among other groups;

Whereas, in 2016, discriminatory laws in North Carolina, Wisconsin, North Dakota, and Texas were ruled to violate the rights of voters and were overturned by the courts;

Whereas the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in *Shelby County v. Holder*, 570 U.S. 529 (2013), calls on Congress to update the formula in the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10301 et seq.);

Whereas addressing the challenges of administering future elections requires increasing the accessibility of vote-by-mail and other limited-contact options to ensure access to the ballot and the protection of the health and safety of voters, and access to the ballot amid a global pandemic like the Coronavirus Disease 2019 public health emergency;

Whereas Congress must work to combat any attempts to dismantle or underfund the United States Postal Service or obstruct the passage of the mail as blatant tactics of voter suppression and election interference;

Whereas following the 2020 elections there has been a relentless attack on the right to vote with more than 400 bills having been introduced to roll back the right to vote, including such bills being introduced in almost every State and at least 44 of such bills having been signed into law in 18 States;

Whereas there is much more work to be done to ensure all citizens of the United States have the right to vote through free, fair, and accessible elections, and Congress must exercise its constitutional authority to protect the right to vote;

Whereas National Voter Registration Day in 2024 is Tuesday, September 17; and

Whereas September 2024 would be an appropriate month—

(1) to designate as “National Voting Rights Month”; and

(2) to ensure that, through the registration of voters and awareness of elections, the democracy of the United States includes all citizens of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates September 2024 as “National Voting Rights Month”;

(2) encourages all people in the United States to uphold the right of every citizen to exercise the sacred and fundamental right to vote;

(3) encourages Congress to pass—

(A) the Freedom to Vote Act (S. 1, H. R. 11, 118th Congress), to set basic national standards to make sure all people in the United States can cast their ballots in the way that works best for them, regardless of what ZIP code they live in, improve access to the ballot for people in the United States, advance commonsense election integrity reforms, and protect the democracy of the United States from relentless attacks;

(B) the Democracy Restoration Act of 2023 (S. 1677, H. R. 4987, 118th Congress), to restore Federal voting rights to citizens after release from imprisonment, honoring the responsibilities of citizenship and civic engagement necessary for building healthy and safe communities, while welcoming the contributions of people returning home after imprisonment; and

(C) other voting rights legislation that seeks to advance voting rights and protect elections in the United States;

(4) recommends that public schools and universities in the United States develop an academic curriculum that educates students about—

(A) the importance of voting, how to register to vote, where to vote, and the different forms of voting;

(B) the history of voter suppression in the United States before and after passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10301 et seq.); and

(C) current measures that have been taken to restrict the vote;

(5) expresses appreciation for the United States Postal Service having issued a special Representative John R. Lewis stamp—

(A) to honor the life and legacy of Representative John R. Lewis in supporting voting rights; and

(B) to remind people in the United States that ordinary citizens risked their lives, marched, and participated in the great democracy of the United States so that all citizens would have the fundamental right to vote; and

(6) invites Congress to allocate the requisite funds for public service announcements on television, radio, newspapers, magazines, social media, billboards, buses, and other forms of media—

(A) to remind people in the United States when elections are being held;

(B) to share important registration deadlines; and

(C) to urge people to get out and vote.

SENATE RESOLUTION 823—RECOGNIZING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH AND CELEBRATING THE HERITAGE AND CULTURE OF LATINOS IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE IMMENSE CONTRIBUTIONS OF LATINOS TO THE UNITED STATES

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CASSIDY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. BUTLER, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Mr. KELLY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. OSSOFF, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. REED, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. SANDERS,

Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. SINEMA, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. HELMY, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. COONS, Ms. SMITH, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. SCOTT of Florida) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 823

Whereas, from September 15, 2024, through October 15, 2024, the United States celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month;

Whereas the Bureau of the Census estimates the Hispanic population living in the 50 States at more than 65,000,000 people, plus more than 3,200,000 people living in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, making Hispanic Americans approximately 19.5 percent or $\frac{1}{5}$ of the total population of the United States and the largest racial or ethnic minority group in the United States;

Whereas, in 2023, there were 1,000,000 or more Hispanic residents in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and in each of the States of Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Washington;

Whereas, from 2022 to 2024, the Latino population in the United States grew by 1.8 percent or 1,200,000 residents;

Whereas, from 2010 to 2022, Latinos grew the population of the United States by 13,080,000 individuals, accounting for more than $\frac{1}{2}$ of the total population growth of the United States during that period;

Whereas the Latino population in the United States is projected to increase by nearly 8 percent by 2060;

Whereas, in 2020, approximately 18,800,000 children, or 25 percent of all children, in the United States were Hispanic;

Whereas 28 percent of public school students in the United States are Latino, and 9 percent of kindergarten through 12th grade teachers are Latino;

Whereas, since 2010, the share of Hispanic adults with at least some college education has increased by 9 percent;

Whereas approximately 3,800,000 Hispanic students are enrolled in higher education, and enrollment of Hispanic students is expected to exceed 4,300,000 by 2026;

Whereas an estimated 36,200,000 Latinos are eligible to vote in the 2024 Presidential election, increasing the eligible Hispanic voters from the 2020 Presidential election by 12 percent and representing 14.7 percent of the electorate in the United States;

Whereas approximately 1 in every 5 Hispanic voters are expected to vote in their first presidential election in November 2024;

Whereas, as of 2024, each year approximately 1,400,000 Latino citizens of the United States become eligible to vote;

Whereas it is estimated that 77,247,271 Hispanics will be 18 years of age or older, thus eligible to vote, by 2060;

Whereas it is estimated that, as of 2023, the purchasing power of Hispanic Americans is \$3,400,000,000,000;

Whereas, measured by gross domestic product, the economy of Latinos in the United States ranks as the fifth largest in the world;

Whereas, as of 2023, Latino-owned businesses have created nearly $\frac{2}{3}$ of all new jobs in the United States and contribute more than \$100,000,000,000 in annual payroll;

Whereas, in 2021, Latinas in the United States contributed approximately \$1,300,000,000,000 to the gross domestic product;

Whereas there are approximately 5,000,000 Hispanic-owned businesses in the United

States, supporting millions of employees nationwide and contributing more than \$800,000,000,000 in revenue to the economy of the United States;

Whereas, between 2007 and 2020, the number of Hispanic-owned businesses grew by 34 percent, representing the fastest growing segment of small businesses in the United States;

Whereas, as of 2023, Latino workers represented approximately 19.1 percent of the total civilian labor force of the United States, and, as a result of Latinos experiencing the fastest population growth of all race and ethnicity groups in the United States, the rate of Latino participation in the labor force is expected to grow;

Whereas, as of 2024, 67.5 percent of all Latinos in the United States participate in the labor force;

Whereas, as of 2024, 6.3 percent of chief executives in the United States are Latino, 9.7 percent of lawyers are Latino, 2.5 percent of postsecondary teachers are Latino, and 11.4 percent of civil engineers are Latino, all who contribute to the United States through their professions;

Whereas Hispanic Americans serve in all branches of the Armed Forces and have fought bravely in every war in the history of the United States since the American Revolution;

Whereas, as of 2024—

(1) more than 257,842 Hispanic members of the Armed Forces serve on active duty; and

(2) there are approximately 1,336,206 Hispanic veterans of the Armed Forces, including approximately 163,264 Latinas;

Whereas, in the Korean war, the 65th Infantry Regiment of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, known as the “Borinqueneers”, was the only active duty, segregated Latino military unit in the history of the United States and earned more than 2,700 Purple Hearts, 9 Distinguished Service Crosses, and a Congressional Gold Medal for their service;

Whereas 59 Hispanic Americans have received the Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest award for valor in action against an enemy force bestowed on an individual serving in the Armed Forces;

Whereas, in 2020, Congress established the National Museum of the American Latino, which, when complete, will display the achievements, diversity, and legacy of the Hispanic community in the United States;

Whereas Hispanic Americans are dedicated public servants, holding posts at the highest levels of the Government of the United States, including 1 seat on the Supreme Court, 5 seats in the Senate, and 56 seats in the House of Representatives; and

Whereas Hispanic Americans harbor a deep commitment to family and community, an enduring work ethic, and a perseverance to succeed and contribute to society: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15, 2024, through October 15, 2024;

(2) esteems the integral role of Latinos and the manifold heritages of Latinos in the economy, culture, and identity of the United States; and

(3) urges the people of the United States to observe Hispanic Heritage Month with appropriate programs and activities that celebrate the contributions of Latinos to the United States.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3283. Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to

authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3284. Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3283. Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title X, add the following:

Subtitle I—Bring Our Heroes Home Act

SEC. 1096. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the “Bring Our Heroes Home Act”.

SEC. 1097. FINDINGS, DECLARATIONS, AND PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS.—Congress finds and declares the following:

(1) A vast number of records relating to missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel have not been identified, located, or transferred to the National Archives following review and declassification. Only in the rarest cases is there any legitimate need for continued protection of records pertaining to missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel who have been missing for decades.

(2) There has been insufficient priority placed on identifying, locating, reviewing, or declassifying records relating to missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel and then transferring the records to the National Archives for public access.

(3) Mandates for declassification set forth in multiple Executive orders have been broadly written, loosely interpreted, and often ignored by Federal agencies in possession and control of records related to missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel.

(4) No individual or entity has been tasked with oversight of the identification, collection, review, and declassification of records related to missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel.

(5) The interest, desire, workforce, and funding of Federal agencies to assemble, review, and declassify records relating to missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel have been lacking.

(6) All records of the Federal Government relating to missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel should be preserved for historical and governmental purposes and for public research.

(7) All records of the Federal Government relating to missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel should carry a presumption of declassification, and all such records should be disclosed under this subtitle to enable the fullest possible accounting for missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel.

(8) Legislation is necessary to create an enforceable, independent, and accountable process for the public disclosure of records relating to missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel.

(9) Legislation is necessary because section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the “Freedom of Information Act”), as implemented by Federal agencies, has prevented the timely public disclosure of records relating to missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this subtitle are—

(1) to provide for the creation of the Missing Armed Forces and Civilian Personnel Records Collection at the National Archives; and

(2) to require the expeditious public transmission to the Archivist and public disclosure of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records, subject to narrow exceptions, as set forth in this subtitle.

SEC. 1098. DEFINITIONS.

In this subtitle:

(1) ARCHIVIST.—The term “Archivist” means Archivist of the United States.

(2) COLLECTION.—The term “Collection” means the Missing Armed Forces and Civilian Personnel Records Collection established under section 1099(a).

(3) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means the Director of the Office of Government Ethics.

(4) EXECUTIVE AGENCY.—The term “Executive agency”—

(A) means an agency, as defined in section 552(f) of title 5, United States Code;

(B) includes any Executive department, military department, Government corporation, Government controlled corporation, or other establishment in the executive branch of the Federal Government, including the Executive Office of the President, any branch of the Armed Forces, and any independent regulatory agency; and

(C) does not include any non-appropriated agency, department, corporation, or establishment.

(5) EXECUTIVE BRANCH MISSING ARMED FORCES AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL RECORD.—The term “executive branch missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record” means a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record of an Executive agency, or information contained in such a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record obtained by or developed within the executive branch of the Federal Government.

(6) GOVERNMENT OFFICE.—The term “Government office” means an Executive agency, the Library of Congress, or the National Archives.

(7) MISSING ARMED FORCES AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL.—

(A) DEFINITION.—The term “missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel” means one or more missing persons; and

(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term “missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel” includes an individual who was a missing person and whose status was later changed to “missing and presumed dead”.

(8) MISSING ARMED FORCES AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL RECORD.—The term “missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record” means a record that relates, directly or indirectly, to the loss, fate, or status of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel that—

(A) was created or made available for use by, obtained by, or otherwise came into the custody, possession, or control of—

(i) any Government office;

(ii) any Presidential library; or

(iii) any of the Armed Forces; and

(B) relates to 1 or more missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel who became missing persons during the period—

(i) beginning on December 7, 1941; and

(ii) ending on the date of enactment of this Act.

(9) MISSING PERSON.—The term “missing person” means—

(A) a person described in paragraph (1) of section 1513 of title 10, United States Code; and

(B) any other civilian employee of the Federal Government or an employee of a contractor of the Federal Government who serves in direct support of, or accompanies, the Armed Forces in the field under orders and who is in a missing status (as that term is defined in paragraph (2) of such section 1513).

(10) NATIONAL ARCHIVES.—The term “National Archives”—

(A) means the National Archives and Records Administration; and

(B) includes any component of the National Archives and Records Administration (including Presidential archival depositories established under section 2112 of title 44, United States Code).

(11) OFFICIAL INVESTIGATION.—The term “official investigation” means a review, briefing, inquiry, or hearing relating to missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel conducted by a Presidential commission, committee of Congress, or agency, regardless of whether it is conducted independently, at the request of any Presidential commission or committee of Congress, or at the request of any official of the Federal Government.

(12) ORIGINATING BODY.—The term “originating body” means the Government office or other initial source that created a record or particular information within a record.

(13) PUBLIC INTEREST.—The term “public interest” means the compelling interest in the prompt public disclosure of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records for historical and governmental purposes, for public research, and for the purpose of fully informing the people of the United States, most importantly families of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel, about the fate of the missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel and the process by which the Federal Government has sought to account for them.

(14) RECORD.—The term “record” has the meaning given the term “records” in section 3301 of title 44, United States Code.

(15) REVIEW BOARD.—The term “Review Board” means the Missing Armed Forces and Civilian Personnel Records Review Board established under section 1099C.

SEC. 1099. MISSING ARMED FORCES AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL RECORDS COLLECTION AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF COLLECTION.—Not later than 90 days after a quorum of the Missing Armed Forces and Civilian Personnel Records Review Board has been established under section 1099C, the Archivist shall—

(1) commence establishment of a collection of records to be known as the “Missing Armed Forces and Civilian Personnel Records Collection”;

(2) commence preparing the subject guidebook and index to the Collection; and

(3) establish criteria and acceptable formats for Executive agencies to follow when transmitting copies of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records to the Archivist, to include required metadata.

(b) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the swearing in of the Board members, the Review Board shall promulgate rules to establish guidelines and processes for the disclosure of records contained in the Collection.

(c) OVERSIGHT.—

(1) SENATE.—The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate shall have continuing jurisdiction, including legislative oversight jurisdiction, in the Senate with respect to the Collection.

(2) HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—The Committee on Oversight and Accountability of

the House of Representatives shall have continuing jurisdiction, including legislative oversight jurisdiction, in the House of Representatives with respect to the Collection.

SEC. 1099A. REVIEW, IDENTIFICATION, TRANSMISSION TO THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES, AND PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF MISSING ARMED FORCES AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL RECORDS BY GOVERNMENT OFFICES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) PREPARATION.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, and sufficiently in advance of the deadlines established under this subtitle, each Government office shall—

(A) identify and locate any missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records in the custody, possession, or control of the Government office, including intelligence reports, congressional inquiries, memoranda to or from the White House and other Federal departments and agencies, Prisoner of War (POW) debriefings, live sighting reports, documents relating to POW camps, movement of POWs, exploitation of POWs, experimentation on POWs, or status changes from Missing in Action (MIA) to Killed in Action (KIA); and

(B) prepare for transmission to the Archivist in accordance with the criteria and acceptable formats established by the Archivist a copy of any missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records that have not previously been transmitted to the Archivist by the Government office.

(2) CERTIFICATION.—Each Government office shall submit to the Archivist, under penalty of perjury, a certification indicating—

(A) whether the Government office has conducted a thorough search for all missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records in the custody, possession, or control of the Government office; and

(B) whether a copy of any missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record has not been transmitted to the Archivist.

(3) PRESERVATION.—No missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record shall be destroyed, altered, or mutilated in any way.

(4) EFFECT OF PREVIOUS DISCLOSURE.—Information that was made available or disclosed to the public before the date of enactment of this Act in a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record may not be withheld, redacted, postponed for public disclosure, or reclassified.

(5) WITHHELD AND SUBSTANTIALLY REDACTED RECORDS.—For any missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record that is transmitted to the Archivist which a Government office proposes to substantially redact or withhold in full from public access, the head of the Government office shall submit an unclassified and publicly releasable report to the Archivist, the Review Board, and each appropriate committee of the Senate and the House of Representatives justifying the decision of the Government office to substantially redact or withhold the record by demonstrating that the release of information would clearly and demonstrably be expected to cause an articulated harm, and that the harm would be of such gravity as to outweigh the public interest in access to the information.

(b) REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided under paragraph (5), not later than 180 days after a quorum of the Missing Armed Forces and Civilian Personnel Records Review Board has been established under section 1099C, each Government office shall, in accordance with the criteria and acceptable formats established by the Archivist—

(A) identify, locate, copy, and review each missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record in the custody, possession, or control

of the Government office for transmission to the Archivist and disclosure to the public or, if needed, review by the Review Board; and

(B) cooperate fully, in consultation with the Archivist, in carrying out paragraph (3).

(2) REQUIREMENT.—The Review Board shall promulgate rules for the disclosure of relevant records by Government offices under paragraph (1).

(3) NATIONAL ARCHIVES RECORDS.—Not later than 180 days after a quorum of the Missing Armed Forces and Civilian Personnel Records Review Board has been established under section 1099C, the Archivist shall—

(A) locate and identify all missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records in the custody of the National Archives as of the date of enactment of this Act that remain classified, in whole or in part;

(B) notify a Government office if the Archivist locates and identifies a record of the Government office under subparagraph (A); and

(C) make each classified missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record located and identified under subparagraph (A) available for review by Executive agencies through the National Declassification Center established under Executive Order 13526 or any successor order.

(4) RECORDS ALREADY PUBLIC.—A missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record that is in the custody of the National Archives on the date of enactment of this Act and that has been publicly available in its entirety without redaction shall be made available in the Collection without any additional review by the Archivist, the Review Board, or any other Government office under this subtitle.

