

jobs and economic growth. Manufacturers, small businesses, trade unions, and industry groups are concerned about the increasing skilled labor shortage. Unfortunately, current law limits the use of eligible savings accounts to help reduce the costs of obtaining advanced technical certifications.

My legislation, the American Workforce Empowerment Act, would allow 529 savings accounts to be used for non-degree technical training certificate programs, tools, and any tests that are required to maintain certifications.

As the American workforce rebounds, we will see increased need for skilled workers to meet rising manufacturing, shipping, and construction demand. These skilled labor positions are good-paying jobs that help provide economic stability for hardworking Americans and are essential to the expansion of our Nation's economy.

CONGRATULATING CAPTAIN JONATHAN TURNBULL

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

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Captain Jonathan Turnbull on his promotion to major in the United States Army.

Captain Turnbull of Gaylord, Michigan, was deployed in Syria where he worked with local forces and non-governmental organizations to stabilize the area and provide humanitarian assistance.

On January 16, 2019, an ISIS suicide bomber forever changed the course of his life and the life of his brothers. Four Americans were killed on that day, and Jonathan received life-threatening injuries. His courage and bravery on that day and each day since has inspired countless Americans as he recovered and continued his service.

Jonathan is the epitome of an American patriot and embodies the fighting spirit of our Nation's Armed Forces. He has fought for his life and his country and has truly earned this promotion to major.

I speak for the entire First District when I say how proud we are of Jonathan, his service, and his commitment.

I wish him, Samantha, Ian, and baby Scotty all the best in the many years to come.

MOUNT NOTRE DAME GIRLS BASKETBALL

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

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mount Notre Dame High School girls basketball team on winning the Ohio High School Athletic Association championship.

Mount Notre Dame captured the Division 1 State championship title after beating Newark in a 2-point double

overtime thriller. This championship was the eighth championship for the Mount Notre Dame basketball program—the most in Ohio school history.

Coach Scott Rogers led his team to a 28-0 record, a number two national ranking, and has won 72 consecutive games.

Among the team's many talented athletes is junior guard KK Bransford who was recently named Ohio's Ms. Basketball.

I commend Coach Scott Rogers and the entire Mount Notre Dame girls basketball team for this historic accomplishment and tradition of excellence.

Congratulations, again, to the Mount Notre Dame players, to Coach Rogers and his staff, and to the Mount Notre Dame faithful.

THE SOUTHERN BORDER

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

Mr. GUEST. Mr. Speaker, since mid-January we have seen a surge of immigrants coming into the country along our southwest border. The numbers are staggering, and the situation along the border continues to deteriorate daily. In March, over 172,000 individuals were encountered by law enforcement, the highest number of monthly encounters in the last 15 years.

Last week, I had the opportunity to visit the border and met with both Federal and State law enforcement officers. We heard repeatedly that recent changes by the Biden administration have driven the overwhelming surge.

Lost in the border conversation is the incredible amount of resources being diverted to try and manage the immigrants we are encountering. This shift in resources is being exploited by drug cartels who continue to use the southwest border as the primary pipeline to bring cocaine, methamphetamine, and fentanyl into the country.

The question can no longer be: Is there a crisis along the border?

But instead it should be: How long will the crisis last, and how bad must the crisis become before the President will act?

THE SOUTHERN BORDER

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

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to address what I think is the biggest crisis to our sovereignty since I have been here, and that is what is going on at the border.

It is hard to think of something new to say, but I want to point out as we pursue an open borders policy that it greatly increases the power of the Mexican cartels.

Because the Mexican cartels have a monopoly on letting people in this country, I heard a story of two people who weren't part of the cartels trying

to sneak people across. Two of them were skinned alive, and a third one was partially skinned and sent back to say: This is what happens if you try to push people across without going through the cartels.

I want to point out an anecdote of a father and a, perhaps, 7-year-old girl who were murdered for trying to come across without the approval of the cartels.

I would like to address the 70,000 people who died from illegal drugs this year. I was recently at the Milwaukee DEA, and I was told last year 540 people in Milwaukee County died of illegal drug use, and the local agents suspected that all 540 were killed by drugs or ingredients from drugs that came across the Mexican border.

Please, President Biden, do something about the crisis on the border.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

LOCAL GRAMMY WINNER JAMES BLACHLY

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Johnstown, Pennsylvania, local, James Blachly, on his 2021 Grammy win.

In April 2018, Blachly and the Johnstown Symphony Orchestra performed the U.S. world premiere of Dame Ethel Smyth's "The Prison." It was this performance that won the 2021 Grammy.

Serving as the music director of the Johnstown Symphony Orchestra and as music director of the Experiential Orchestra, Mr. Blachly is known for his innovative programming which aims to increase audience engagement.

James is an incredibly talented conductor and composer. In 2016, he was the only conductor from the United States invited to participate in the first annual Young Conductors Showcase as part of El Sistema's 40th anniversary celebration, and he was the only U.S. conductor to be invited as Conducting Fellow in Maestra Marin Alsop's final year at the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music.

