

Senate bill that would allow for the extension of the term of FBI Director Robert Mueller whose 10-year term expires on August 2.

On May 12 of this year, President Obama announced his desire to extend that term by 2 years. At the time, the President said, "In his 10 years at the FBI, Bob Mueller has set the gold standard for leading the bureau. Given the ongoing threats facing the United States, as well as the leadership transitions at other agencies like the Defense Department and Central Intelligence Agency, I believe continuity and stability at the FBI is critical at this time."

I agree with the President's remarks, and I am confident that Director Mueller will continue to work with integrity and respect for Americans' rights as he ensures the safety of the American people. The Nation needs, now as much as at any time in our history, an FBI that is capable of a multifaceted mission to best protect us from a variety of criminal threats, which has been proven under Mueller's leadership. I congratulate him on his noteworthy 10-year term and look forward to continuing to work with him and with the Committee on the Judiciary.

The job of the Federal Bureau of Investigation is critical, and that agency must have experienced and capable leadership. There are many threats which the FBI must concentrate its limited resources on, ranging from interstate violent crime, organized crime, human trafficking, exploitation of children, corporate fraud, mortgage fraud, cybercrime, and domestic terrorism.

As time advances, so do the demands we place on the FBI and its agents across the country. We appreciate the difficulty the Director must face when determining how to allocate resources. As these demands grow and the nature of the threats evolve, I hope the FBI will maintain an appropriate degree of focus on the types of crime that impact average Americans every day, whether it be fraud against seniors, corporate officers defrauding investors, civil rights violations by those who abuse power, theft of individual identities, or electronic intrusions into people's privacy.

Director Mueller is the right person to continue to lead the Federal Bureau of Investigation in confronting these challenges at this time. He has proven himself to be honest, frank, and committed to the rule of law.

While this extension is unusual, it is important that we grant it so that we have continuity in the leadership of the FBI at this critical time. I urge support of this important measure.

I yield 2 minutes to our distinguished Member from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. As a member of the Homeland Security Committee, I want to join my colleagues on the Judiciary Committee, on which I also serve, to note the uniqueness of our times. There's a

point that I think is very important about the continuity of existing FBI Director Mueller; and that is that we live not only in dangerous times, but we also live in times where resources are being strained. Questions are being raised about the resources necessary for law enforcement; and certainly a leader who understands the broad needs of the American public and the collaborative needs, collaborating with other law enforcement because of past experiences, is very important.

Mr. Mueller, in his 10 years, has had collaborative efforts with all of the Federal law enforcement agencies and has opened up a dialogue between local and State law enforcement agencies. Just ask New York to tell you how important that is; ask Texas or a number of our other large States with assets that are in the eye of the storm of potential terrorist acts.

So I join with my colleagues and acknowledge the leadership of the President for asking the FBI Director to stay for 2 extra years and that this does not undermine the 10-year term that is by law. I ask colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 1103, a bill to extend the term of the incumbent Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Director Robert Mueller has shown extraordinary leadership, and made fundamental changes to the FBI for the better protection of the American people.

Director Mueller has a long and distinguished history of public service. After completing college, he joined the United States Marine Corps, and is a decorated Vietnam veteran. Director Mueller served as the Chief of the Criminal Division in the U.S. Attorney's office in San Francisco, and prosecuted cases of financial fraud, corruption and terrorism as the Assistant U.S. Attorney in Boston, before being named U.S. Attorney in San Francisco.

President Bush nominated Mr. Mueller as the sixth FBI Director on September 4, 2001, just one week prior to the attacks of September 11. Director Mueller has since led the Bureau in modernizing its approach to law enforcement, and developed an intelligence driven organization with a focus on prevention. By centralizing intelligence management, and coordinating intelligence and counterterrorism efforts, Director Mueller has improved the effectiveness of his agency.

Over the last ten years, Director Mueller has overseen the transformation of the FBI, from a reactive investigatory agency, to a far more proactive bureau that uses intelligence to seek out threats before they materialize. His visionary leadership has increased collaboration between the FBI and other intelligence gathering agencies, including foreign partners, established partnerships between the bureau, businesses, private industry stakeholders, and the general public, and greatly increased communication between FBI field offices and state and local law enforcement bodies.

During his tenure leading the agency, Director Mueller has increased resources to combat the threat of terrorism, without neglecting its other duties. Just last week, the FBI arrested 16 individuals for engaging in cyber attacks. Last Thursday, the FBI, along with the Drug Enforcement Agency, and other Federal law

enforcement bodies, arrested over 70 individuals connected with La Familia Michoacana, one of the most violent drug trafficking organizations in Mexico. Additionally, in the past week, FBI efforts led to indictments on charges of drug trafficking, international kidnapping and coercion, and human trafficking.

Under Director Mueller's leadership, the FBI has made unprecedented improvements to face the challenges of hatred and global terrorism; the agency has thwarted a plot to detonate a bomb in the Sears Tower, arrested individuals engaged in a massive recruiting effort to attract young people to jihadist groups, and stopped an attack on Fort Dix. Director Mueller and his agency have achieved these, and a litany of other accomplishments, without asking for applause or recognition.

The FBI is America's primary federal agency responsible for investigating and preventing acts of terrorism. Now, more than ever, when we are faced with aggression from an enemy intent on destroying our way of life, the leader of the FBI must be able to meet the challenges ahead. The future of our nation is not entirely of our choosing; we are faced with an assault on our principles and freedoms we did not seek to galvanize, and a confrontation with intolerance and evil we did not expect. With strategic and forward looking leaders like Director Mueller, we will overcome these challenges.