(5) EXEMPTIONS.—

(A) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE POW/MIA ACCOUNTING AGENCY.—The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) is exempt from the requirement under this subsection to declassify and transmit to the Archivist documents in its custody or control that pertain to a specific case or cases that DPAA is actively investigating or developing for the purpose of locating, disinterring, or identifying a missing member of the Armed Forces

(B) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE MILITARY SERVICE CASUALTY OFFICES AND DEPARTMENT OF STATE SERVICE CASUALTY OFFICES.—The Department of Defense Military Service Casualty Offices and the Department of State Service Casualty Offices are exempt from the requirement to declassify and transmit to the Archivist documents in their custody or control that pertain to individual cases with respect to which the office is lending support and assistance to the families of missing individuals.

(c) TRANSMISSION TO THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES.—Each Government office shall—

(1) not later than 180 days after a quorum of the Missing Armed Forces and Civilian Personnel Records Review Board has been established under section 1099C, commence transmission to the Archivist of copies of the missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records in the custody, possession, or control of the Government office; and

(2) not later than 1 year after a quorum of the Missing Armed Forces and Civilian Personnel Records Review Board has been established under section 1099C, complete transmission to the Archivist of copies of all missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records in the possession or control of the Government office.

(d) PERIODIC REVIEW OF POSTPONED MISSING ARMED FORCES AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL RECORDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—All missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records, or information within a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record, the public disclosure

of which has been postponed under the standards under this subtitle shall be reviewed by the originating body—

(A)(i) periodically, but not less than every 5 years, after the date on which the Review Board terminates under section 1099C(o); and

(ii) at the direction of the Archivist; and

(B) consistent with the recommendations of the Review Board under section 1099E(b)(3)(B).

(2) CONTENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A periodic review of a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record, or information within a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record, by the originating body shall address the public disclosure of the missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record under the standards under this subtitle.

(B) CONTINUED POSTPONEMENT.—If an originating body conducting a periodic review of a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record, or information within a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record, the public disclosure of which has been postponed under the standards under this subtitle, determines that continued postponement is required, the originating body shall provide to the Archivist an unclassified written description of the reason for the continued postponement that the Archivist shall highlight and make accessible on a publicly accessible website administered by the National Archives.

(C) SCOPE.—The periodic review of postponed missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records, or information within a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record, shall serve the purpose stated in section 1097(b)(2), to provide expeditious public disclosure of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records, to the fullest extent possible, subject only to the grounds for postponement of disclosure under section 1099B.

(D) DISCLOSURE ABSENT CERTIFICATION BY PRESIDENT.—Not later than 10 years after a quorum of the Missing Armed Forces and Civilian Personnel Records Review Board has been established under section 1099C, all missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records, and information within a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record, shall be publicly disclosed in full, and available in the Collection, unless—

(i) the head of the originating body, Executive agency, or other Government office recommends in writing that continued postponement is necessary;

(ii) the written recommendation described in clause (i)—

(I) is provided to the Archivist in unclassified and publicly releasable form not later than 180 days before the date that is 10 years after a quorum of the Missing Armed Forces and Civilian Personnel Records Review Board has been established under section 1099C; and

(II) includes—

(aa) a justification of the recommendation to postpone disclosure with clear and convincing evidence that the identifiable harm is of such gravity that it outweighs the public interest in disclosure; and

(bb) a recommended specified time at which or a specified occurrence following which the material may be appropriately disclosed to the public under this subtitle;

(iii) the Archivist transmits all recommended postponements and the recommendation of the Archivist to the President not later than 90 days before the date that is 10 years after the date a quorum of the Missing Armed Forces and Civilian Personnel Records Review Board has been established under section 1099C; and

(iv) the President transmits to the Archivist a certification indicating that continued

postponement is necessary and the identifiable harm, as demonstrated by clear and convincing evidence, is of such gravity that it outweighs the public interest in disclosure not later than the date that is 10 years after the date a quorum of the Missing Armed Forces and Civilian Personnel Records Review Board has been established under section 1099C.

SEC. 1099B. GROUNDS FOR POSTPONEMENT OF PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF RECORDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Disclosure to the public of a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record or particular information in a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record created after the date that is 25 years before the date of the review of the missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record by the Archivist may be postponed subject to the limitations under this subtitle only—

- (1) if it pertains to—
 - (A) military plans, weapons systems, or operations;
 - (B) foreign government information;
 - (C) intelligence activities (including covert action), intelligence sources or methods, or cryptology;
 - (D) foreign relations or foreign activities of the United States, including confidential sources;
 - (E) scientific, technological, or economic matters relating to the national security;
 - (F) United States Government programs for safeguarding nuclear materials or facilities;

(G) vulnerabilities or capabilities of systems, installations, infrastructures, projects, plans, or protection services relating to the national security; or

(H) the development, production, or use of weapons of mass destruction; and

(2) the threat posed by the public disclosure of the missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record or information is of such gravity that it outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

(b) OLDER RECORDS.—Disclosure to the public of a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record or particular information in a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record created on or before the date that is 25 years before the date of the review of the missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record by the Archivist may be postponed subject to the limitations under this subtitle only if, as demonstrated by clear and convincing evidence—

(1) the release of the information would be expected to—

(A) reveal the identity of a confidential human source, a human intelligence source, a relationship with an intelligence or security service of a foreign government or international organization, or a nonhuman intelligence source, or impair the effectiveness of an intelligence method currently in use, available for use, or under development;

(B) reveal information that would impair United States cryptologic systems or activities;

(C) reveal formally named or numbered United States military war plans that remain in effect, or reveal operational or tactical elements of prior plans that are contained in such active plans; or

(D) reveal information, including foreign government information, that would cause serious harm to relations between the United States and a foreign government, or to ongoing diplomatic activities of the United States; and

(2) the threat posed by the public disclosure of the missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record or information is of such gravity that it outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

(c) EXCEPTION.—Regardless of the date on which a missing Armed Forces and civilian

personnel record was created, disclosure to the public of information in the missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record may be postponed if—

(1) the public disclosure of the information would reveal the name or identity of a living person who provided confidential information to the United States and would pose a substantial risk of harm to that person;

(2) the public disclosure of the information could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, and that invasion of privacy is so substantial that it outweighs the public interest;

(3) the public disclosure of the information could reasonably be expected to cause harm to the methods currently in use or available for use by members of the Armed Forces to survive, evade, resist, or escape; or

(4) the public disclosure of such information would conflict with United States law or regulations.

SEC. 1099C. ESTABLISHMENT AND POWERS OF THE MISSING ARMED FORCES AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL RECORDS REVIEW BOARD.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established as an independent establishment in the executive branch a board to be known as the “Missing Armed Forces and Civilian Personnel Records Review Board” to ensure and facilitate the review, transmission to the Archivist, and public disclosure of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records.

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) APPOINTMENTS.—The Review Board shall be composed of 5 members appointed by the President, of whom—

(A) 1 shall be appointed in consultation with the Archivist of the United States and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and shall serve as the Chairperson of the Review Board;

(B) 1 shall be recommended by the majority leader of the Senate;

(C) 1 shall be recommended by the minority leader of the Senate;

(D) 1 shall be recommended by the Speaker of the House of Representatives; and

(E) 1 shall be recommended by the minority leader of the House of Representatives.

(2) QUALIFICATIONS.—The members of the Review Board shall—

(A) be appointed without regard to political affiliation;

(B) be citizens of the United States of integrity and impartiality;

(C) not be employees of an Executive agency on the date of the appointment;

(D) have high national professional reputation in their fields and be capable of exercising the independent and objective judgment necessary to the fulfillment of their role in ensuring and facilitating the identification, location, review, transmission to the Archivist, and public disclosure of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records;

(E) possess an appreciation of the value of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records to scholars, the Federal Government, and the public, particularly families of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel;

(F) include at least 1 professional historian; and

(G) include at least 1 attorney.

(3) CONSULTATION WITH THE OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT ETHICS.—In considering persons to be appointed to the Review Board, the President shall consult with the Director of the Office of Government Ethics to—

(A) determine criteria for possible conflicts of interest of members of the Review Board, consistent with ethics laws, statutes, and regulations for executive branch employees; and

(B) ensure that no individual selected for such position of member of the Review Board

possesses a conflict of interest as so determined.

(4) CONSULTATION.—Appointments to the Review Board shall be made after considering individuals recommended by the American Historical Association, the Organization of American Historians, the Society of American Archivists, the American Bar Association, veterans’ organizations, and organizations representing families of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel.

(c) SECURITY CLEARANCES.—The appropriate departments, agencies, and elements of the executive branch of the Federal Government shall cooperate to ensure that an application by an individual nominated to be a member of the Review Board, seeking security clearances necessary to carry out the duties of the Review Board, is expeditiously reviewed and granted or denied.

(d) CONSIDERATION BY THE SENATE.—Nominations for appointment under subsection (b)(1)(A) shall be referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate for consideration.

(e) VACANCY.—Not later than 60 days after the date on which a vacancy on the Review Board occurs, the vacancy shall be filled in the same manner as specified for original appointment.

(f) CHAIRPERSON NEEDED FOR QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Review Board, including the Chairperson appointed and confirmed pursuant to subsection (b)(1)(A), shall constitute a quorum.

(g) REMOVAL OF REVIEW BOARD MEMBER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A member of the Review Board shall not be removed from office, other than—

(A) by impeachment by Congress; or

(B) by the action of the President for inefficiency, neglect of duty, malfeasance in office, physical disability, mental incapacity, or any other condition that substantially impairs the performance of the member’s duties.

(2) JUDICIAL REVIEW.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A member of the Review Board removed from office may obtain judicial review of the removal in a civil action commenced in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia.

(B) RELIEF.—The member may be reinstated or granted other appropriate relief by order of the court.

(3) NOTICE OF REMOVAL.—If a member of the Review Board is removed from office, and that removal is by the President, not later than 10 days after the removal, the President shall submit to the leadership of Congress, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Reform of the House of Representatives a report specifying the facts found and the grounds for the removal.

(h) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—

(1) BASIC PAY.—A member of the Review Board shall be treated as an employee of the executive branch and compensated at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code, for each day (including travel time) during which the member is engaged in the performance of the duties of the Review Board.

(2) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—A member of the Review Board shall be allowed reasonable travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from the member’s home or regular place of business in the performance of services for the Review Board.

(i) DUTIES OF THE REVIEW BOARD.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Review Board shall consider and render a decision on a determination by a Government office to seek to postpone the disclosure of a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record, in whole or in part.

(2) RECORDS.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Review Board shall consider and render a decision regarding—

(A) whether a record constitutes a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record; and

(B) whether a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record, or particular information in a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record, qualifies for postponement of disclosure under this subtitle.

(j) POWERS.—The Review Board shall have the authority to act in a manner prescribed under this subtitle, including authority to—

(1) direct Government offices to transmit to the Archivist missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records as required under this subtitle;

(2) direct Government offices to transmit to the Archivist substitutes and summaries of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records that can be publicly disclosed to the fullest extent for any missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record that is proposed for postponement in full or that is substantially redacted;

(3) obtain access to missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records that have been identified by a Government office;

(4) direct a Government office to make available to the Review Board, and if necessary investigate the facts surrounding, additional information, records, or testimony from individuals, which the Review Board has reason to believe is required to fulfill its functions and responsibilities under this subtitle;

(5) hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony, receive such evidence, and administer such oaths as the Review Board considers advisable to carry out its responsibilities under this subtitle;

(6) hold individuals in contempt for failure to comply with directives and mandates issued by the Review Board under this subtitle, which shall not include the authority to imprison or fine any individual;

(7) require any Government office to account in writing for the destruction of any records relating to the loss, fate, or status of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel;

(8) receive information from the public regarding the identification and public disclosure of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records; and

(9) make a final determination regarding whether a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record will be disclosed to the public or disclosure of the missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record to the public will be postponed, notwithstanding the determination of an Executive agency.

(k) WITNESS IMMUNITY.—The Review Board shall be considered to be an agency of the United States for purposes of section 6001 of title 18, United States Code.

(l) OVERSIGHT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Reform of the House of Representatives shall—

(A) have continuing legislative oversight jurisdiction with respect to the official conduct of the Review Board and the disposition of postponed records after termination of the Review Board; and

(B) not later than 10 days after submitting a request, be provided access to any records held or created by the Review Board.

(2) DUTY OF REVIEW BOARD.—The Review Board shall have the duty to cooperate with the exercise of oversight jurisdiction under paragraph (1).

(3) SECURITY CLEARANCES.—The Chairman and Ranking Members of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Accountability of the House of Representatives, and designated Committee staff, shall be granted all security clearances and accesses held by the Review Board, including to relevant Presidential and department or agency special access and compartmented access programs.

(m) SUPPORT SERVICES.—The Administrator of the General Services Administration shall provide administrative services for the Review Board on a reimbursable basis.

(n) INTERPRETIVE REGULATIONS.—The Review Board may issue interpretive regulations.

(o) TERMINATION AND WINDING UP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Two years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Review Board shall, by majority vote, determine whether all Government offices have complied with the obligations, mandates, and directives under this subtitle.

(2) TERMINATION DATE.—The Review Board shall terminate on the date that is 4 years after the date of swearing in of the Board members.

(3) REPORT.—Before the termination of the Review Board under paragraph (2), the Review Board shall submit to Congress reports, including a complete and accurate accounting of expenditures during its existence, and shall complete all other reporting requirements under this subtitle.

(4) RECORDS.—Upon termination of the Review Board, the Review Board shall transfer all records of the Review Board to the Archivist for inclusion in the Collection, and no record of the Review Board shall be destroyed.

SEC. 1099D. MISSING ARMED FORCES AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL RECORDS REVIEW BOARD PERSONNEL.

(a) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 45 days after the initial meeting of the Review Board, the Review Board shall appoint an individual to the position of Executive Director.

(2) QUALIFICATIONS.—The individual appointed as Executive Director of the Review Board—

(A) shall be a citizen of the United States of integrity and impartiality;

(B) shall be appointed without regard to political affiliation; and

(C) shall not have any conflict of interest with the mission of the Review Board.

(3) CONSULTATION WITH THE OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT ETHICS.—In their consideration of the person to be appointed to the position of Executive Director of the Review Board, the Review Board shall consult with the Director of the Office of Government Ethics to—

(A) determine criteria for possible conflicts of interest of the Executive Director of the Review Board, consistent with ethics laws, statutes, and regulations for executive branch employees; and

(B) ensure that no individual selected for such position of Executive Director of the Review Board possesses a conflict of interest as so determined.

(4) SECURITY CLEARANCE.—

(A) LIMIT ON APPOINTMENT.—The Review Board shall not appoint an individual as Executive Director until after the date on which the individual qualifies for the necessary security clearance.

(B) EXPEDITED PROVISION.—The appropriate departments, agencies, and elements of the executive branch of the Federal Government

shall cooperate to ensure that an application by an individual nominated to be Executive Director, seeking security clearances necessary to carry out the duties of the Executive Director, is expeditiously reviewed and granted or denied.

(5) DUTIES.—The Executive Director shall—

(A) serve as principal liaison to Government offices;

(B) be responsible for the administration and coordination of the review of records by the Review Board;

(C) be responsible for the administration of all official activities conducted by the Review Board; and

(D) not have the authority to decide or determine whether any record should be disclosed to the public or postponed for disclosure.

(6) REMOVAL.—The Executive Director may be removed by a majority vote of the Review Board.

(b) STAFF.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Review Board may, in accordance with the civil service laws, but without regard to civil service law and regulation for competitive service as defined in subchapter I of chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code, appoint and terminate additional employees as are necessary to enable the Review Board and the Executive Director to perform their duties under this subtitle. The Executive Director and other employees of the Review Board shall be treated as employees of the executive branch.

(2) QUALIFICATIONS.—An individual appointed to a position as an employee of the Review Board—

(A) shall be a citizen of the United States of integrity and impartiality; and

(B) shall not have had any previous involvement with any official investigation or inquiry relating to the loss, fate, or status of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel.

(3) CONSULTATION WITH THE OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT ETHICS.—In their consideration of persons to be appointed as staff of the Review Board, the Review Board shall consult with the Director of the Office of Government Ethics to—

(A) determine criteria for possible conflicts of interest of staff of the Review Board, consistent with ethics laws, statutes, and regulations for executive branch employees; and

(B) ensure that no individual selected for such position of staff of the Review Board possesses a conflict of interest as so determined.

(4) SECURITY CLEARANCE.—

(A) LIMIT ON APPOINTMENT.—The Review Board shall not appoint an individual as an employee of the Review Board until after the date on which the individual qualifies for the necessary security clearance.

(B) EXPEDITED PROVISION.—The appropriate departments, agencies, and elements of the executive branch of the Federal Government shall cooperate to ensure that an application by an individual who is a candidate for a position with the Review Board, seeking security clearances necessary to carry out the duties of the position, is expeditiously reviewed and granted or denied.

(c) COMPENSATION.—The Review Board shall fix the compensation of the Executive Director and such employees without regard to chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code, relating to classification of positions and General Schedule pay rates, except that the rate of pay for the Executive Director and other employees may not exceed the rate payable for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of title 5, United States Code.

(d) ADVISORY COMMITTEES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Review Board may create 1 or more advisory committees to assist in fulfilling the responsibilities of the Review Board under this subtitle.

(2) APPLICABILITY OF FACAs.—Any advisory committee created by the Review Board shall be subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.).

SEC. 1099E. REVIEW OF RECORDS BY THE MISSING ARMED FORCES AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL RECORDS REVIEW BOARD.

(a) STARTUP REQUIREMENTS.—The Review Board shall—

(1) not later than 90 days after the date on which all members are sworn in, publish an initial schedule for review of all missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records, which the Archivist shall highlight and make available on a publicly accessible website administered by the National Archives; and

(2) not later than 180 days after the swearing in of the Board members, begin reviewing of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records, as necessary, under this subtitle.

(b) DETERMINATION OF THE REVIEW BOARD.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Review Board shall direct that all records that relate, directly or indirectly, to the loss, fate, or status of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel be transmitted to the Archivist and disclosed to the public in the Collection in the absence of clear and convincing evidence that the record is not a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record.

(2) POSTPONEMENT.—In approving postponement of public disclosure of a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record, or information within a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record, the Review Board shall seek to—

(A) provide for the disclosure of segregable parts, substitutes, or summaries of the missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record; and

(B) determine, in consultation with the originating body and consistent with the standards for postponement under this subtitle, which of the following alternative forms of disclosure shall be made by the originating body:

(i) Any reasonably segregable particular information in a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record.

(ii) A substitute record for that information which is postponed.

(iii) A summary of a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record.

(3) REPORTING.—With respect to a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record, or information within a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record, the public disclosure of which is postponed under this subtitle, or for which only substitutions or summaries have been disclosed to the public, the Review Board shall create and transmit to the Archivist, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, and the Committee on Oversight and Accountability of the House of Representatives an unclassified and publicly releasable report containing—

(A) a description of actions by the Review Board, the originating body, or any Government office (including a justification of any such action to postpone disclosure of any record or part of any record) and of any official proceedings conducted by the Review Board; and

(B) a statement, based on a review of the proceedings and in conformity with the decisions reflected therein, designating a recommended specified time at which, or a specified occurrence following which, the material may be appropriately disclosed to the

public under this subtitle, which the Review Board shall disclose to the public with notice thereof, reasonably calculated to make interested members of the public aware of the existence of the statement.

(4) ACTIONS AFTER DETERMINATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of a determination by the Review Board that a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record shall be publicly disclosed in the Collection or postponed for disclosure and held in the protected Collection, the Review Board shall notify the head of the originating body of the determination and highlight and make available the determination on a publicly accessible website reasonably calculated to make interested members of the public aware of the existence of the determination.

(B) OVERSIGHT NOTICE.—Simultaneous with notice under subparagraph (A), the Review Board shall provide notice of a determination concerning the public disclosure or postponement of disclosure of a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record, or information contained within a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record, which shall include a written unclassified justification for public disclosure or postponement of disclosure, including an explanation of the application of any standards in section 1099B to the President, to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, and the Committee on Oversight and Reform of the House of Representatives.

(5) REFERRAL AFTER TERMINATION.—A missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record that is identified, located, or otherwise discovered after the date on which the Review Board terminates shall be transmitted to the Archivist for the Collection and referred to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives for review, ongoing oversight and, as warranted, referral for possible enforcement action relating to a violation of this subtitle and determination as to whether declassification of the missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel is warranted under this subtitle.

(c) NOTICE TO PUBLIC.—Every 30 days, beginning on the date that is 60 days after the date on which the Review Board first approves the postponement of disclosure of a missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel record, the Review Board shall highlight and make accessible on a publicly available website reasonably calculated to make interested members of the public aware of the existence of the postponement a notice that summarizes the postponements approved by the Review Board, including a description of the subject, originating body, length or other physical description, and each ground for postponement that is relied upon.

(d) REPORTS BY THE REVIEW BOARD.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and every year thereafter until the Review Board terminates, the Review Board shall submit a report regarding the activities of the Review Board to—

(A) the Committee on Oversight and Reform of the House of Representatives;

(B) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

(C) the President;

(D) the Archivist; and

(E) the head of any Government office the records of which have been the subject of Review Board activity.

(2) CONTENTS.—Each report under paragraph (1) shall include the following information:

(A) A financial report of the expenses for all official activities and requirements of the Review Board and its employees.

(B) The progress made on review, transmission to the Archivist, and public disclosure of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records.

(C) The estimated time and volume of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records involved in the completion of the duties of the Review Board under this subtitle.

(D) Any special problems, including requests and the level of cooperation of Government offices, with regard to the ability of the Review Board to carry out its duties under this subtitle.

(E) A record of review activities, including a record of postponement decisions by the Review Board or other related actions authorized under this subtitle, and a record of the volume of records reviewed and postponed.

(F) Suggestions and requests to Congress for additional legislative authority needs.

(G) An appendix containing copies of reports relating to postponed records submitted to the Archivist under subsection (b)(3) since the end of the period covered by the most recent report under paragraph (1).

(3) COPIES AND BRIEFS.—Coincident with the reporting requirements in paragraph (2), or more frequently as warranted by new information, the Review Board shall provide copies to, and fully brief, at a minimum, the President, the Archivist, leadership of Congress, the Chairman and Ranking Members of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Accountability of the House of Representatives, and the Chairs and Chairmen, as the case may be, and Ranking Members and Vice Chairmen, as the case may be, of such other committees as leadership of Congress determines appropriate on the Controlled Disclosure Campaign Plan, classified appendix, and postponed disclosures, specifically addressing—

(A) recommendations for periodic review, downgrading, and declassification, as well as the exact time or specified occurrence following which specific missing Armed Forces and civilian material may be appropriately disclosed;

(B) the rationale behind each postponement determination and the recommended means to achieve disclosure of each postponed item;

(C) any other findings that the Review Board chooses to offer; and

(D) an addendum containing copies of reports of postponed records to the Archivist required under subsection (b)(3) made since the date of the preceding report under this subsection.

(4) TERMINATION NOTICE.—Not later than 90 days before the Review Board expects to complete the work of the Review Board under this subtitle, the Review Board shall provide written notice to Congress of the intent of the Review Board to terminate operations at a specified date.

SEC. 1099F. DISCLOSURE OF OTHER MATERIALS AND ADDITIONAL STUDY.

(a) MATERIALS UNDER SEAL OF COURT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Review Board may request the Attorney General to petition any court of the United States or of a foreign country to release any information relevant to the loss, fate, or status of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel that is held under seal of the court.

(2) GRAND JURY INFORMATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Review Board may request the Attorney General to petition any court of the United States to release any information relevant to loss, fate, or status of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel that is held under the injunction of secrecy of a grand jury.

(B) TREATMENT.—A request for disclosure of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel materials under this subtitle shall be deemed to constitute a showing of particularized need under rule 6 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Attorney General should assist the Review Board in good faith to unseal any records that the Review Board determines to be relevant and held under seal by a court or under the injunction of secrecy of a grand jury;

(2) the Secretary of State should—

(A) contact the Governments of the Russian Federation, the People's Republic of China, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to seek the disclosure of all records in their respective custody, possession, or control relevant to the loss, fate, or status of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel; and

(B) contact any other foreign government that may hold information relevant to the loss, fate, or status of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel, and seek disclosure of such information; and

(3) all agencies should cooperate in full with the Review Board to seek the disclosure of all information relevant to the loss, fate, or status of missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel consistent with the public interest.

SEC. 1099G. RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.

(a) PRECEDENCE OVER OTHER LAW.—When this subtitle requires transmission of a record to the Archivist or public disclosure, it shall take precedence over any other law (except section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986), judicial decision construing such law, or common law doctrine that would otherwise prohibit such transmission or disclosure, with the exception of deeds governing access to or transfer or release of gifts and donations of records to the United States Government.

(b) FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.—Nothing in this subtitle shall be construed to eliminate or limit any right to file requests with any Executive agency or seek judicial review of the decisions under section 552 of title 5, United States Code.

(c) JUDICIAL REVIEW.—Nothing in this subtitle shall be construed to preclude judicial review under chapter 7 of title 5, United States Code, of final actions taken or required to be taken under this subtitle.

(d) EXISTING AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this subtitle revokes or limits the existing authority of the President, any Executive agency, the Senate, or the House of Representatives, or any other entity of the Government to publicly disclose records in its custody, possession, or control.

(e) RULES OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—To the extent that any provision of this subtitle establishes a procedure to be followed in the Senate or the House of Representatives, such provision is adopted—

(1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the Senate and House of Representatives, respectively, and is deemed to be part of the rules of each House, respectively, but applicable only with respect to the procedure to be followed in that House, and it supersedes other rules only to the extent that it is inconsistent with such rules; and

(2) with full recognition of the constitutional right of either House to change the rules (so far as they relate to the procedure of that House) at any time, in the same manner, and to the same extent as in the case of any other rule of that House.

SEC. 1099H. REQUESTS FOR EXTENSIONS.

The head of a Government office required to comply with a deadline under this subtitle

that is based off the date of establishment of a quorum of the Missing Armed Forces and Civilian Personnel Records Review Board under section 1099C may request an extension from the Board for good cause. If the Board agrees to the request, the deadline applicable to the Government office for the purpose of such requirement shall be such later date as the Board may determine appropriate.

SEC. 1099I. TERMINATION OF EFFECT OF SUBTITLE.

(a) PROVISIONS PERTAINING TO THE REVIEW BOARD.—The provisions of this subtitle that pertain to the appointment and operation of the Review Board shall cease to be effective when the Review Board and the terms of its members have terminated under section 1099C(o).

(b) OTHER PROVISIONS.—The remaining provisions of this subtitle shall continue in effect until such time as the Archivist certifies to the President and Congress that all missing Armed Forces and civilian personnel records have been made available to the public in accordance with this subtitle.

SEC. 1099J. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out this subtitle, to remain available until expended.

SEC. 1099K. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision of this subtitle, or the application thereof to any person or circumstance, is held invalid, the remainder of this subtitle and the application of that provision to other persons not similarly situated or to other circumstances shall not be affected by the invalidation.

SA 3284. Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4638, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2025 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . OUTBOUND INVESTMENT TRANSPARENCY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Defense Production Act of 1950 (50 U.S.C. 4501 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“TITLE VIII—PROTECTION OF COVERED SECTORS

“SEC. 801. DEFINITIONS.

“In this title:

“(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ‘appropriate congressional committees’ means—

“(A) the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate; and

“(B) the Committee on Financial Services and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives.

“(2) COUNTRY OF CONCERN.—The term ‘country of concern’ means, subject to such regulations as may be prescribed in accordance with section 806, a country specified in section 4872(d)(2) of title 10, United States Code.

“(3) COVERED ACTIVITY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to such regulations as may be prescribed in accordance with section 806, and except as provided in subparagraph (B), the term ‘covered activity’

means any activity engaged in by a United States person in a related covered sector that involves—

“(i) an acquisition by such United States person of an equity interest or contingent equity interest, or monetary capital contribution, in a covered foreign entity, directly or indirectly, by contractual commitment or otherwise, with the goal of generating income or gain;

“(ii) an arrangement for an interest held by such United States person in the short- or long-term debt obligations of a covered foreign entity that includes governance rights that are characteristic of an equity investment, management, or other important rights, as defined in regulations prescribed in accordance with section 806;

“(iii) the establishment of a wholly owned subsidiary in a country of concern, such as a greenfield investment, for the purpose of production, design, testing, manufacturing, fabrication, or development related to one or more covered sectors;

“(iv) the establishment by such United States person of a joint venture in a country of concern or with a covered foreign entity for the purpose of production, design, testing, manufacturing, fabrication, or research involving one or more covered sectors, or other contractual or other commitments involving a covered foreign entity to jointly research and develop new innovation, including through the transfer of capital or intellectual property or other business proprietary information; or

“(v) the acquisition by a United States person with a covered foreign entity of—

“(I) operational cooperation, such as through supply or support arrangements;

“(II) the right to board representation (as an observer, even if limited, or as a member) or an executive role (as may be defined through regulation) in a covered foreign entity;

“(III) the ability to direct or influence such operational decisions as may be defined through such regulations;

“(IV) formal governance representation in any operating affiliate, like a portfolio company, of a covered foreign entity; or

“(V) a new relationship to share or provide business services, such as but not limited to financial services, marketing services, maintenance, or assembly functions, related to covered sectors.

“(B) EXCEPTIONS.—The term ‘covered activity’ does not include—

“(i) any transaction the value of which the Secretary of the Treasury determines is de minimis, as defined in regulations prescribed in accordance with section 806;

“(ii) any category of transactions that the Secretary determines is in the national interest of the United States, as may be defined in regulations prescribed in accordance with section 806;

“(iii) any ordinary or administrative business transaction as may be defined in such regulations;

“(iv) an investment by a United States person in—

“(I) any publicly traded security (as that term is defined in section 3(a)(10) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78c(a)(10)), denominated in any currency, that trades on a securities exchange or through the method of trading that is commonly referred to as ‘over-the-counter,’ in any jurisdiction; or

“(II) a security issued by—

“(aa) any investment company (as that term is defined in section 3(a)(1) of the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended, at 15 U.S.C. 80a-3(a)(1)) that is registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission, such as index funds, mutual funds, or exchange traded funds;

“(bb) any company that has elected to be a business development company pursuant to section 54 of the Investment Company Act of 1940 (15 U.S.C. 80a-53); or

“(cc) any derivative of item (aa) or (bb);

“(v) any ancillary transaction undertaken by a financial institution (as that term is defined in section 5312 of title 31, United States Code); or

“(vi) the creation, contribution to, or provision of software distributed under open source licenses that permit downstream users to use, reproduce, distribute, copy, create derivative works of, and make modifications to the software.

“(C) ANCILLARY TRANSACTION DEFINED.—In this paragraph, the term ‘ancillary transaction’ means the processing, settling, clearing or sending of payments and cash transactions, underwriting services, credit rating services, and other services ordinarily incident to and part of the provision of financial services, such as opening bank accounts, direct custody services, foreign exchange services, remittances services, and safe deposit services.

“(4) COVERED FOREIGN ENTITY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to regulations prescribed in accordance with section 806, and except as provided in subparagraph (B), the term ‘covered foreign entity’ means—

“(i) any entity that is incorporated in, has a principal place of business in, or is organized under the laws of a country of concern;

“(ii) any entity the equity securities of which are primarily traded in the ordinary course of business on one or more exchanges in a country of concern;

“(iii) any entity in which any entity described in subclause (i) or (ii) holds, individually or in the aggregate, directly or indirectly, an ownership interest of greater than 50 percent; or

“(iv) any other entity that is not a United States person and that meets such criteria as may be specified by the Secretary of the Treasury in such regulations.

“(B) EXCEPTION.—The term ‘covered foreign entity’ does not include any entity described in subparagraph (A) that can demonstrate that a majority of the equity interest in the entity is ultimately owned by—

“(i) nationals of the United States; or

“(ii) nationals of such countries (other than countries of concern) as are identified for purposes of this subparagraph pursuant to regulations prescribed in accordance with section 806.

“(5) COVERED SECTORS.—Subject to regulations prescribed in accordance with section 806, the term ‘covered sectors’ includes sectors within the following areas, as specified in such regulations:

“(A) Advanced semiconductors and microelectronics.

“(B) Artificial intelligence.

“(C) Quantum information science and technology.

“(D) Hypersonics.

“(E) Satellite-based communications.

“(F) Networked laser scanning systems with dual-use applications.

“(6) PARTY.—The term ‘party’, with respect to an activity, has the meaning given that term in regulations prescribed in accordance with section 806.

“(7) UNITED STATES.—The term ‘United States’ means the several States, the District of Columbia, and any territory or possession of the United States.

“(8) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term ‘United States person’ means—

“(A) an individual who is a citizen or national of the United States or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States; and

“(B) any corporation, partnership, or other entity organized under the laws of the

United States or the laws of any jurisdiction within the United States.

“SEC. 802. ADMINISTRATION OF UNITED STATES INVESTMENT NOTIFICATION.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall delegate the authorities and functions under this title to the Secretary of the Treasury.

“(b) COORDINATION.—In carrying out the duties of the Secretary under this title, the Secretary shall—

“(1) coordinate with the Secretary of Commerce; and

“(2) consult with the United States Trade Representative, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, and the Director of National Intelligence.

“SEC. 803. MANDATORY NOTIFICATION OF COVERED ACTIVITIES.

“(a) MANDATORY NOTIFICATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to regulations prescribed in accordance with section 806, beginning on the date that is 90 days after such regulations take effect, a United States person that plans to engage in a covered activity shall—

“(A) if such covered activity is not a secured transaction, submit to the Secretary of the Treasury a complete written notification of the activity not later than 14 days before the anticipated completion date of the activity; and

“(B) if such covered activity is a secured transaction, submit to the Secretary of the Treasury a complete written notification of the activity not later than 14 days after the completion date of the activity.

“(2) CIRCULATION OF NOTIFICATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, upon receipt of a notification under paragraph (1), promptly inspect the notification for completeness.

“(B) INCOMPLETE NOTIFICATIONS.—If a notification submitted under paragraph (1) is incomplete, the Secretary shall promptly inform the United States person that submits the notification that the notification is not complete and provide an explanation of relevant material respects in which the notification is not complete.

“(3) IDENTIFICATION OF NON-NOTIFIED ACTIVITY.—The Secretary shall establish a process to identify covered activities for which—

“(A) a notification is not submitted to the Secretary under paragraph (1); and

“(B) information is reasonably available.

“(b) CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), any information or documentary material filed with the Secretary of the Treasury pursuant to this section shall be exempt from disclosure under section 552 of title 5, United States Code, and no such information or documentary material may be made public by any government agency or Member of Congress.

“(2) EXCEPTIONS.—The exemption from disclosure provided by paragraph (1) shall not prevent the disclosure of the following:

“(A) Information relevant to any administrative or judicial action or proceeding.

“(B) Information provided to Congress or any of the appropriate congressional committees.

“(C) Information important to the national security analysis or actions of the President to any domestic governmental entity, or to any foreign governmental entity of an ally or partner of the United States, under the direction and authorization of the President or the Secretary, only to the extent necessary for national security purposes, and subject to appropriate confidentiality and classification requirements.

“(D) Information that the parties have consented to be disclosed to third parties.

“SEC. 804. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 360 days after the date on which the regulations pre-

scribed under section 806 take effect, and not less frequently than annually thereafter, the Secretary of the Treasury shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that—

“(1) lists all notifications submitted under section 803(a) during the year preceding submission of the report and includes, with respect to each such notification—

“(A) basic information on each party to the covered activity with respect to which the notification was submitted; and

“(B) the nature of the covered activity that was the subject to the notification, including the elements of the covered activity that necessitated a notification;

“(2) includes a summary of those notifications, disaggregated by sector, by covered activity, and by country of concern;

“(3) provides additional context and information regarding trends in the sectors, the types of covered activities, and the countries involved in those notifications;

“(4) includes a description of the national security risks associated with—

“(A) the covered activities with respect to which those notifications were submitted; or

“(B) categories of such activities; and

“(5) assesses the overall impact of those notifications, including recommendations for—

“(A) expanding existing Federal programs to support the production or supply of covered sectors in the United States, including the potential of existing authorities to address any related national security concerns;

“(B) investments needed to enhance covered sectors and reduce dependence on countries of concern regarding those sectors; and

“(C) the continuation, expansion, or modification of the implementation and administration of this title, including recommendations with respect to whether the definition of ‘country of concern’ under section 801(2) should be amended to add or remove countries.

“(b) FORM OF REPORT.—Each report required by this section shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

“(c) TESTIMONY REQUIRED.—Not later than one year after the date of enactment of this title, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Commerce shall each provide to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives testimony with respect to the national security threats relating to investments by United States persons in countries of concern and broader international capital flows.

“SEC. 805. PENALTIES AND ENFORCEMENT.

“(a) PENALTIES WITH RESPECT TO UNLAWFUL ACTS.—Subject to regulations prescribed in accordance with section 806, it shall be unlawful—

“(1) to fail to submit a notification under subsection (a) of section 803 with respect to a covered activity or to submit other information as required by the Secretary of the Treasury; or

“(2) to make a material misstatement or to omit a material fact in any information submitted to the Secretary under this title.

“(b) ENFORCEMENT.—The President may direct the Attorney General to seek appropriate relief in the district courts of the United States, in order to implement and enforce this title.

“SEC. 806. REQUIREMENT FOR REGULATIONS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 360 days after the date of the enactment of this title, the Secretary of the Treasury shall finalize regulations to carry out this title.

“(b) ELEMENTS.—Regulations prescribed to carry out this title shall include specific examples of the types of—

“(1) activities that will be considered to be covered activities; and

“(2) the specific sectors and subsectors that may be considered to be covered sectors.

“(c) REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall prescribe regulations further defining the terms used in this title, including ‘covered activity’, ‘covered foreign entity’, and ‘party’, in accordance with subchapter II of chapter 5 and chapter 7 of title 5 (commonly known as the ‘Administrative Procedure Act’).

“(d) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN RULE-MAKING.—The provisions of section 709 shall apply to any regulations issued under this title.

“(e) LOW-BURDEN REGULATIONS.—In prescribing regulations under this section, the Secretary of the Treasury shall structure the regulations—

“(1) to minimize the cost and complexity of compliance for affected parties;

“(2) to ensure the benefits of the regulations outweigh their costs;

“(3) to adopt the least burdensome alternative that achieves regulatory objectives;

“(4) to prioritize transparency and stakeholder involvement in the process of prescribing the regulations; and

“(5) to regularly review and streamline existing regulations to reduce redundancy and complexity.

“SEC. 807. MULTILATERAL ENGAGEMENT AND COORDINATION.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall delegate the authorities and functions under this section to the Secretary of State.

“(b) AUTHORITIES.—The Secretary of State, in coordination with the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Commerce, the United States Trade Representative, and the Director of National Intelligence, shall—

“(1) conduct bilateral and multilateral engagement with the governments of countries that are allies and partners of the United States to ensure coordination of protocols and procedures with respect to covered activities with countries of concern and covered foreign entities; and

“(2) upon adoption of protocols and procedures described in paragraph (1), work with those governments to establish mechanisms for sharing information, including trends, with respect to such activities.

“(c) STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF OUTBOUND INVESTMENT SCREENING MECHANISMS.—The Secretary of State, in coordination with the Secretary of the Treasury and in consultation with the Attorney General, shall—

“(1) develop a strategy to work with countries that are allies and partners of the United States to develop mechanisms comparable to this title for the notification of covered activities; and

“(2) provide technical assistance to those countries with respect to the development of those mechanisms.

“(d) REPORT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the development of the strategy required by subsection (b), and annually thereafter for a period of 5 years, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that includes the strategy, the status of implementing the strategy, and a description of any impediments to the establishment of mechanisms comparable to this title by allies and partners.

“(2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ‘appropriate congressional committees’ means—

“(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Finance, the Committee

on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

“(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Ways and Means, the Committee on Financial Services, the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

“SEC. 808. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this title, including to provide outreach to industry and persons affected by this title.

“(b) HIRING AUTHORITY.—The head of any agency designated as a lead agency under section 802(b) may appoint, without regard to the provisions of sections 3309 through 3318 of title 5, United States Code, not more than 25 candidates directly to positions in the competitive service (as defined in section 2102 of that title) in that agency. The primary responsibility of individuals in positions authorized under the preceding sentence shall be to administer this title.

“SEC. 809. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION WITH RESPECT TO FREE AND FAIR COMMERCE.

“Nothing in this title may be construed to restrain or deter foreign investment in the United States, United States investment abroad, or trade in goods or services, if such investment and trade do not pose a risk to the national security of the United States.”.

(b) SUNSET.—This section and the amendments made by this section shall terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I have seven requests for committees to meet during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 17, 2024, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday September 17, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 17, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 17, 2024, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session

of the Senate on Tuesday, September 17, 2024, at 2 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 17, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

The Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection of the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 17, 2024, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hybrid hearing.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that William McCarthy, an intern in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of today’s session of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTIONS WEEK

RECOGNIZING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 815 and that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions: S. Res. 815, National Hispanic-Serving Institutions Week, and S. Res. 823, Hispanic Heritage Month.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. MERKLEY. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 815) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to. (The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of September 12, 2024, under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

The resolution (S. Res. 823) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to. (The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 5613

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5613) to require a review of whether individuals or entities subject to the imposition of certain sanctions through inclusion on certain sanctions lists should also be subject to the imposition of other sanctions and included on other sanctions lists.

Mr. MERKLEY. I now ask for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will receive its second reading on the next legislative day.

RESOLUTION CORRECTION—S. Res.
815

The PRESIDING OFFICER. For the information of the Senate, S. Res. 815 was discharged from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pen-

sions, not the Committee on the Judiciary.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY,
SEPTEMBER 18, 2024

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, September 18; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that following the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Court nomination; further, that the cloture motion with respect to the Court nomination ripen at 11:45 a.m.; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed during Wednesday's session, the motions to reconsider be consid-

ered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:34 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, September 18, 2024, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate September 17, 2024:

THE JUDICIARY

MARY KATHLEEN COSTELLO, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

INTRODUCTION OF A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MEDICAL RESEARCH AND OBSERVING “MEDICAL RESEARCH WEEK” FROM SEPTEMBER 16 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 20, 2024

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce a resolution recognizing “Medical Research Week” from September 16 through September 20, 2024. This important resolution recognizes the important breakthroughs of medical research improving health outcomes for patients and communities, securing global competitiveness in science, boosting job creation, educating the next generation of scientists, and strengthening economic growth.

Medical research through the support of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), continues to serve a vital role advancing health and medicine. This research can lead cutting edge preventative strategies for treatments and additional cures for longstanding medical challenges such as cancer, Alzheimer’s, heart disease, sickle cell, and obesity. I have met with Hoosier families that are struggling with these rare diseases, and I have been moved by the impact that medical research has on their lives. These insights have inspired me and my colleagues about the necessity of medical research to provide more treatment options and better diagnoses for all Americans.

NIH research funding generates nearly \$93 billion in economic activity and continues to support more than 400,000 jobs across the United States. Medical research is not only focused on improving the health of all Americans, but it is also as an economic driver for growth and job opportunities. NIH work ripples far beyond its headquarters in Bethesda, Maryland, into every state. It drives demand for medical supplies and research equipment, boosts local and regional economics to benefit manufactures and suppliers across the country, and into many United States territories.

I’m proud to represent Indiana’s 7th Congressional District which has become a healthcare and innovation hub in America. In my home state of Indiana the NIH awarded \$414 million dollars in grants and contracts during FY23 that directly supports 5,359 jobs for Hoosiers and over 1.1 billion dollars of economic activity. In my district alone the NIH has contributed \$264 million dollars in grants to 9 different research sites in 2023; including Indiana University, Purdue University, Butler University, Marian University, the Regenstreif Institute, and others.

NIH supported medical research plays a primary role in several sectors. The NIH supports noncommercial and clinical research with private sector innovation, allowing for major achievements in rare diseases such as ALS, substance use disorders, stroke, and Parkinson’s.

During my service in Congress, I have consistently advocated for more resources to expand medical research that promotes better screening tools for underserved and understudied populations, and that is more inclusive of diverse participants in clinical trials. Congressional action has helped improve medical research through the NIH, CDC and DOD’s pancreatic cancer research program, supported in part by the bipartisan appropriations letters I lead each year to increase overall funding and increasing funding for the Veterans Medical and Prosthetic Research Program. I urge all my colleagues to join me in these appropriations requests and oppose the short-sighted budget cuts some have proposed. Imagine what we could accomplish with more robust investments in medical research in our nation, from making strides to combatting antimicrobial resistance, to harnessing the power of personalized medicine to treat disease, and more. These critical breakthroughs in medical research are our nation’s best hope in finding cures, prevention measures, and treatments for diseases affecting millions of Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting this resolution to recognize the importance of medical research in America. I urge the House to support this resolution.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENERGY STUDY INSTITUTE (EESI)

HON. JENNIFER L. McCLELLAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) on the organization’s 40th anniversary.

For 40 years, EESI has played an important role on Capitol Hill by providing members of Congress and our staff with nonpartisan, science-based educational resources about climate, clean energy, and environmental topics.

Congressional staff use EESI resources to stay informed, which contribute to our offices’ ability to serve our constituents. Earlier this year, I was pleased to be a guest on EESI’s podcast, The Climate Conversation, where we discussed environmental justice, the public health impacts of the climate crisis, and the need to build resilience into our communities and infrastructure.

EESI’s origins date back to the 1970s when then-Rep. Richard L. “Dick” Ottinger (D-NY) and a bipartisan group of members of Congress saw a knowledge gap on environmental and energy topics and established a study conference to provide members with the information they necessary to make sound decisions. In 1984, EESI began its work as an independent nonprofit organization. Now, after

40 years, EESI still enjoys a reputation for providing Congress with the information necessary to do our jobs. What must have felt important then feels all the more urgent today.

Congratulations to EESI for serving as a trusted source of timely, relevant, nonpartisan, and science-based educational resources about climate topics. With gratitude for EESI’s service to the policymaking community to date, I wish the organization the best for another 40 years of advancing solutions, fostering bipartisanship, supporting rural communities, and cultivating young leaders.

HONORING AN OUTSTANDING TX-08 CITIZEN

HON. MORGAN LUTTRELL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. LUTTRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize an outstanding District 8 citizen and local hero, Cy-Fair Fire Department Chief Amy Ramon. It is my privilege to stand before you and pay tribute to Chief Ramon, as she is now the first woman to receive the Texas Fire Chief of the Year award. Her dedication and commitment to excellence have truly set her apart in her field.

Chief Ramon earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Management from LeTourneau University then her Juris Doctor degree from South Texas College of Law.

She began as a volunteer firefighter at the age of 20 and was promoted through the ranks due to her commendable character. She assumed the role of Fire Chief in July 2014. Since then, Chief Ramon has worked diligently to steward her position with care. Her endless dedication and commitment to serving her community has left her with much to show from her service.

Chief Ramon currently oversees 13 active fire stations that cover 164 square miles. Last year, under her leadership, these stations responded to an astonishing 40,806 calls. Chief Ramon’s guidance has been a key factor in the department’s success over the past year. Her ability to lead such a large and active department is a testament to her exceptional skills and unwavering dedication.

Chief Ramon continues to serve as Cy-Fair’s Fire Chief after 34 admirable years of success. She remains an active and important member of our community. I am proud of Chief Ramon for all she has accomplished and the exemplary citizen she continues to be in her community.

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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

HONORING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF CARPENTERS UNION LOCAL NO. 599 IN HAMMOND

HON. FRANK J. MRVAN

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. MRVAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct pleasure to congratulate the members and leaders of the Hammond, Indiana Carpenters Union Local No. 599 as they commemorate the organization's 125th anniversary. In honor of this momentous occasion, Hammond Carpenters Local No. 599 will recognize union members for their outstanding service during a pin ceremony and anniversary celebration on Saturday, September 21, 2024, at the Hellenic Banquet Center in Merrillville, Indiana.

Hammond Carpenters Local No. 599 is a remarkable organization representing skilled craftsmen throughout Northwest Indiana and beyond. I would like to acknowledge the members being honored for their hard work and devotion to their trade. The graduated apprentices who will be honored include: Daniel Almeida, Sean Anderson, Trystan Arch, Joseph Armstrong, Robert Chicvara, Donald Colard, Brian Derby, Jaclyn Flores, Anthony Gibson, Austin Haney, Amber Jetmund, Isaiah Jimenez, Roy Meyer, Brian Orzechowicz, Matt Resunenko, Alex Salgado and Arnell Washington. The members who will be honored for 10 years of service include: Gregory Carns, Joshua Clausen, Jose Cordero, Tom Drakos, Adam Ibarra, Joshua Lindquist, Jakob Winarski, and Gregory Woosley. The members who will be honored for 15 years of service include: Andrew Denham, Brian Jamka, Cory Klajajic, Chad Kuhn, Thomas Lashenik, Kyle Lazzaroni, Gary Nord, Daniel Prendergast, Daniel Rademacher, Jason Shultz, Stephan Sosnowski, John Terpstra, and Bert Williams. The members who will be honored for 20 years of service include: Jack Bonick, Josh Bridegroom, Robert Buczek, Rick Companik, Todd Dapshis, Shane Eaker, Alberto Gomez, Todd Hemann, Jose Marquez, Sebert Meadows, Henry Quintana, Darryl Ramos, Jason Swigon, and Adam VanAmstel. The members who will be honored for 25 years of service include: Marc Bozetarnik, Jeff Buesing, John Erickson, Justin Fischer, Chris Gorski, Roy Hamende, Sr., Don Hancock, Gary Jenczalik, Darrin Jendreas, George Jeronimo, Alfonso Martinez, Daniel Miller, Adam Nagel, Edwin Pina, Jeff Sellers, James Stuppy, Scott Talaga, and Chris Tauber. The members who will be awarded for 30 years of service include: Phil Baran, Sylvia Cabrales, Brian Hensley, Eric Long, James Prahlow, and David Thomas. The members who will be honored for 35 years of service include: John Adams, James Ballard, Michael Brown, Duane Dedelow, Daniel Defflorio, John Dorsey, James Golub, Carl Harbison, Tom John, Craig McGuane, Kenneth Morgan, Randall Norris, James Slagle, and David Turczi. The members who will be honored for 40 years of service are Kevin McCarthy and Michael Rodriguez. The members who will be honored for 45 years of service include: Terry Eckrich, Fred Kuhn, Richard Meyers, Brian Morton, and Thomas Perez. The members who will be honored for 50 years of service are Daniel Brown and Timothy Foley.

The members who will be honored for 55 years of service include: Greg Argentine,

Charles Gibbs, Rudy Medellin, and Michael Schaller. The members who will be honored for 60 years of service include: Robert Lowry, Bernard Ritchey, and Darrel Silks. Lastly, but most noteworthy, Ron Carlson will be honored for his 70 years of service.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating the Hammond, Indiana Carpenters Union Local No. 599 on its 125th Anniversary. Northwest Indiana has a rich history of excellence in its craftsmanship and loyalty among its tradesmen and women. Carpenters Union Local No. 599, and all unions, work tirelessly to ensure safe working conditions, living wages, and growth opportunities for its employees. For their significant contributions to working families and the development of the region, the leaders and members of Carpenters Union Local No. 599 are worthy of the highest praise.

HONORING THE CALIFORNIA
TAHOE CONSERVANCY'S 40TH AN-
NIVERSARY

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and commend the California Tahoe Conservancy as it celebrates its 40th anniversary serving the Lake Tahoe Basin and community. This outstanding achievement is a testament to the crucial work the Tahoe Conservancy has accomplished to protect the Lake Tahoe Basin's beautiful natural resources and landscapes.

During my tenure as a California State Senator, I was honored to lead the legislation that established the Tahoe Conservancy in 1984. For four decades, the Tahoe Conservancy has significantly advanced California's efforts to restore and enhance the natural and recreational resources of the Lake Tahoe Basin. Today, the Tahoe Conservancy continues its legacy as a leader in environmental protection by helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and wildfire risk, protecting ecologically critical lands, and enhancing the region's climate resiliency.

Since its founding, the Tahoe Conservancy has consistently demonstrated its commitment to collaborating with other public agencies and fostering partnerships with surrounding communities, especially those facing significant inequities. From spearheading initiatives to support the Lake Tahoe Basin's sustainable economy to ensuring public health and safety, the Tahoe Conservancy is helping the region establish an enduring balance between humans and the natural environment.

The Tahoe Conservancy's innovative strategies and groundbreaking projects are protecting the Lake Tahoe Basin's rich biodiversity and restoring the Basin's ecological resilience. The Tahoe Conservancy is a faithful steward of the Basin's natural, tribal, and cultural resources, and I look forward to seeing their continued work to protect this special place for future generations to enjoy.

On behalf of the constituents of California's Eighth Congressional District, I would like to congratulate the California Tahoe Conservancy on its 40th anniversary and extend my

sincere gratitude for its generations of service to the Lake Tahoe Basin and community.

RECOGNIZING POLICE CHIEF DEAN
LOGAN'S RETIREMENT FROM
THE DOYLESTOWN POLICE DE-
PARTMENT

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and commemorate Doylestown Police Chief Dean Logan, after faithfully serving and protecting the residents of Doylestown for the past thirty-seven years.

Chief Logan began his career in 1987 as a patrolman. His hard work and unwavering dedication quickly propelled him through the ranks. Just four years later, Officer Logan became Detective Logan, a role in which he served for 12 years, solving numerous cases and delivering justice to the community he cared so deeply about. His excellence and leadership were undeniable, and he soon moved up again, this time to Sergeant. After just two years in that role, he became a Lieutenant—a position he held for seven years. It was during this period that he attended and graduated from Session 226 of the FBI National Academy, a prestigious milestone in his career.

Chief Logan's ascent did not stop there. In 2012, after many years of dedicated service, he took on the role of Chief, a position in which he served the people of Doylestown Township with courage and distinction.

During his tenure as Chief, he led a team of over 20 officers and civilian staff and managed an annual budget exceeding three million dollars. His leadership and forward-thinking approach left a lasting impact on the community, particularly through his contributions to modernizing and improving policing practices. Under his guidance, the department embraced the use of social media, implemented In-Car and Body-Worn Camera systems, and established a Motor Patrol Unit. Chief Logan also prioritized the continued education and training of his officers, ensuring they were equipped with advanced skills in traffic enforcement, criminal investigations, and command-level leadership.

Chief Logan's service extended beyond the Doylestown Township Police Department. He was a dedicated member of the Bucks County Chiefs of Police Association and the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association. His leadership also played a key role in the construction of the new Township Administration Building and Police Station in 2018, as part of the Doylestown Township Building Committee.

Chief Logan has spent his life and career protecting and serving the public. His commitment, vision, and integrity embody the very best of law enforcement, and his impact on this community will be felt for years to come. We wish him all the best in his future endeavors and express our deep gratitude for his service to the Doylestown Township Police Department. Mr. Speaker, I ask that we remember Chief A. Dean Logan for his remarkable service, his commitment to others, and the indelible mark he has left on all who had the privilege to know him.

CELEBRATING JIM ERVIN'S 80TH
BIRTHDAY

HON. LISA C. McCLAIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mrs. McCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my most heartfelt wishes to my good friend Jim Ervin as he celebrates his 80th birthday.

A proud veteran, businessman, and inspiration to many, Jim's background has allowed him to excel in everything he has done. At 80, Jim continues to apply his wealth of experience to our Nation's defense industry. As a result, Jim is widely renowned for his ability to forge meaningful relationships between policymakers, business leaders, and innovators throughout the country. His tireless work ethic is one that should inspire us all.

Throughout his incredible 20-year service in the U.S. Air Force, Jim was able to see—and experience—almost every aspect of our military, foreign and domestic. As a logistician, he ensured that our troops in the Middle East and South America had everything they needed. As a legislative liaison, he advocated on behalf of the Air Force to make sure that our airmen were always ready to serve. Jim is someone who will always put others first, especially in service to his country.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing Jim a happy 80th birthday. I am proud to be able to call him my friend, and I sincerely look forward to what the future has in store for him.

HONORING THE 50TH
ANNIVERSARY OF WEST CARE

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, today, we gather to commemorate a remarkable milestone in the field of healthcare and community service—the 50th Anniversary of West Care. This historic occasion is a testament to the enduring legacy and unwavering commitment of West Care to improving various physical, mental, and behavioral health issues in the community.

Comprehensive Drug and Alcohol Abuse Program of Central California (CDAAPCC) was founded in the spring of 1973 under the visionary leadership of four master's graduates from California State University of Fresno in aspirations of finding a solution of the rising issue of substance abuse in Fresno, CA. Of the four initial founders, only one, Robert "Bob" Klise, MSW, continued the original mission. What began as a thesis, would grow exponentially over the next 50 years to provide behavioral health and human services in the Golden State and beyond.

The legacy that has transcended from 1973 until 2024 has left an undeniable impact on many. In 1973 the Comprehensive Drug and Alcohol Abuse Program of Central California (CDAAPCC) was founded to facilitate the creation of a treatment program. In 1974, The Third Floor of the program received funding and was able to admit its first client in 1975.

The project at hand continued to prosper and in search of new ways to assist the community, residential services expanded to include women's treatments in 1985.

Further expansion allowed for a new recovery residence to promote aftercare in 1988. In 1992, The Third Floor entered a management contract with West Care following the passing of founder, Bob Klise. In efforts to continue his legacy after his passing, The Third Floor began offering outpatient treatments. 1999 was a pivotal year for The Third Floor as it merged with West Care to become West Care California, Veteran services were introduced with the Homefront Grant-Per-Diem Transitional Housing Program. Education, and prevention services were also introduced with the Women 2 Women program for mothers, who were affected by or at risk of HIV/AIDS. Treatment services broadened into perinatal services to tie young children into their parent's treatments. Last, but most certainly not least, California's longest running program, MLK residential, was founded with the management provided by West Care. Within the following years, many programs, such as: The Living Room, San Joaquin Valley Veterans, Youth Services in Kings, and Options Program were introduced and merged with West Care.

In 2014, the Criminal Justice Services expanded with the introduction of the Custody to Community Transition Reentry Program (CCTRP) in San Diego. That same year, extension into Housing Opportunities for non-Veteran individuals and families experiencing homelessness with the project LiftOFF program was also introduced. Within 2021–2023 more programs such as Housing Support, New Model of Care, and Wings Advocacy Fresno also collaborated with West Care to provide additional support.

West Care's mission is both clear and commendable. The community outreach efforts have left an indelible mark on the Central Valley. Their commitment to uplifting the human spirit is unwavering, with numerous organizations and program support. Their advocacy efforts are rooted in the promotion of working, growing, and learning together. As we stand on the cusp of West Care's 50th Anniversary, it is incumbent upon us to recognize and celebrate this momentous occasion. It represents five decades of unwavering dedication, advocacy, and service to the community.

Mr. Speaker, I invite my esteemed colleagues to join me in honoring West Care. Let us celebrate their legacy and their ongoing commitment to changing lives and improving communities in which it operates.

HONORING DR. SHANESSA
FENNER, OF W.T. BROWN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ON WINNING CUMBERLAND COUNTY SCHOOLS 2025 PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR AWARD

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Dr. Fenner on being named Cumberland County Schools Principal of the Year.

Dr. Fenner is truly a dedicated public servant and educator. Since 2002, she has worked

tirelessly to ensure that the students of Cumberland County receive a top-notch education and develop the skills necessary to be prepared for the future. After graduating from Fayetteville State University, she kept her talent in our community and dedicated her time and energy into our own students.

As the son of a retired Cabarrus County teacher, I understand the sacrifices our teachers and educators make every single day on behalf of our students, and I want to personally thank Dr. Fenner for all of her hard work. I feel so lucky and blessed that we have such selfless and devoted educators, like Dr. Fenner, in our community.

Again, congratulations to Dr. Fenner on winning this prestigious award. She should feel immensely proud of all she has done to improve the lives of our students.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in congratulating Dr. Fenner on being named Cumberland County's Principal of the Year.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ALBERT
JOSEPH BORO

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Albert Boro (Mayor Boro) who passed away at the age of 89 on September 1, 2024. Mayor Boro was an iconic public figure in the City of San Rafael and Marin County and a beloved family member.

Born and raised in San Francisco, Mayor Boro earned a degree in Business Administration from the University of San Francisco. He went on to work for Pacific Bell as an executive for 35 years before retiring in 1990. Mayor Boro married Patricia Boro in 1959, and they moved to Marin County after they had their first son, Albert. The family grew with the birth of Maureen, followed by Michael, and then the family moved to San Rafael in 1966, where they had their fourth child, Gena.

While working full time, Mayor Boro quickly became involved in the Marin community, serving as a member of the Marin County Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Cultural Commission from 1968 to 2005, during which he helped to secure 9,700 acres of open space. He also served as a Lector and Eucharistic Minister for Saint Raphael's Catholic Church for many years. In 1971, he joined the San Rafael Planning Commission and was subsequently elected to the San Rafael City Council in 1987. After leaving his corporate role, Mayor Boro stepped into his "second career," as elected Mayor of San Rafael in 1991. After an initial four-year term, he was re-elected in 1995, 1999, 2003 and 2007, serving a total of 20 years as Mayor.

Revered for his ability to build consensus and for his many contributions to project and policy development, Mayor Boro's positive impacts on the community are far-reaching. He oversaw the expansion of city services to the historically underserved Canal neighborhood by renovating the community center. He also guided the preservation of the historic Rafael Theatre, and construction of the new Public Works building and Parkside Children's Center. During his tenure, Mayor Boro played an instrumental role in regional and county initiatives, simultaneously serving as Director of the

Golden Gate Bridge, Highway, and Transportation District and as Chair of numerous agencies including Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit, the Marin County Parks Commission, the Central Marin Sanitation Agency, the Marin County Fair Board of Directors, and the Marin County Council of Mayors and Councilmembers, to name just a few.

Mayor Boro was known for his firm, fair, and caring leadership and faith in local governance. He embraced challenges with common sense, humor, and an unwavering commitment to improving the lives of his neighbors. Over the years, he received numerous accolades, including 2012 San Rafael Citizen of the Year and lifetime emeritus member of Mann County Cultural Commission, and he was named one of the top ten mayors in California—a regard that many held for him throughout his civic life.

Mayor Boro is survived by his wife Patricia Boro; their children and children-in-law, Al and Arlene Boro, Maureen Boro and Mike Winter, Mike Boro and John Fontana, and Gena and Keith Granucci; and their granddaughters Jessica and Madeline Granucci; his sister Barbara and her husband Bill Miles; and many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

It was my privilege and honor to work with Mayor Boro, and I will miss his friendship. His depth of character is surpassed only by his legacy of his good deeds in San Rafael and beyond. Mr. Speaker, Al Boro was a tireless advocate for the San Rafael community whose legacy cannot be overstated. I respectfully ask that you join me in expressing my sincere appreciation for his many decades of good work and expressing my deep condolences to his friends and family.

HONORING ANNIE NICKERSON, THE
FIRST GOLD STAR MOTHER OF
WORLD WAR I

HON. CLAUDIA TENNEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the remarkable legacy of Annie Nickerson, a figure of profound significance in American history and a poignant symbol of sacrifice during World War I. Annie Nickerson holds the distinguished title of being the first Gold Star Mother of World War I, an honor that reflects both her personal loss and her role in a broader national story.

Annie's son, Alfred Nickerson, served valiantly in the U.S. Army and, tragically, lost his life in France during the Great War in 1918. His sacrifice, and that of many others like him, is memorialized through the Gold Star Mothers organization—a testament to the courage and resilience of families who have given their children in defense of our country. The Gold Star Mothers pin awarded to Annie Nickerson serves as a powerful symbol of her enduring strength and the ultimate sacrifice made by her family.

Established in 1928, the Gold Star Mothers organization has been dedicated to honoring and supporting those who have lost loved ones in military service. This organization stands as a beacon of remembrance and respect, celebrating the valor of these families and ensuring that their sacrifices are never for-

gotten. Annie Nickerson's role as the first Gold Star Mother of World War I is a critical part of this legacy, representing the profound impact of these families on our nation's history.

On September 28th, Niagara County will host a significant ceremony to honor and commemorate the contributions and sacrifices of Gold Star Mothers and their families. This event will serve as a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by individuals like Annie Nickerson and her son, Alfred. It is a moment to reflect on the extraordinary courage of Gold Star Mothers throughout history and to celebrate their enduring legacy.

As we approach this ceremony, it is important to remember the sacrifices of those who have given so much for our freedom. Annie Nickerson's story is a testament to the strength and bravery of Gold Star Mothers, and her legacy continues to inspire and remind us of the true cost of freedom. Her memory serves as a powerful symbol of the countless families who have experienced similar loss and continue to honor their loved ones with dignity and grace.

I am honored to share this important reflection on Annie Nickerson's enduring legacy and the broader significance of the Gold Star Mothers. May we continue to honor and remember the sacrifices made by all Gold Star Families with the respect and gratitude they so deeply deserve.

HONORING THE 2024 INDUCTEES TO
THE FLORIDA INVENTORS HALL
OF FAME

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the nine inventors who have been selected as the 2024 Inductees to the Florida Inventors Hall of Fame. To be named as an Inductee, these inventors were nominated by their peers nationwide and have undergone a review process by the Florida Inventors Hall of Fame Selection Committee. As a result, their innovations have been identified as significantly impacting the quality of life, economic development, and welfare of their communities, the residents of Florida, and the United States.

The Florida Inventors Hall of Fame was founded in 2013 at the University of South Florida. It was recognized by the Florida Senate with Senate Resolution 1756, adopted on April 30, 2014. The Florida Inventors Hall of Fame catalyzes the cycle of discovery and innovation across the state of Florida by recognizing pioneering inventors, empowering future problem-solvers and change-makers, and propelling the American legacy of innovation through transformative experiences and meaningful storytelling.

Nomination to the Florida Inventors Hall of Fame is open to all Florida inventors (living or deceased) who are or have been residents of Florida. The nominee must be a named inventor on a patent issued by the United States Patent and Trademark Office. The impact of the inventor and his or her invention should be significant to society, and the invention should have been commercialized, utilized or led to important innovations.

The 2024 Inductees are the tenth class to be inducted into the Florida Inventors Hall of Fame. Their achievements underscore the critical role that innovation plays in driving progress and improving the quality of life for people in our state, our nation and around the world. Their groundbreaking work not only advances scientific discovery but also strengthens the economy and enhances our global competitiveness. The 2024 Inductees collectively hold more than 350 U.S. patents and come from across industry and academia. Since its founding, the Florida Inventors Hall of Fame has inducted 77 inventors, who collectively hold over 5,200 U.S. patents.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my neighbors in Tampa Bay and the citizens of Florida, I am proud to honor the 2024 Inductees to the Florida Inventors Hall of Fame for this outstanding achievement. Innovation and invention are the building blocks of our Nation. I applaud these highly accomplished individuals and the organizations that support them in their quest to change the world in ways that truly benefit humanity. It is because of the perseverance of these inventors that future generations are encouraged to reach beyond their limits and push the boundaries of innovation.

The 2024 Inductees are:

Barry J. Byrne: Professor and Associate Chair of the University of Florida Department of Pediatrics and the Director of the Powell Gene Therapy Center at UF, who is recognized for groundbreaking advances in delivering DNA to muscle cells, initiating the new field of muscle gene therapy, and for developing innovative AAV-mediated gene therapy to restore cardiac and skeletal muscle function for patients with inherited neuromuscular diseases.

Patricia Davis-Lemesy: Engineering Fellow at Cordis Corporation, who is recognized for the revolutionary development of novel polymers that address the characteristics required to conduct coronary angioplasty on blocked coronary arteries, and for advances in polymer chemistry leading to the design of artificial tendons for human trauma surgery.

Peter J. Delyett, Jr.: Pegasus Professor and Distinguished Professor of Optics & Photonics, Electrical & Computer Engineering and Physics and Director of the Townes Laser Institute at the University of Central Florida, who is recognized for significant contributions to development and commercialization of low-noise, high-power, ultrafast semiconductor lasers for applications in industrial manufacturing, metrology, communications, and signal processing.

Hariklia "Lili" Deligianni: Founder of Sense4Me and retired Researcher and Principal Investigator with IBM's Thomas J. Watson Research Center, who is recognized for the invention and development of breakthrough electrochemical technologies that revolutionized the capability of electronic devices and the semiconductor industry and led to the widespread adoption of electrodeposition as a key processing technology for the fabrication of computer chips.

Greg Mesaros: Chief Executive Officer and Chair of Triadex Services, who is recognized for industry-disrupting innovations integrating technology, market strategy and collective impact into digital tools enabling businesses to cost-effectively scale operations, and providing small businesses the ability to access supply chain prices and efficiencies similar to large corporations.

Sylvia Wilson Thomas: Vice President for Research & Innovation and President & CEO of the Research Foundation at the University of South Florida, who is recognized for transformational innovations in miniaturized electronic circuitry and advanced materials to support biosensors for more effective real-time health monitoring, and development of nano electronic device integration using advanced membrane/material systems to meet global technological challenges.

Anthony "Tony" Van Heugten: Chief Technology Officer at e-Vision Smart Optics, Inc., who is recognized for cutting-edge ophthalmic technologies, developing liquid crystal tunable lenses for intra-ocular lenses, contact lenses, eyewear, and virtual and augmented reality devices; and for innovations in ophthalmic medical devices to restore clear vision for people with presbyopia, glaucoma, and cataracts.

Rachana Vidhi: Director of Technical Sales at NextEra Analytics, who is recognized for pioneering contributions in renewable energy integration, in particular battery technologies that have revolutionized battery storage systems, accelerated the growth of renewable energy integration, and advanced sustainability; and developing innovative approaches to predicting long-term performance of Lithium-ion batteries for utility-scale applications.

Daniel H. Yeh: Professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of South Florida, who is recognized for pioneering contributions to environmental engineering and sustainability, particularly wastewater purification and recycling, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, renewable bioenergy, and global WaSH (water, sanitation and hygiene) to mitigate water scarcity and inadequate sanitation for countless communities worldwide.

HONORING THE LIFE OF LARRY FISHER

HON. MARK DeSAULNIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life of Larry Fisher.

Larry was born in Los Angeles, California and attended the University of Southern California where he was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and served as editor of the Daily Trojan. Shortly after earning his degree in Journalism, Larry moved to Sacramento to serve on the staff of Jesse M. Unruh, former Speaker of the California State Assembly.

He subsequently returned to Los Angeles and served as executive director of the California Democratic Party before joining Braun and Company as an account executive in 1966. He served as CEO of Braun and Company's international public relations firm, Braun Ketchum, where he spent many years directing corporate media campaigns and providing counsel to executives.

Upon retiring from Braun Ketchum, Larry and his wife, Betty, moved to the Bay Area. After a stint working as a director and case manager for Options Recovery in Berkeley, Larry embarked on a new path, entering a three-year program to become a spiritual director. He worked with clients in both individual and group settings, helping them find new meaning and direction.

Sadly, Larry passed away in May 2024. He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Betty, their children, L. Timothy (Monaliza Fisher), and Lara (Justin Darisse), and his grandchildren, Emma, Aiden, and Cameron.

Larry will be remembered for his outstanding character and the incredible impact he had on his community. Please join me in recognizing Larry for his many contributions to our community and devoted service to the State of California.

RECOGNIZING DEPUTY QUINTEN L. MIGHT

HON. LARRY BUCSHON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the lifesaving efforts of Deputy Quinten L. Might of the Gibson County Sheriff's Office and thank him for his continuing service to his community and state.

Deputy Might grew up in the community that he serves today, attending and graduating from Wood Memorial High School in Gibson County. After graduation, he enlisted in the United States Army where he served as a medic. He continued his record of service when he joined the Gibson County Sheriff's Office in 2019 as a correctional officer, and was sworn in as a deputy in 2021. At only 25 years old, Quinten has proven that he is willing and ready to protect and save the lives of those in his community, including in four separate incidents since July of 2023.

One of these lifesaving occasions was on May 24, 2024, when Deputy Might and another deputy responded to a personal injury accident involving a two-vehicle collision. Upon arrival, Deputy Might came to the aid of an individual who was unconscious and not breathing. Despite multiple small explosions from the fire of the crash, the two deputies moved the victim to safety, and hooked up an AED unit and began two-person CPR until the individual thankfully regained consciousness, ultimately surviving the incident.

More recently, on August 9, 2024, Deputy Might responded to a residence call about a two-year old girl who fell into a swimming pool and was unresponsive. As soon as he arrived, Deputy Might called an ambulance and quickly moved the child from the backyard to the front, during which time he freed up her airway by striking her back, likely saving her life.

I am grateful that we have law enforcement officers like Deputy Quinten Might serving our communities today, and thank him for his service and dedication to Gibson County, and the State of Indiana.

CONGRATULATING TARYN KLOTH

HON. DUSTY JOHNSON

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Taryn Kloth on her remarkable 2024 Olympic performance, finishing ninth overall in the Women's Beach Volleyball Olympic competition. Taryn, a Sioux

Falls native, proudly represented Team USA with her teammate Kristen Nuss. It was exciting to see a South Dakotan represent Team USA in the Paris Olympics. Our state proudly cheered on Taryn throughout the matches.

Taryn attended O'Gorman Catholic High School in Sioux Falls, South Dakota where she began her impressive volleyball career. After helping start the first indoor volleyball team in South Dakota, Taryn earned the Gatorade South Dakota Player of the Year award in 2014, a national championship for her club team, a back-to-back state championship, and landed a top-20 high school ranking in the country.

After high school, she went to Creighton University as their highest ranked recruit in school history. Taryn led the team to four consecutive Big East titles and four NCAA tournament appearances, including a school-best Elite 8 appearance in 2016.

Taryn graduated early from Creighton and then attended Louisiana State University where she helped them to a No. 1 ranking in the 2020 season. Taryn and Kristen completed the 2021 season going a historic 36-0, earning multiple accolades, including the prestigious American Volleyball Coaches Association Pair of the Year award. The two created a partnership "TKN" and became the No. 1 ranked Association of Volleyball Professionals Beach Volleyball Team and No. 2 ranked team worldwide.

I am proud to recognize and congratulate Taryn and Kristen for their hard work, dedication to the sport, and performance throughout their careers. I wish them continued success in their future endeavors. I thank Taryn for representing South Dakota well.

HONORING MS. MARGIE LEE PAGE JONES IN RECOGNITION OF HER CENTENARIAN BIRTHDAY

HON. MARC A. VEASEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the accomplishments of Ms. Margie Lee Page Jones, as she has reached her 100th birthday.

Ms. Jones was born to Myrtle and Lovy Page on September 16, 1924 in Lee County, Texas. She soon became a big sister to her brother Alton Page. Their childhood was shaped by simple pleasures, including riding donkeys and spending time with their horse named 'Oh Baby.' Ms. Jones also developed a love for music throughout her childhood with the song 'Rattlesnake Daddy' playing on their wind-up Victrola phonograph.

She attended the Doaks Springs School, where she was mentored by Principal C.L. Salsbury and teacher Ms. Corrett Moore. Soon after, she furthered her studies at C.J. Walker Beauty College. It was in Dallas, Texas that she met and married the love of her life, Mr. Joseph Jones. Together, they had four children—Myrtle Denise, Larry Joe, Elissa (Lisa) Lynn, and Michael Lee.

Their marriage continued until Mr. Jones passed away in 2001. Margie's family grew to include six grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren, reflecting her role as a devoted mother and grandmother. Throughout her life,

Ms. Jones has been a devout Christian and has played an active role in her church. Her involvement with the Jordan Missionary Baptist Church began in the late 1960s, where she has been an active member for over 56 years. In 2015, she was honored as one of the Church Mothers, recognizing her longstanding commitment to her community.

As we mark her 100th birthday, we celebrate Margie's contributions to her family and community. Happy 100th birthday to Ms. Jones.

HONORING CONSTITUTION WEEK

HON. ABIGAIL DAVIS SPANBERGER

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Constitution Week. I also rise to recognize the work and dedication that the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Children of the American Revolution pour into preserving and promoting the history of our Nation.

It is a privilege to commemorate the 236th anniversary of the drafting and adoption of the Constitution of the United States of America. Constitution Week serves as a reminder of the enduring importance of our Constitution and the freedoms it guarantees. The Daughters of the American Revolution and the Children of the American Revolution play an invaluable role in educating future generations about the principles enshrined by our founding fathers.

Through educational initiatives, historical preservation efforts, and community outreach, the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Children of the American Revolution actively engage in preserving our nation's story. Their programs—from providing scholarships to holding essay contests to facilitating history projects—encourage young Americans to take pride in their country and serve as a reminder to Americans of their civic duty to protect and defend the Constitution.

I thank the Daughters of the American Revolution Fredericksburg Chapter and the Surgeon Lawrence Brooks Society of the Children of the American Revolution for their dedication and service to our communities on behalf of this noble cause.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Constitution Week and recognizing the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Children of the American Revolution for their remarkable achievements and their continued commitment to educating the American people about the United States Constitution and the history of our Nation.

REMARKS ON THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

HON. JENNIFER A. KIGGANS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD remarks submitted at the request of a Virginia Beach constituent, Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman of Temple Lev Tikvah, and are a reflection of his views:

ON THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Palestinian award-winning author and lawyer, Raja Shehadeh is co-founder in 1979 of Al-Haq, the Palestinian human rights organization. The Observer lauded him, "Palestine's greatest prose writer" and the New York Times Book Review heaps praises as well, "in his moral clarity and bearing of the heart is self-questioning and assistance on focusing on the experience of the individual within the storms of nationalist myth and hubris. Shehadeh recalls writers such as Ghassan Kanafani and Primo Levi."

In his latest book with a challenging title, *What Does Israel Fear From Palestine?* New York: Other Press, 2024, Shehadeh, clearly a Palestinian patriot who was born in 1951 in the West Bank town of Ramallah, offers us a concise packed yet imbalanced perspective on the long and agonizing Palestinian-Israeli conflict that the October 7, 2023, Hamas's vile attack with terrifying Holocaust dimensions, has brought into sharp view with months of fighting and much suffering to both sides. The detail-oriented writer and activist is anchored in the Palestinian saga of loss and grievances going back to the pivotal 1948 victorious Israeli War of Independence which the Palestinians painfully regard as their Nakba (Catastrophe).

Touching are the author's reminiscences of growing up in Ramallah with his grandma who was a refugee from Jaffa, ever missing her old home and inculcating in her young grandson an attachment to the family's past. "For a long time, I was hostage to the memories, perceptions and attitudes of others that I could not abandon. My sense of place was not my own." However, following the 1967 War when he was able to visit Jaffa, his family's roots gained a realistic sense of belonging. The close physical proximity was a primary factor.

Shehadeh blames the British for the turn of events culminating in the 1948 Arab defeat and the Palestinian debacle, pointing at the 1917 Balfour Declaration as the root cause, stating that the 1922 to 1948 British Mandate was dedicated to fulfilling the earlier declared British commitment toward the Jewish people. I believe that historians would beg to differ, regarding a gradual British shift in the Arabs' favor and manifested in severe limits on Jewish refugees before and after WWII and the Holocaust. Intense Jewish military pressure was created as the British Empire was disintegrating. The author claims that "what happened in Palestine was the utter dissolution of a nation," notwithstanding the acknowledged fact that no such "nation" historically existed yet the Israeli Jewish narrative supported by the Bible claims past millennial Jewish life and creativity which is cavalierly dismissed by the author, "Israel treated the Bible as a historical document and used it to back up the claim that the land had belonged to the Jews from time immemorial, having been promised to them by the Almighty."

He bemoans the fate of the Palestinian Arabs, about 160,000, who remained in Israel and were "forced" to celebrate Israel Independence Day. Admittedly, they were caught in a bind but there is no evidence that they were coerced to celebrate Israel's national festivals. After all they have enjoyed the benefits of becoming Israeli citizens and significant progress of integration was accomplished though challenges remain in a complex scenario with serious security issues. There is evidence of growing Palestinization of Arab Israelis while polls reflect no desire on their part to trade their Israeli citizenship for an Arab one. There is no mention by the author of the 750,000 Jewish refugees in 1948 from Arab lands who left under duress, subject to pogroms and losing their belongings following centuries of discrimination.

It is hard for Shehadeh to come to grips with Israel's success to establish a modern Jewish national identity, defined by him as "Zionist colonization," with the revitalized Hebrew language bestowing Hebrew names on the rebuilt landscape that had carried Arab ones. He points at, a non-starter, proposal of his late father, Aziz Shehadeh, following the 1967 War, to use the 1947 Partition Resolution—then denied by the Arabs—for a Palestinian state. Abba Eban, Israel's legendary foreign minister, insightfully coined that the Palestinians "never missed an opportunity to miss an opportunity." Indeed, the controversial Jewish State Law of July 19, 1948, caused understandable consternation among Israeli Arabs, exacerbated by the dropping of Arabic as an official language. Sadly, I share with the author, only 3% of Israeli Jews are literate in Arabic. That is part of an important discussion concerning Israel's better integration into the surrounding Arab Middle East while there are those Israelis who prefer a Western orientation. I suggest that both approaches ought to be pursued tandem.

The book's Part Two is dedicated to the Gaza War, 2023-4, triggered by the October 7, 2023, Hamas's massacres which the author thankfully condemns though seemingly impressed with the military aspects of catching Israel by surprise as Egypt did in the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the breaking through the failed billion plus costly barrier, along with the heavy Israeli fatalities, casualties and captives. "The brutality of Hamas's attack and the civilian death toll certainly cast a shadow on their military success."

Whereas an occupied population has the right under the international law to resist, they have no right to commit war crimes. Still, this time the Palestinians did not fit into the role of victims. To the Israelis it seemed like aggressors who were challenging Israel's very existence."

The astute Shehadeh is surely aware that Gaza was returned to the Palestinians in 2005 by then Prime Minister Sharon, followed by Hamas's forceful occupation and the cruel toppling of the Palestinian Authority there with no elections since the 2006 Hamas's "victory". He regards the Israeli response to the October 7 Nazi-like Hamas's massacres excessive, expecting public Israeli criticism as back in 1982 with the horrific Sabra and Shatila massacres in Lebanon. The author though surely knows that the Christian Phalangists had a decisive hand at that time. Somehow, there is no reference also to Iran's leading role in directing its radical proxies, Hamas, Hezbollah, Houthis and others, to prevent the near peace between Israel and Saudi Arabia with the successful foundation of the Abraham Accords. Also, the author's comparison of Israel to the once South African apartheid state is misleading.

I wholeheartedly concur with Shehadeh's following assessment, "Young Israelis felt secure enough that they planned a rave night on the border with Gaza. But when Hamas broke through Israel's vulnerability and insecurity were exposed. Israelis were traumatized because they realized they couldn't go on with their life in the same way, making the same assumptions about the reality of the state and its security. Unless, that is, they defeated the aggressor." I also share the author's own response to his book's title, "The very high human and material cost of the war in Gaza proves that what Israel fears from Palestine is Palestine's very existence." Surely a Hamas controlled Palestinian state is not accepted by Israel for obvious reasons.

I do appreciate Shehadeh's optimism concerning the future, "And yet, looking back at the history of the region it is only after great upheavals that hopeful consequences

follow.” However, the central question and challenge remain, whether two separate and contradictory narratives can be reconciled for the future sake of both peoples.

Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman is the founder of Temple Lev Tikvah in Virginia Beach. Kazakhstan's only born rabbi, he is the son of Polish Holocaust Survivors and spent his early childhood in transit and DP Camps in Austria and Germany. He grew up Haifa, Israel.

HONORING COMMISSIONER L.
JEFFREY GREEN

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ
OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, it is with great enthusiasm that I rise to recognize Cooper City Commissioner L. Jeffrey Green.

Jeffrey Green began his career with the Federal Bureau of Investigation in January 1988 and recently celebrated his 36th year with the Bureau. Mr. Green currently serves as the Community Relations Coordinator for the Miami Division and is responsible for expanding the FBI's presence in local communities through civic and community engagement.

In addition to his FBI career, Mr. Green is also an elected Commissioner for Cooper City. In this capacity, Commissioner Green is one of five elected officials responsible for governing local municipal affairs. This includes providing oversight of the City's \$60+ million-dollar budget, its public safety operations, and all aspects of running a local government.

Commissioner Green will be ending his term serving the City this November. As a devoted public servant for more than 14 years, Commissioner Green helped transform Cooper City into "Someplace Special" to work, live, and raise a family.

Commissioner Green leads with his heart and has been a calming voice on the City Commission throughout his tenure. On behalf of the people of Florida's 25th District, we are grateful for his leadership and wish him well. We appreciate his invaluable work for the residents of Cooper City.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NORTHERN
MARIANA ISLANDS AND AMERICAN
SAMOA CRIMINAL JUSTICE
SUPPORT ACT OF 2024

HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO
SABLAN

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce legislation that gives this House an opportunity to provide more funding for policing.

My bill, the Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa Criminal Justice Support Act, does this by allowing the Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa to be treated as two separate entities for the purposes of the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant program. Currently, the Marianas and American Samoa are considered as one

entity for funding, unlike the other U.S. insular areas—Puerto Rico, Guam, and the United States Virgin Islands—which are treated as individual jurisdictions, as are all fifty States.

By fixing this inequity in funding for police in the Marianas and American Samoa, we can ensure our local law enforcement agencies receive the necessary training and equipment they need to keep our communities safe. Making this change will also provide more funding to support prosecutors and the courts, as well as justice-related initiatives aimed at crime prevention.

Local law enforcement is increasingly the first line of defense against the evolving security threats our country faces. We must do all we can to recognize the vital role of our police in maintaining public safety.

The gentlelady from American Samoa, Ms. RADEWAGEN, is an original cosponsor of the bill. I urge all my colleagues to consider this critical and bipartisan legislation for the good of our island communities.

CELEBRATING ASCOT HILLS CHALLENGE 5K RUN/WALK 10TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JIMMY GOMEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. GOMEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate and honor the Ascot Hills Challenge 5K Run/Walk for their 10 years of organizing a 3.1-mile trail course in Northeast Los Angeles.

Founded by Troy Carbajal, Marleen Fonseca, and David Sifuentes, residents of El Sereno in California's 34th Congressional District, the Ascot Hills Challenge 5K Run/Walk has donated event proceeds to support the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) fire academy magnet school program as well as the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) student police cadet program at Woodrow Wilson High School since 2014.

Both the LAFD fire academy magnet school program and the LAPD student police cadet program offer a rigorous and disciplined curriculum developed for young men and women expressing an interest in a public service career.

Additionally, a portion of the proceeds also goes to assist with the efforts to protect, beautify, and maintain Ascot Hills Park for its continual community use.

This annual event not only connects residents with valuable resources and organizations in the community, but also serves to encourage youth to exercise and participate in public service.

With limited green space in Northeast Los Angeles, we are grateful to have leaders like Troy, Marleen, and David who ensure that Angelenos get to experience the green spaces in Los Angeles through events like the Ascot Hills Challenge 5K Run/Walk.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating this milestone for the Ascot Hills Challenge 5K Run/Walk, and I look forward to seeing all that they do in the next 10 years and beyond.

RECOGNIZING SEPTEMBER AS
SEPSIS AWARENESS MONTH

HON. MARCUS J. MOLINARO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize September 2024 as Sepsis Awareness Month. We honor individuals who have been affected by sepsis and pledge unwavering support and recognition of the diagnosis to patients and families.

Sepsis is a life-threatening medical emergency triggered by the body's extreme response to an infection. It occurs when an existing infection spurs a chain reaction throughout the body and rapidly leads to tissue damage, organ failure, and death without treatment. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an estimated 1.7 million American adults are diagnosed with sepsis and 350,000 adults die or are discharged to hospice as a result of it every year. Accordingly, 1 in 3 people who die in a hospital had sepsis during that hospitalization and for every hour treatment is delayed, the risk of death increases by 4 percent to 9 percent. This life-threatening medical emergency is the leading cause of death in U.S. hospitals.

To raise awareness around this devastating diagnosis, we must educate people, share survivor stories, and support innovation and research. According to the Sepsis Alliance, an estimated 37 percent of U.S. adults have never heard of sepsis, reinforcing the need to arm communities with the resources to recognize and respond to it. Our commitment to accelerating education of the diagnosis must remain a priority to save lives and limbs from sepsis.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues in the House join me in recognizing the month of September to advocate for patients diagnosed with sepsis and for the tireless work of the families, caretakers, and researchers supporting those who have been impacted by it.

RECOGNIZING CONSTITUTION
WEEK

HON. THOMAS MASSIE

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, the Constitution of the United States of America, the guardian of our liberties, embodies the principles of limited government in a republic dedicated to rule by law.

September 17, 2024, marks the two hundred and thirty-seventh anniversary of the framing of the Constitution of the United States of America by the Constitutional Convention.

It is fitting and proper to accord official recognition to this magnificent document and its memorable anniversary, and to the patriotic celebrations which will commemorate it.

To honor this year's Constitution Week, I ask my fellow citizens, and especially my fellow Members of Congress, to reaffirm the ideals the Framers of the Constitution had in 1787 by vigilantly protecting the freedoms guaranteed to us through this guardian of our liberties.

I extend my sincerest gratitude to the members of the John Guill-Polly Hawkins Craig Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution for their steadfast commitment to honoring the history of our great Nation and for hosting a Constitution Week celebration for my constituents.

HONORING NATIONAL HISPANIC
HERITAGE MONTH

HON. FRANK J. MRVAN

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. MRVAN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that I rise to celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month and its 2024 theme, Pioneers of Change Shaping the Future Together. From September 15, 2024, through October 15, 2024, in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month, the people of the United States will reflect on the outstanding contributions Hispanic Americans have made for the future success of our great Nation.

Hispanic Heritage Month begins each year on September 15 and recognizes the anniversaries of the independence of five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Mexico and Chile observe their independence days on September 16 and September 18, respectively. This month, we take the time to commend the many inspiring Hispanic leaders that work to create programs and opportunities that are crucial for the progress of the Hispanic community in Northwest Indiana and beyond.

I am proud and honored to highlight recent efforts made in the region to strengthen educational opportunities for the Hispanic community. In 2020, Indiana University Northwest in Gary, Indiana, was designated as a Hispanic-Serving Institution by the United States Department of Education. Purdue University Northwest in Hammond, Indiana, received the same designation in 2024. The Hispanic-Serving Institution designation provides universities with resources for the implementation of programs, facilities, and services to enhance educational opportunities for Hispanic Americans. I believe that this remarkable program not only empowers the Hispanic community throughout Northwest Indiana but is truly vital for the prosperity of our country.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month and in honoring the leaders and members of the Hispanic community who have worked to improve the quality of life for all Americans for generations to come. Our Nation's success is reliant upon the rich heritage and cultural diversity of its people.

HONORING MS. ALIANNA SIGLER
OF ELIZABETH CASHWELL ELEMENTARY ON WINNING CUMBERLAND COUNTY SCHOOLS 2025
TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARD

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Ms. Alianna Sigler on being named Cumberland County Schools Teacher of the Year.

Ms. Sigler has over nine years of teaching experience and has spent the last two years in her current role with Elizabeth Cashwell Elementary. She has won the admiration of both students and parents alike due to her focus on student-centered education.

As the son of a retired Cabarrus County teacher, I understand the sacrifices our teachers and educators make every single day on behalf of our students, and I want to personally thank Ms. Sigler for all of her hard work. I feel so proud and blessed that we have such selfless and devoted teachers, like Ms. Sigler, in our community.

Again, congratulations to Ms. Sigler on winning this prestigious award. She should feel immensely proud of all she has done to educate our students and instill in them a lifelong love of learning.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in congratulating Ms. Alianna Sigler on being named Cumberland County's Teacher of the Year.

CONGRATULATING MILES
KRAJEWSKI

HON. DUSTY JOHNSON

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Miles Krajewski on his remarkable 2024 Paralympic performance. Miles and his teammate, Jayci Simon, made Paralympic history for the United States by becoming the first Americans to medal in Paralympic Badminton. Miles and Jayci earned the silver medal for Mixed Doubles in Paris. Hailing from Yankton, South Dakota, Miles represented our state with dedication and skill, serving as an inspiration to many.

Miles graduated from Yankton High School earlier this year and will attend the University of South Dakota this fall as a business student. As an alumnus, I'm confident the University of South Dakota will be a great place for Miles to continue excelling as a student and athlete.

At 19 years old, Miles has achieved significant success. Prior to competing at the 2024 Paralympics, he represented Team USA in Santiago in 2023. There, Miles won two gold medals in SH6 Badminton events where he secured first place in Singles by defeating the defending champion, and with Jayci Simon they won gold in Mixed Doubles after prevailing in four matches. Miles later earned bronze in Men's Doubles and Mixed Doubles in an impressive run at the 2024 Badminton World Federation Para-Badminton World Championships.

I am proud to recognize and congratulate Miles for his hard work, dedication to the sport, and performance throughout his career. I wish him continued success in his future endeavors. I thank Miles for representing South Dakota well.

HONORING MR. LARRY LABELLE
CHRISTIAN

HON. MARC A. VEASEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the life and accomplishments of Larry Lavelle Christian—a hero in our Tarrant County community and beyond.

Larry Lavelle Christian grew up in Jones, Louisiana. As an adult, Mr. Christian ultimately moved to North Texas. As a professional truck driver, he drove through the entire county. "Country boy," as he was known in his childhood, was a steadfast figure of reliability in the trucking community, always trying to be helpful and uplift his fellow truckers.

Following the death of his wife, Mr. Christian leaned on his faith and felt called to retire. Upon his retirement and in one of the darkest moments of his life, Larry wanted to help others. Each week, Mr. Christian collected food donations and delivered them to underserved neighborhoods.

Mr. Christian's dedication to the fight against food insecurity illustrates his character and commitment to our community. Mr. Christian's leadership and dedication has made a true difference in the state of Texas. He has been recognized by the Midwest Food Bank Texas, a nonprofit focused on combating hunger. In collaboration, they launched a major effort to obtain and distribute food to those in need. Their combined work led to \$673,000 worth of food being provided to families, children, and seniors throughout Texas. I am pleased to honor Mr. Larry Lavelle Christian today.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S6071–S6110

Measures Introduced: Seventeen bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 5060–5076, and S. Res. 822–823. **Page S6097**

Measures Reported:

S. 3348, to amend the Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 to address harmful algal blooms, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

S. 4212, to amend the Visit America Act to promote music tourism, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

S. 4343, to establish and maintain a coordinated program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that improves wildfire, fire weather, fire risk, and smoke related forecasting, detection, modeling, observations, and service delivery, and to address growing needs in the wildland-urban interface, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. **Page S6097**

Measures Passed:

Southern Border Transparency Act: Committee on the Judiciary was discharged from further consideration of S. 3187, to require the Department of Homeland Security to publish various publications and reports regarding the number of aliens seeking entry along the southern border of the United States, and the bill was then passed. **Pages S6085–86**

National Hispanic-Serving Institutions Week: Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 815, designating the week beginning on September 9, 2024, as “National Hispanic-Serving Institutions Week”, and the resolution was then agreed to. **Page S6109**

Hispanic Heritage Month: Senate agreed to S. Res. 823, recognizing Hispanic Heritage Month and celebrating the heritage and culture of Latinos in the United States and the immense contributions of Latinos to the United States. **Page S6109**

Measures Considered:

Right to IVF Act: Senate resumed consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 4445, to protect and expand nationwide access to fertility treatment, including in vitro fertilization. **Pages S6075–84**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to the motion to reconsider the vote by which cloture was not invoked on the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill on June 13, 2024. **Page S6078**

Senate agreed to the motion to reconsider the vote by which cloture was not invoked on the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill on June 13, 2024. **Page S6078**

By 51 yeas to 44 nays (Vote No. 242), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, not having voted in the affirmative, Senate upon reconsideration rejected the motion to close further debate on the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill. **Page S6078**

Jenkins Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Rose E. Jenkins, of the District of Columbia, to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court. **Pages S6084–85**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Michelle Williams Court, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California. **Page S6085**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S6075**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S6084**

Pennell Nomination—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the motion to invoke cloture with respect to the nomination of Rebecca L. Pennell, of Washington, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Washington, be withdrawn. **Page S6091**

Court Nomination—Agreement: A unanimous consent agreement was reached providing that Senate resume consideration of the nomination of Michelle Williams Court, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California, at approximately 10 a.m., on Wednesday, September 18, 2024; and that the motion to invoke cloture with respect to the nomination ripen at 11:45 a.m.

Page S6110

Nomination Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nomination:

By 52 yeas to 41 nays (Vote No. EX. 243), Mary Kathleen Costello, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Page S6085

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 54 yeas to 42 nays (Vote No. EX. 241), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination.

Pages S6074–75

Messages from the House: Page S6071

Measures Referred: Page S6095

Measures Read the First Time: Pages S6095, S6109

Executive Communications: Page S6095

Additional Cosponsors: Pages S6097–99

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions:
Pages S6099–S6100

Additional Statements: Pages S6094–95

Amendments Submitted: Pages S6101–02

Authorities for Committees to Meet: Page S6109

Privileges of the Floor: Page S6109

Record Votes: Three record votes were taken today. (Total—243) Pages S6074–75, S6078, S6085

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:34 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, September 18, 2024. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S6110.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

NOMINATIONS

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nominations of Lieutenant General Randall Reed, USAF, to be general and Commander, United States Transportation Command, and Lieutenant General Xavier T. Brunson, USA, to be general and Commander, United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command/United States Forces Korea, who was introduced by Representative

Strickland, both of the Department of Defense, after the nominees testified and answered questions in their own behalf.

PRIVATE STUDENT LENDING AND SERVICING MARKET

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection concluded a hearing to examine risks and harm in the private student lending and servicing market, including S. 4686, to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require the disclosure of the annual percentage rates applicable to Federal student loans, and S. 2949, to require the Secretary of Defense to complete a data matching agreement with the Secretary of Education in order to ensure individuals who are current or former active-duty military service members or civilian employees and are otherwise eligible for assistance under the public service loan forgiveness program have their periods of employment automatically certified and counted towards the public service loan forgiveness program, after receiving testimony from Aissa Canchola Banez, Student Borrower Protection Center, and Beth Akers, American Enterprise Institute, both of Washington, D.C.; and Dalie Jimenez, University of California School of Law, Irvine.

LOWERING HEALTH CARE COSTS

Committee on Finance: Committee concluded a hearing to examine lowering health care costs for Americans, focusing on the Inflation Reduction Act, after receiving testimony from Jeanne M. Lambrew, The Century Foundation, New York, New York; Rena Conti, Boston University Questrom School of Business, Boston, Massachusetts; Kirsten Axelsen, American Enterprise Institute, and Theo Merkel, Paragon Health Institute and Manhattan Institute, both of Washington, D.C.; and Judith Aiken, Portland, Maine.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the national security risks of replacing nonpartisan civil servants with political appointees, focusing on ensuring a trustworthy government, after receiving testimony from Elaine C. Duke, former Acting Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security; Peter Levine, former Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness; and Jenny Mattingley, Partnership for Public Service, and Thomas Devine, Government Accountability Project, both of Washington, D.C.

HATE CRIMES

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded a hearing to examine stemming the tide of hate crimes in America, after receiving testimony from Maya M.

Berry, Arab American Institute, Washington, D.C.; Kenneth S. Stern, Bard Center for the Study of Hate, New York, New York; and Rabbi Mark Goldfeder, National Jewish Advocacy Center, Atlanta, Georgia.

AI OVERSIGHT

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Privacy, Technology, and the Law concluded an oversight hearing to examine AI, focusing on insiders' perspectives, after receiving testimony from Helen Toner, Georgetown University Center for Security and

Emerging Technology, Washington, D.C.; William Saunders, OpenAI, and David Evan Harris, California Initiative for Technology and Democracy, both of San Francisco; and Margaret Mitchell, Seattle, Washington.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee met in closed session to receive a briefing on certain intelligence matters from officials of the intelligence community.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 30 public bills, H.R. 9614–9643; and 10 resolutions, H.J. Res. 204; and H. Res. 1452–1454, 1456–1461, were introduced. **Pages H5316–18**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H5319–21**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

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, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–679);

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, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–680);

H.R. 455, to amend the Controlled Substances Act to fix a technical error in the definitions (H. Rept. 118–681, Part 1);

H.R. 5509, to modernize permitting systems at the Department of the Interior, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 118–682);

H.R. 7764, 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 (H. Rept. 118–683);

H.R. 9489, to sunset the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 118–684); and

H. Res. 1455, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3724) to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to prohibit recognized accrediting agen-

cies 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” (H. Rept. 118–685). **Page H5316**

Recess: The House recessed at 12:35 p.m. and reconvened at 2 p.m. **Page H5244**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures: FIFA World Cup

2026 Commemorative Coin Act: H.R. 7438, to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the FIFA World Cup 2026;

Pages H5246–48

Dustoff Crews of the Vietnam War Congressional Gold Medal Act: 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;

Pages H5248–50

Billie Jean King Congressional Gold Medal Act: 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, by a 2/3 yeand-nay vote of 308 yeas to 87 nays, Roll No. 419;

Pages H5250–53

Building on Reemployment Improvements to Deliver Good Employment for Workers Act: H.R. 5861, amended, to extend reemployment services and eligibility assessments to all claimants for unemployment benefits;

Pages H5253–54

Taxpayer Data Protection Act: H.R. 8292, amended, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase penalties for unauthorized disclosure of taxpayer information;

Pages H5254–55

Improving Social Security's Service to Victims of Identity Theft Act: H.R. 3784, amended, 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;

Pages H5255–57

VSO Equal Tax Treatment Act: H.R. 1432, amended, 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;

Pages H5272–73

Chronic Disease Flexible Coverage Act: H.R. 3800, amended, 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;

Pages H5273–74

Fiscal Year 2024 Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Authorization Act: H.R. 6324, amended, to authorize major medical facility projects for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2024;

Pages H5274–75

Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2024: 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;

Pages H5275–76

Prioritizing Veterans' Survivors Act: 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;

Pages H5276–77

Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act: H.R. 4424, amended, 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;

Pages H5277–78

Veterans Accessibility Advisory Committee Act of 2024: H.R. 7342, amended, to establish the Veterans Advisory Committee on Equal Access;

Pages H5278–80

Clear Communication for Veterans Claims Act: H.R. 7816, amended, 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;

Pages H5280–81

Naming the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Guntersville, Alabama, as the "Colonel Ola Lee Mize Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic": 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";

Pages H5281–83

Restoring Benefits to Defrauded Veterans Act: H.R. 4190, amended, 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;

Pages H5283–84

Fairness for Servicemembers and their Families Act: H.R. 2911, amended, 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;

Pages H5284–85

Veterans Benefits Continuity and Accountability Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2024: H.R. 9468, making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024;

Pages H5285–88

Dennis John Beningo Traumatic Brain Injury Program Reauthorization Act of 2024: H.R. 7208,

amended, to reauthorize the Traumatic Brain Injury program; **Pages H5290–91**

Medicaid Program Improvement Act: H.R. 8111, amended, to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to ensure the reliability of address information provided under the Medicaid program;

Pages H5291–92

Accelerating Kids' Access to Care Act: H.R. 4758, amended, to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to streamline enrollment under the Medicaid program of certain providers across State lines;

Pages H5292–95

Amend the title so as to read: “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.”; **Pages H5293–95**

BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Reauthorization Act of 2024: 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;

Pages H5295–96

Amending title XIX of the Social Security Act to further require certain additional provider screening under the Medicaid program: H.R. 8112, amended, to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to further require certain additional provider screening under the Medicaid program;

Pages H5296–97

Medicare and Medicaid Fraud Prevention Act of 2024: H.R. 8089, amended, to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require certain additional provider screening under the Medicaid program;

Pages H5300–01

Leveraging Integrity and Verification of Eligibility for Beneficiaries Act: H.R. 8084, amended, to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to verify certain eligibility criteria for individuals enrolled for medical assistance quarterly;

Pages H5301–02

Amending the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a lifespan respite care program: H.R. 6160, amended, to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a lifespan respite care program;

Pages H5302–03

Poison Control Centers Reauthorization Act of 2024: S. 4351, to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain poison control programs;

Pages H5203–04

DeOndra Dixon INCLUDE Project Act of 2024: H.R. 7406, amended, 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; **Pages H5304–06**

Supporting and Improving Rural EMS Needs Reauthorization Act: S. 265, to reauthorize the rural emergency medical service training and equipment assistance program; **Page H5306**

Supporting Patient Education And Knowledge Act of 2024: H.R. 6033, amended, 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;

Pages H5306–08

Telehealth Enhancement for Mental Health Act of 2024: H.R. 7858, amended, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish a Medicare incident to modifier for mental health services furnished through telehealth;

Pages H5308–09

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: “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”; and

Pages H5308–09

Launch Communications Act: S. 1648, to facilitate access to the electromagnetic spectrum for commercial space launches and commercial space reentries.

Pages H5309–10

Failed Suspension: The House failed to suspend the rules and pass the following measure:

No Foreign Election Interference Act: H.R. 8314, amended, 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, by a $\frac{2}{3}$ yeas-and-nays vote of 218 yeas to 181 nays with one answering “present”, Roll No. 418.

Pages H5270–72

Suspensions—Proceedings Postponed: The House debated the following measures under suspension of the rules. Further proceedings were postponed.

Find and Protect Foster Youth Act: 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;

Pages H5257–59

Protecting America's Children by Strengthening Families Act: H.R. 9076, amended, 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; **Pages H5259–70**

Autism Collaboration, Accountability, Research, Education, and Support Act of 2024: H.R. 7213, amended, 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/re-authorize certain programs with respect to autism spectrum disorder?]; and **Pages H5297–H5300**

Future Uses of Technology Upholding Reliable and Enhanced Networks Act: H.R. 1513, to direct the Federal Communications Commission to establish a task force to be known as the “6G Task Force”. **Pages H5310–11**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Two yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H5289, H5289–90.

Adjournment: The House met at 12 p.m. and adjourned at 9:56 p.m.

Committee Meetings

ACCREDITATION FOR COLLEGE EXCELLENCE ACT OF 2023; GUIDING UNIFORM AND RESPONSIBLE DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION LIMITS ACT OF 2023; ANTI-BDS LABELING ACT; RETIRE ACT; NO BAILOUT FOR SANCTUARY CITIES ACT; VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN BY ILLEGAL ALIENS ACT; PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF THE RULE RELATING TO MULTI-POLLUTANT EMISSIONS STANDARDS FOR MODEL YEARS 2027 AND LATER LIGHT-DUTY AND MEDIUM-DUTY VEHICLES

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 3724, the “Accreditation for College Excellence Act of 2023” [End Woke Higher Education Act]; H.R. 4790, the “Guiding Uniform and Responsible Disclosure Requirements and Information Limits Act of 2023” [Prioritizing Economic Growth Over Woke Policies Act]; H.R. 5179, the “Anti-BDS Labeling Act”; H.R. 5339, the “RETIRE Act” [Protecting Americans’ Investments from Woke Policies Act]; H.R. 5717, the “No Bailout for Sanctuary Cities Act”; H.R. 7909, the “Violence Against Women by Illegal Aliens Act”; and 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”. The Committee granted, by a

record vote of 9–3, a rule providing for consideration of H.R. 3724, the “End Woke Higher Education Act”, H.R. 4790, the “Prioritizing Economic Growth Over Woke Policies Act”, H.R. 5179, the “Anti-BDS Labeling Act”, H.R. 5339, the “Protecting Americans’ Investments from Woke Policies Act”, H.R. 5717, the “No Bailout for Sanctuary Cities Act”, H.R. 7909, the “Violence Against Women by Illegal Aliens Act”, and 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”. The rule provides for consideration of H.R. 3724, the “End Woke Higher Education Act”, under a structured rule. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce or their respective designees. The rule provides that, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Education and the Workforce now printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 118–49 shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule makes in order only the amendments printed in part A of the Rules Committee report. Each amendment shall be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. All points of order against the amendments printed in part A of the Rules Committee report are waived. The rule provides one motion to recommit. The rule further provides for consideration of H.R. 4790, the “Prioritizing Economic Growth Over Woke Policies Act”, under a closed rule. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Financial Services now printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 118–48, modified by the amendment printed in part B of the Rules Committee report, shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order

against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services or their respective designees. The rule provides one motion to recommit. The rule further provides for consideration of H.R. 5179, the “Anti-BDS Labeling Act”, under a closed rule. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means or their respective designees. The rule provides one motion to recommit. The rule further provides for consideration of H.R. 5339, the “Protecting Americans’ Investments from Woke Policies Act”, under a closed rule. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Education and the Workforce now printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 118–50 shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce or their respective designees. The rule provides one motion to recommit. The rule further provides for consideration of H.R. 5717, the No Bailout for Sanctuary Cities Act, under a structured rule. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees. The rule provides that the bill shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill. The rule makes in order only the amendments printed in part C of the Rules Committee report. Each amendment shall be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. All points of order against the

amendments printed in part C of the Rules Committee report are waived. The rule provides one motion to recommit. The rule further provides for consideration of H.R. 7909, the “Violence Against Women by Illegal Aliens Act”, under a closed rule. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 118–47 shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees. The rule provides one motion to recommit. The rule further provides for consideration of 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”, under a closed rule. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the joint resolution. The rule provides that the joint resolution shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the joint resolution. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce or their respective designees. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit. Testimony was heard from Chairman Foxx, and Representatives Sablan, Carter of Georgia, Tonko, Biggs, Nadler, Huizenga, Waters, and Tenney.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2024

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: Subcommittee on Food and Nutrition, Specialty Crops, Organics, and Research, to hold hearings to examine keeping kids learning in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program, 2 p.m., SD–562.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Subcommittee on Economic Policy, to hold hearings to examine the macroeconomic impacts of potential tax reform in 2025, 2 p.m., SD-538.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: to hold hearings to examine aviation cybersecurity threats, 10 a.m., SR-253.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: to hold hearings to examine America's regional commissions, focusing on sharing best practices in regional and economic development, 10 a.m., SD-406.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: business meeting to continue to consider S. 4667, to amend title 31, United States Code, to establish the Life Sciences Research Security Board, S. 4373, to provide for congressional approval of national emergency declarations, S. 4495, to enable safe, responsible, and agile procurement, development, and use of artificial intelligence by the Federal Government, S. 4675, to require the United States Postal Service to submit a comprehensive proposal to the Postal Regulatory Commission before implementing any network changes, S. 4630, to establish an interagency committee to harmonize regulatory regimes in the United States relating to cybersecurity, S. 4654, to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to allow Indian tribal governments to directly request fire management assistance declarations and grants, S. 4698, to authorize the Joint Task Forces of the Department of Homeland Security, S. 4711, to limit the consideration of marijuana use when making an employment suitability or security clearance determination, S. 4681, to ensure a timely, fair, meaningful, and transparent process for individuals to seek redress because they were wrongly identified as a threat under the screening and inspection regimes used by the Department of Homeland Security, to require a report on the effectiveness of enhanced screening programs of the Department of Homeland Security, S. 4043, to amend title 5, United States Code, to make executive agency telework policies transparent, to track executive agency use of telework, S. 4679, to amend title XLI of the FAST Act to improve the Federal permitting process, S. 4716, to amend section 7504 of title 31, United States Code, to improve the single audit requirements, S. 4294, to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to negotiate with the Government of Canada regarding an agreement for integrated cross border aerial law enforcement operations, S. 59, to implement merit-based reforms to the civil service hiring system that replace degree-based hiring with skills- and competency-based hiring, S. 4676, to enhance the effectiveness of the Shadow Wolves Program, S. 4672, to require the Commissioner for U.S. Customs and Border Protection to assess current efforts to respond to hazardous weather and water events at or near United States borders and, to the extent such efforts may be improved, to develop a hazardous weather and water events preparedness and response strategy, S. 4697, to enhance the cybersecurity of the Healthcare and Public Health Sector, S. 4715, to require the National Cyber Director to submit to Congress a plan to establish an institute within the Federal Government to serve as a centralized resource

and training center for Federal cyber workforce development, S. 4631, to amend title 41, United States Code, to prohibit minimum education requirements for proposed contractor personnel in certain contract solicitations, S. 4700, to modify the governmentwide financial management plan, S. 4656, to amend title 5, United States Code, concerning restrictions on the participation of certain Federal employees in partisan political activity, S. 4651, to require agencies to use information and communications technology products obtained from original equipment manufacturers or authorized resellers, S. 4419, to require the Science and Technology Directorate in the Department of Homeland Security to develop greater capacity to detect, identify, and disrupt illicit substances in very low concentrations, S. 4321, to amend title 5, United States Code, to prohibit the payment of annuities and retired pay to individuals convicted of certain sex crimes, S. 2546, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 100 North Taylor Lane in Patagonia, Arizona, as the "Jim Kolbe Memorial Post Office", S. 3946, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1106 Main Street in Bastrop, Texas, as the "Sergeant Major Billy D. Waugh Post Office", S. 4077, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 180 Steuart Street in San Francisco, California, as the "Dianne Feinstein Post Office", H.R. 5527, to amend section 1078 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 to increase the effectiveness of the Technology Modernization Fund, H.R. 7219, to ensure that Federal agencies rely on the best reasonably available scientific, technical, demographic, economic, and statistical information and evidence to develop, issue or inform the public of the nature and bases of Federal agency rules and guidance, H.R. 7524, to amend title 40, United States Code, to require the submission of reports on certain information technology services funds to Congress before expenditures may be made, H.R. 3254, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish a process to review applications for certain grants to purchase equipment or systems that do not meet or exceed any applicable national voluntary consensus standards, H.R. 6174, to improve the biodetection functions of the Department of Homeland Security, H.R. 272, to amend title 31, United States Code, to authorize transportation for Government astronauts returning from space between their residence and various locations, H.R. 4403, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to make improvements to the Securing the Cities program, H.R. 5887, to amend chapter 3 of title 5, United States Code, to improve Government service delivery, and build related capacity for the Federal Government, H.R. 7525, to require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to issue guidance to agencies requiring special districts to be recognized as local government for the purpose of Federal financial assistance determinations, H.R. 4467, to direct the Under Secretary for Management of the Department of Homeland Security to assess contracts for covered services performed by contractor personnel along the United States land border with Mexico, H.R. 599, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3500

West 6th Street, Suite 103 in Los Angeles, California, as the “Dosan Ahn Chang Ho Post Office”, H.R. 1060, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1663 East Date Place in San Bernardino, California, as the “Dr. Margaret B. Hill Post Office Building”, H.R. 1098, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 50 East Derry Road in East Derry, New Hampshire, as the “Chief Edward B. Garone Post Office”, H.R. 1555, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2300 Sylvan Avenue in Modesto, California, as the “Corporal Michael D. Anderson Jr. Post Office Building”, H.R. 3608, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 28081 Marguerite Parkway in Mission Viejo, California, as the “Major Megan McClung Post Office Building”, H.R. 3728, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 25 Dorchester Avenue, Room 1, in Boston, Massachusetts, as the “Caroline Chang Post Office”, H.R. 5476, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1077 River Road, Suite 1, in Washington Crossing, Pennsylvania, as the “Susan C. Barnhart Post Office”, H.R. 5640, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 12804 Chillicothe Road in Chesterland, Ohio, as the “Sgt. Wolfgang Kyle Weninger Post Office Building”, H.R. 5712, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 220 Fremont Street in Kiel, Wisconsin, as the “Trooper Trevor J. Casper Post Office Building”, H.R. 5985, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 517 Seagaze Drive in Oceanside, California, as the “Charlesetta Reece Allen Post Office Building”, H.R. 6073, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 9925 Bustleton Avenue in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as the “Sergeant Christopher David Fitzgerald Post Office Building”, H.R. 6651, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 603 West 3rd Street in Necedah, Wisconsin, as the “Sergeant Kenneth E. Murphy Post Office Building”, H.R. 7192, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 333 West Broadway in Anaheim, California, as the “Dr. William I. ‘Bill’ Kott Post Office Building”, H.R. 7199, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at S74w16860 Janesville Road, in Muskego, Wisconsin, as the “Colonel Hans Christian Heg Post Office”, H.R. 7423, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 103 Benedette Street in Rayville, Louisiana, as the “Luke Letlow Post Office Building”, and the nominations of Sherri Malloy Beatty-Arthur, Rahkel Bouchet, Erin Camille Johnston, Ray D. McKenzie, and John Cuong Truong, each to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, Ann C. Fisher, of South Dakota, and Ashley Jay Elizabeth Poling, of North Carolina, both to be a Commissioner of the Postal Regulatory Commission, and Carmen G. Iguina Gonzalez, and Joseph Russell Palmore, both to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, 10 a.m., SD-342.

Committee on Indian Affairs: business meeting to consider S. 2695, to amend the Indian Law Enforcement Reform Act to provide for advancements in public safety

services to Indian communities, S. 3857, to take certain land in the State of California into trust for the benefit of the Jamul Indian Village of California, S. 4442, to amend the Crow Tribe Water Rights Settlement Act of 2010 to make improvements to that Act, and S. 4505, to approve the settlement of water rights claims of Ohkay Owingeh in the Rio Chama Stream System, to restore the Bosque on Pueblo Land in the State of New Mexico; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine the nomination of Patrice H. Kunesh, of Minnesota, to be Chairman of the National Indian Gaming Commission, 10 a.m., SD-628.

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: to hold hearings to examine streamlining and coordinating support for rural small businesses, 2:30 p.m., SR-428A.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: to hold hearings to examine current and future VA budget challenges, focusing on providing for veterans, 3 p.m., SR-418.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold hearings to examine foreign threats to elections in 2024, focusing on roles and responsibilities of U.S. tech providers, 2:30 p.m., SH-216.

House

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, oversight hearing on Inspectors General of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Transportation, and the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak), 10 a.m., 2358-A Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, Full Committee, hearing entitled “The Findings and Recommendations of the Commission on the National Defense Strategy”, 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Education and Workforce, Subcommittee on Workforce Protections, hearing entitled “Examining the Biden-Harris Attacks on Tipped Workers”, 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 670, the “Think Differently Database Act”; H.R. 8107, the “Ensuring Access to Medicaid Buy-in Programs Act of 2024”; H.R. 8108, to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to add a Medicaid State plan requirement with respect to the determination of residency of certain individuals serving in the Armed Forces; H.R. 3433, the “Give Kids a Chance Act of 2024”; H.R. 7188, the “Shandra Eisenga Human Cell and Tissue Product Safety Act”; H.R. 7623, the “Telehealth Modernization Act of 2024”; H.R. 3227, the “Ensuring Seniors' Access to Quality Care Act”; H.R. 9067, the “Building America's Health Care Workforce Act”; H.R. 7155, the “United States-Abraham Accords Cooperation and Security Act of 2024”; H.J. Res. 139, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services relating to “Medicare and Medicaid Programs: Minimum Staffing Standards for Long-Term Care Facilities and Medicaid Institutional Payment Transparency Reporting”; H.R.

7890, the “Children and Teens’ Online Privacy Protection Act”; H.R. 7891, Kids Online Safety Act”; H.R. 8449, the “AM Radio for Every Vehicle Act”; H.J. Res. 163, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to “New Source Performance Standards for Greenhouse Gas Emissions From New, Modified, and Reconstructed Fossil Fuel-Fired Electric Generating Units; Emission Guidelines for Greenhouse Gas Emissions From Existing Fossil Fuel-Fired Electric Generating Units; and Repeal of the Affordable Clean Energy Rule”; H.J. Res. 133, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to “Greenhouse Gas Emissions Standards for Heavy-Duty Vehicles-Phase 3”; and H.J. Res. 117, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to “Reconsideration of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Particulate Matter”, 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee on Digital Assets, Financial Technology and Inclusion, hearing entitled “Dazed and Confused: Breaking Down the SEC’s Politicized Approach to Digital Assets”, 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on National Security, Illicit Finance, and International Financial Institutions, hearing entitled “Protecting Americans’ Savings: Examining the Economics of the Multi-Billion Dollar Romance Confidence Scam Industry”, 2 p.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Great Power Competition in the Indo-Pacific”, 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Full Committee, hearing entitled “A Country Without Borders: How the Biden-Harris Open Borders Policies Have Undermined Our Safety and Security”, 10 a.m., 310 Cannon.

Committee on House Administration, Subcommittee on Modernization, hearing entitled “Continuity of Congress: Preparing for the Future by Learning from the Past”, 12 p.m., 1310 Longworth.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Crime and Federal Government Surveillance, hearing entitled “Oversight of Homeland Security Investigations”, 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Federal Lands, hearing on H.R. 1479, the “Chiricahua National Park Act”; H.R. 1504, the “Apex Area Technical Corrections Act”; H.R. 8931, to redesignate Saratoga National Historical Park as Saratoga National Battlefield Park; H.R. 8946, the “Reversionary Interest Conveyance Act”; H.R. 9159, the “Appalachian Trail Centennial Act”; H.R. 9492, to amend Public Law 99–338 with respect to Kaweah Project permits; HR. 9516, the “Military Families National Parks Access Enhancement Act”; and S. 612, the “Lake Tahoe Restoration Reauthorization Act”, 10:15 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Accountability, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 3642, the “Executive Branch

Accountability and Transparency Act of 2023”; legislation on the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 2024; legislation on the Federal Register Modernization Act; H.R. 5300, the “GAO Inspector General Parity Act”; legislation on the Federal Acquisition Security Council Improvement Act of 2024; legislation on the Value Over Cost Act; legislation on the Federal Improvement in Technology Procurement Act; H.R. 9566, the “Source Code Harmonization And Reuse in Information Technology Act”; H.R. 5536, the “Grant Transparency Act of 2023”; legislation on the Protecting Taxpayers Wallet Act; legislation on the Manager Attitudes and Notions According to Government Employee Responses Act; H.R. 8784, the “Full Responsibility and Expedited Enforcement Act”; H.R. 825, the “Banning Operations and Leases with the Illegitimate Venezuelan Authoritarian Regime Act”; and several postal naming measures, 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Holding the SBA Accountable: Testimony from Small Business Administrator Guzman”, 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 8689, the “Amtrak Executive Bonus Disclosure Act”; H.R. 3149, to designate United States Route 20 in the States of Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, and Massachusetts as the “National Medal of Honor Highway”, and for other purposes; H.R. 3988, the “Assuring that Robust, Thorough, and Informed Congressional Leadership is Exercised Over National Emergencies Act”; H.R. 6435, the “Making Aid for Local Disasters Equal Now Act”; H.R. 2672, the “FEMA Loan Interest Payment Relief Act”; H.R. 6997, the “Disaster Contract Improvement Act”; H.R. 8530, the “Improving Federal Building Security Act of 2024”; H.R. 2892, the “Weather Alert Response and Notification Act”; H.R. 6984, to designate the Federal building located at 300 E. 3rd Street in North Platte, Nebraska, as the “Virginia Smith Federal Building”, and for other purposes; legislation to require the Administrator of General Services to sell certain property related to United States Penitentiary, Leavenworth, and for other purposes; H.R. 8692, the “Amtrak Transparency and Accountability for Passengers and Taxpayers Act”; H.R. 9135, the “Ensuring Airline Resiliency to Reduce Delays and Cancellations Act”; H.R. 8995, the “Baby Changing on Board Act”; H.R. 4043, to amend the Save Our Seas 2.0 Act to expand eligibility for certain wastewater infrastructure grants, and for other purposes; H.R. 9037, the “Federal Emergency Mobilization Accountability (FEMA) Workforce Planning Act”; H.R. 9541, the “Promoting Opportunities to Widen Electrical Resilience Act of 2024”; H.R. 3356, the “Motor Carrier Safety Screening Modernization Act”; H.R. 8505, the “Household Goods Shipping Consumer Protection Act”; H.R. 7779, the “Good Samaritan Remediation of Abandoned Hardrock Mines Act of 2024”; H.R. 1720, the “Ocean Pollution Reduction Act II”; H.R. 8728, the “State-Managed Disaster Relief Act”; H.R. 1605, the “Natural Disaster Recovery Program Act of 2023”; H.R. 8616, the “Ensuring

Quality Investments in Preparedness Act of 2024”; H.R. 9121, the “Fire Management Assistance Grants for Tribal Governments Act”; H.R. 5623, the “Addressing Addiction After Disasters Act”; H.R. 6083, the “Duplications of Benefits Victims Relief Act”; H.R. 9313, the “Think Differently About Building Accessibility Act”; H.R. 9024, the “Extreme Weather and Heat Response Modernization Act”; H.R. 8610, the “Counter-UAS Authority Security, Safety, and Reauthorization Act”; and General Services Administration Capital Investment and Leasing Program Resolutions, 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, hearing entitled “Examining VA’s Challenges with Ensuring Quality Contracted Disability Compensation Examinations”, 10:15 a.m., 360 Cannon.

Subcommittee on Health, markup on H.R. 9496, to amend title 38, United States Code, to include a representative of the National Association of State Veterans Homes on the Geriatrics and Gerontology Advisory Committee of the Department of Veterans Affairs; H.R. 9324, the “Protecting Veteran Access to Telemedicine Services Act of 2024”; H.R. 9478, the “Veterans Supporting

Prosthetics Opportunities and Recreational Therapy Act”; H.R. 9525, the “Service Dogs Assisting Veterans Act”; H.R. 7504, the “Rural Veterans Transportation to Care Act”; H.R. 9301, the “New Mexico Rural Veteran Health Care Access Act”; H.R. 9485, the “Enhancing Faith-Based Support for Veterans Act of 2024”; H.R. 9438, the “No Wrong Door for Veterans Act”; H.R. 9146, the “Ensuring Continuity in Veterans Health Act”; and H.R. 8562, the “Parity for Native Hawaiian Veterans Act”, 2:30 p.m., 360 Cannon.

Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled “Dial 988+1: Examining the Operations of the Veterans Crisis Line”, 2:30 p.m., 360 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled “Investing in a Healthier America: Chronic Disease Prevention and Treatment”, 2 p.m., 1100 Longworth.

Joint Meeting

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: to hold hearings to examine Russia’s imperial identity, 2 p.m., 2358C–RHOB.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Wednesday, September 18

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Wednesday, September 18

Senate Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Senate will resume consideration of the nomination of Michelle Williams Court, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California, and vote on the motion to invoke cloture thereon at approximately 11:45 a.m. Additional roll call votes are possible during Wednesday's session.

House Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Consideration of H.R. 5339—Protecting Americans' Investments from Woke Policies Act (Pursuant to a Rule). Consideration of H.R. 5179—Anti-BDS Labeling (Pursuant to a Rule). Consideration of H.R. 7909—Violence Against Women by Illegal Aliens Act (Pursuant to a Rule). Consideration of H.R. 9494—Continuing Appropriations and Other Matters Act, 2025 (Pursuant to a Rule).

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