Congratulations to James and the Johnstown Symphony. Their hard work and dedication have truly paid off.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 20, 2021.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II

of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on April 20, 2021, at 9:42 a.m.:

That the Senate agreed to Relative to the death of the Honorable William "Bill" Emerson Brock III, former United States Senator for the State of Tennessee S. Res. 163.

Appointments:

Board of Visitors of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy.

National Council on Disability.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

CHERYL L. JOHNSON,
Clerk.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 13 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1415

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. JAYAPAL) at 2 o'clock and 15 minutes p.m.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 20, 2021.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on April 20, 2021, at 12:26 p.m.:

Appointments:

United States Holocaust Memorial Council for the 117th Congress.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

CHERYL L. JOHNSON,
Clerk.

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 the yeas and nays are ordered.

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

TRAINING IN HIGH-DEMAND ROLES TO IMPROVE VETERAN EMPLOYMENT ACT

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the

bill (H.R. 2523) to amend the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 to improve the COVID-19 Veteran Rapid Retraining Assistance program, to make certain technical corrections to the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2523

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 "Training in High-demand Roles to Improve Veteran Employment Act" or the "THRIVE Act".

SEC. 2. IMPROVEMENTS TO COVID-19 VETERAN RAPID RETRAINING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8006 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (Public Law 117-2) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (3) of subsection (c) and inserting the following new paragraph (3):

“(3) DETERMINATION OF HIGH-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS.—

“(A) INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall use the list of high-demand occupations prepared in conjunction with the Secretary of Labor.

“(B) MODIFICATIONS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may add and remove occupations from the list under subparagraph (A) as the Secretary determines appropriate.”;

(2) in subsection (d)(3)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting “(other than such a program pursued solely through distance learning on a half-time basis or less)” after “a covered program of education under the retraining assistance program under this section”; and

(B) in subparagraph (C), by striking “less than a half-time basis” and inserting “a half-time basis or less”;

(3) by redesignating subsections (f), (g), and (h) as subsections (k), (l), and (m), respectively;

(4) by inserting after subsection (e) the following new subsections:

“(f) EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Labor, shall contact each veteran who pursues a covered program of education under this section—

“(1) not later than 30 days after the date on which the veteran begins the program of education to notify the veteran of the availability of employment placement services upon completion of the program; and

“(2) not later than 14 days after the date on which the veteran completes, or terminates participation in, such program to facilitate the provision of employment placement services to such veteran.

“(g) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall seek to enter into a memorandum of understanding with one or more qualified nonprofit organizations for the purpose of facilitating the employment of veterans who participate in the retraining assistance program under this section.

“(2) QUALIFIED NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION.—For purposes of this subsection, a qualified nonprofit organization is a nonprofit organization that—

“(A) is an association of businesses; and

“(B) has at least two years of experience providing job placement services for veterans.

“(h) FOLLOW UP OUTREACH.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in coordination with the

Secretary of Labor, shall contact each veteran who completes a covered program of education under the retraining assistance program under this section 30, 60, 90, and 180 days after the veteran completes such program of education to ask the veteran about the experience of the veteran in the retraining assistance program and the veteran's employment status.

“(i) QUARTERLY REPORTS.—Not later than the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and quarterly thereafter, the Secretary of Labor shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report containing the following information about veterans who participate in the retraining assistance program under this section:

“(1) The percentage of such veterans who found employment before the end of the second calendar quarter after exiting the program.

“(2) The percentage of such veterans who found employment before the end of the fourth calendar quarter after exiting the program.

“(3) The median earnings of all such veterans for the second quarter after exiting the program.

“(4) The percentage of such veterans who attain a recognized postsecondary credential during the 12-month period after exiting the program.

“(j) COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the termination of the retraining assistance program under subsection (1), the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report on the outcomes and effectiveness of the program.”;

(5) in subsection (1), as so redesignated, by striking “No retraining assistance may be paid under this section after the date that is 21 months after the date of the enactment of this Act” and inserting “No retraining assistance may be paid under this section for a covered program of education that begins on or after December 11, 2022”;

(6) in subsection (m), as so redesignated, by striking the period at the end and inserting the following: “, which shall be carried out as if such section were authorized for the payment of readjustment and rehabilitation benefits to or on behalf of veterans under chapters 30, 31, and 41 of title 38, United States Code. Not more than \$386,000,000 may be obligated or expended to carry out this section.”; and

(7) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(n) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) The term ‘covered public health emergency’ means the declaration—

“(A) of a public health emergency, based on an outbreak of COVID-19 by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under section 319 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d); or

“(B) of a domestic emergency, based on an outbreak of COVID-19 by the President, the Secretary of Homeland Security, or State, or local authority.

“(2) The term ‘veteran’ means—

“(A) a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable; or

“(B) a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces who performs active service for a period of 30 days or longer by reason of the covered public health emergency.

“(3) The term ‘active service’ has the meaning given such term in section 101 of title 10, United States Code.”.