As a senior Member of the Committee on Homeland Security, I agree with the President's recommendation that extending Director Mueller's term for two additional years will greatly benefit our national security. I am pleased at the bipartisan support that this legislation has received.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have no requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time as well.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1103.

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 GI BILL FAIRNESS ACT OF 2011

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 1383) to temporarily preserve higher rates for tuition and fees for programs of education at non-public institutions of higher learning pursued by individuals enrolled in the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs before the enactment of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Improvement Act of 2010, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the Senate amendments is as follows:

On page 3, strike lines 10 and 11 and insert the following:

Code, who, since January 4, 2011, has been enrolled in the same non-public institution of higher learning in a State in

Beginning on page 4, strike line 12 and all that follows through page 5, line 3, and insert the following:

(a) EXTENSION.—Section 3729(b)(2)(B) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in clause (i)—

(A) by striking “January 1, 2004” and inserting “October 1, 2011”; and

(B) by striking “3.00” both places it appears and inserting “3.30”;

(2) in clause (ii)—

(A) by striking “January 1, 2004, and before October 1, 2011” and inserting “October 1, 2011, and before October 1, 2012”; and

(B) by striking “3.30” both places it appears and inserting “2.80”; and

(3) in clause (iii), by striking “October 1, 2011” and inserting “October 1, 2012”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the later of October 1, 2011, or the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of the Senate amendments to H.R. 1383, as amended, the Restoring GI Bill Fairness Act of 2011. The bill would temporarily restore the Post-9/11 GI Bill program’s original method of paying tuition and fees to veterans attending private schools in several States.

When the original Post-9/11 GI Bill was enacted, veterans were promised that the VA would pay 100 percent of tuition and fees up to a State’s most expensive in-state undergraduate tuition and fee charges at a public institution of higher learning. The State-based cap applied to veterans who chose both public and private schools. What this meant to some veterans attending schools in certain States was tuition and fee payments could be well in excess of \$20,000 annually. Veterans applied and enrolled in these schools based on that original promise.

However, in an effort to “fix” some elements of the original GI Bill, Congress left those veterans in a bind. The Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Improvements Act of 2010, which was enacted on January 4, 2011, made several changes. And one of those changes included a national cap of \$17,500 on tuition and fee payments for veterans attending private schools, a change that will go into effect 1 week from today. For veterans that were enrolled in certain private schools in several States, including New York, Texas, Arizona, Michigan, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina, this change has real consequences. They will see their tuition and fee payments reduced by thousands of dollars. And, Mr. Speaker, I just don’t think that’s fair.

We shouldn’t change the rules on these veterans when they had already

decided to attend the school of their choice and made financial decisions based on those rules. On May 23, the House unanimously voted to keep the original promise made to these veterans in H.R. 1383. The Senate has now acted on that bill, and we’re ready to finish the job and send the bill to the President before these cuts can take place.

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Similar to the original House measure, the Senate amendment would temporarily restore the cap on tuition and fees to the State-based method effective on August 1, 2011. This increase would apply only to veterans who were enrolled in nonpublic institutions of higher learning in the seven States that I mentioned previously before the 4th of January of 2011—in other words, they had to have already been enrolled on the 4th of January of this year—a change from the House-passed version which was actually April 1 of 2011. Veterans who initially enrolled after January 4, 2011, would be subject to the new cap.

Mr. Speaker, it has come to our attention that some veterans are concerned about the January 4 eligibility date. We have talked with VA. They have assured us that any veteran who has applied and was accepted to a school on or before the 4th of January of 2011 will be covered under this particular bill we are considering on the floor today. Veterans who applied or were accepted after that date will be grandfathered under H.R. 1383.

I believe VA’s interpretation of the bill accurately reflects the House’s intent. I would note that this bill, as amended, passed the Senate unanimously, and, of course, it passed this body unanimously as well.

I reserve the balance of my time and would encourage a positive vote by all my colleagues.

Mr. FILNER. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I also rise in support of H.R. 1383, as amended. I thank Chairman MILLER for the work he has done on the bill to make sure it was palatable in both the House and the Senate.

Let me just say, though, for the record, the GI Bill updates which we passed last Congress were passed with the full support of virtually every veterans service organization in the Nation, the majority of which submitted letters of support and strongly advocated for the bill, which included this tuition cap which we have been talking about. Everyone was well aware of the effect of the tuition cap, so I was sort of surprised when these same folks started talking about what they called “unintended consequences.” I think everybody knew the consequences.

I know that many of our veterans made plans about their education based on the laws in effect before they started. And while most States ended up getting an increase with the new national average, a few States also saw a

decrease. It is in these States that H.R. 1383, as amended, seeks to hold harmless our veterans from the so-called “unintended consequences” of the tuition cap.

Our veterans have indeed, as Chairman MILLER pointed out, earned their education benefits, and I firmly believe that we should seek to avoid any actions that may interfere with the use of their benefits. I am pleased that we are here today taking action to alleviate this potential burden on a small population of these student veterans. The start of the new school year, of course, is right around the corner, so I hope that with our quick action today we will have this issue solved in time for the new academic year.

We have made quite a few changes to improve the so-called Post-9/11 GI Bill, and more changes are still being contemplated. As a veterans’ committee and as a Congress, we must continue to work hard to ensure future changes do not delay or diminish benefits. Veterans are our priority, and we will protect their interests.

I have no further requests for time, Mr. Speaker, and I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the Senate amendments to H.R. 1383.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. I have no further requests for time.

Once again, I encourage all Members to support my motion to concur in the Senate amendments.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to the bill, H.R. 1383.

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. MILLER of Florida. 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 and the Chair’s prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

BLOCKING PROPERTY OF
TRANSNATIONAL CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS—MESSAGE FROM
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 112-46)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed: