

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1168, 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. GOOD of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

ACCESS FOR VETERANS TO RECORDS ACT OF 2022

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7337) to require the Archivist of the United States to submit a plan to Congress to eliminate the records backlog at the National Personnel Records Center, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7337

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 "Access for Veterans to Records Act of 2022".

SEC. 2. PLAN TO ELIMINATE RECORDS BACKLOG AT THE NATIONAL PERSONNEL RECORDS CENTER.

(a) **PLAN REQUIRED.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Archivist of the United States shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a comprehensive plan for reducing the backlog of requests for records from the National Personnel Records Center and improving the efficiency and responsiveness of operations at the National Personnel Records Center, that includes, at a minimum, the following:

(1) An estimate of the number of backlogged record requests for veterans.

(2) Target timeframes to reduce the backlog.

(3) A detailed plan for using existing funds to improve the information technology infrastructure, including secure access to appropriate agency Federal records, to prevent future backlogs.

(4) Actions to improve customer service for requesters.

(5) Measurable goals with respect to the comprehensive plan and metrics for tracking progress toward such goals.

(6) Strategies to prevent future record request backlogs, including backlogs caused by an event that prevents employees of the Center from reporting to work in person.

(b) **UPDATES.**—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the comprehensive plan is submitted under subsection (a), and biannually thereafter until the response rate by the National Personnel Records Center reaches 90 percent of all requests in 20 days or less, not including any request involving a record damaged or lost in the National Personnel Records Center fire of 1973 or any request that is subject to a fee that has not been paid in a timely manner by the requestor (provided the National Personnel

Records Center issues an invoice within 20 days after the date on which the request is made), the Archivist of the United States shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees an update of such plan that—

(1) describes progress made by the National Personnel Records Center during the preceding 90-day period with respect to record request backlog reduction and efficiency and responsiveness improvement;

(2) provides data on progress made toward the goals identified in the comprehensive plan; and

(3) describes any changes made to the comprehensive plan.

(c) **CONSULTATION REQUIREMENT.**—In carrying out subsections (a) and (b), the Archivist of the United States shall consult with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(d) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.**—In this section, the term "appropriate congressional committees" means—

(1) the Committee on Oversight and Reform and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives; and

(2) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate.

SEC. 3. ADDITIONAL FUNDING TO ADDRESS RECORDS BACKLOG.

(a) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—In addition to amounts otherwise available, there is authorized to be appropriated to the National Archives and Records Administration, \$60,000,000 to address backlogs in responding to requests from veterans for military personnel records, improve cybersecurity, improve digital preservation and access to archival Federal records, and address backlogs in requests made under section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Freedom of Information Act). Such amounts may also be used for the Federal Records Center Program.

(b) **REQUIREMENT TO MAINTAIN IN-PERSON STAFFING LEVELS.**—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Archivist of the United States shall ensure that the National Personnel Records Center maintains staffing levels and telework arrangements that enable the maximum processing of records requests possible in order to achieve the performance goal of responding to 90 percent of all requests in 20 days or less, not including any request involving a record damaged or lost in the National Personnel Records Center fire of 1973 or any request that is subject to a fee that has not been paid in a timely manner by the requestor (provided the National Personnel Records Center issues an invoice within 20 days after the date on which the request is made).

(c) **INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORTING.**—The Inspector General for the National Archives and Records Administration shall, for two years following the date of the enactment of this Act, include in every semiannual report submitted to Congress pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978, a detailed summary of—

(1) efforts taken by the National Archives and Records Administration to address the backlog of records requests at the National Personnel Records Center; and

(2) any recommendations for action proposed by the Inspector General related to reducing the backlog of records requests at the National Personnel Records Center and the status of compliance with those recommendations by the National Archives and Records Administration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY)

and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. 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 measure.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the Access for Veterans to Records Act would address the serious backlog of requests for veterans' records currently pending at the National Personnel Records Center, or NPRC, which is part of the National Archives and Records Administration. This bill has received bipartisan support, and I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, including Ranking Member COMER and Representative FRED KELLER, who have cosponsored this legislation, along with a number of other Members.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the NPRC has accumulated a backlog of veterans' records requests, which reached a peak of 603,000 during March of 2022.

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Veterans and their families need these records to access critical services, including housing and healthcare.

Many of these records are only available as paper documents. That limitation, combined with limited building operations and a reduced workforce to protect NPRC employees during the coronavirus pandemic, have been the primary cause of this backlog.

The NPRC has made some progress to reduce the backlog. As of February 28, the NPRC workforce has returned to full capacity at its facility in St. Louis, Missouri. NPRC also added overtime shifts on weekends and some holidays. However, the backlog, which currently stands at 515,000 records requests, remains significant and can only be remedied with legislative intervention.

This bill has two components. First, it requires National Archives to provide the Oversight and Reform Committee with a detailed plan and target timeframes to eliminate the backlog and strategies to prevent a future records requests backlog. This includes submitting biannual status updates on the backlog and maintaining staffing levels to meet the goal of responding to 90 percent of requests in 20 days or less.

Second, the bill would authorize \$60 million for NARA to make upgrades to its information technology infrastructure. The upgrades are necessary for NARA to improve its ability to digitize documents and to prevent future backlogs.

The committee has already voted to approve \$60 million for National Archives in an amendment offered by Representative KELLER to another bill.

Congress must take action to help our veterans, many of whom put their lives on hold waiting for records from the NPRC. I urge my colleagues to support the veterans by supporting this important legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, over 2 years ago, committee Republicans opened an investigation into the veterans' records requests backlog at the National Personnel Records Center.

Pennsylvania veterans and their families were frustrated and concerned with the lengthy delays they were experiencing as they tried to access their own documents outlining military service.

American veterans and families rely on these records to prove eligibility for medical care and the benefits they are entitled to.

What we found was deeply disturbing. The records at the NPRC are on paper. They cannot be accessed remotely.

When the NPRC shut down in-person operations and told its workforce to go home, the backlog piled up to more than 500,000 military service records requests.

Veterans put their lives on the line for our country. The least we can do for them is to ensure they have access to the care and benefits they have earned.

Based on our findings, we urged the chairwoman to hold hearings. We pressed the NPRC to get staff back to work in person. But under the current administration, the backlog has grown to over 600,000 pending requests, with more added daily.

That is why, in June of last year, I introduced the RECORDS Act to require the NPRC to get back to work in person. Finally, after significant pressure from congressional Republicans, the NPRC returned to full in-person staffing on March 7 of this year.

I am pleased that this legislation has finally reached the House floor.

The Access for Veterans to Records Act incorporates improvements Republicans made to ensure the backlog is fixed. This bipartisan legislation requires the NPRC to maintain in-person staffing levels.

The bill also authorizes the funds necessary to speed up the digital preservation of records, so we will not face this problem in the future.

Finally, the bill contains reporting requirements to ensure proper accountability for addressing the current backlog and preventing future issues.

The Access for Veterans to Records Act is a bipartisan bill that demonstrates how Congress can work together to advance legislative reforms that are truly responsive to the needs of the American people and those who have given so much for our country.

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), the distinguished chairman of the Subcommittee on Government Operations.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished chairwoman and Mr. KELLER, my colleague and friend from Pennsylvania, for their leadership on H.R. 7337, the Access for Veterans to Records Act.

The Access for Veterans to Records Act will help provide the National Archives and Records Administration resources desperately needed to address veterans' records requests.

The records center houses records that are essential for veterans to receive the service-related benefits they need, including medical treatment, unemployment assistance, and emergency housing.

The records center was already behind the curve when it came to investing in records digitization, creating a massive backlog. The pandemic then exacerbated that problem.

Although NPRC has reduced the backlog to 515,000 from a peak of 603,000, it is still preventing veterans from receipt of the records they need. It can't be an acceptable standard.

The Access for Veterans to Records Act requires NARA to submit a detailed plan for eliminating the backlog and authorizes \$60 million to improve the situation.

This legislative effort works in lockstep with the National Archives and Records Administration's own efforts to secure funding from the Federal Technology Modernization Fund. At the urging of the chairwoman, myself, and others, the National Archives applied for and received a \$9.1 million award from the Technology Modernization Fund to do just that.

Projects like this one at the National Archives are precisely why we created the Technology Modernization Fund. Proactive investments in effective technologies make Federal programs work and will serve our veterans well.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the legislation.

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume for the purpose of closing.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 7337 is a bipartisan bill directly addressing a current problem facing America's veterans. I am thankful that the chairwoman and her staff worked with me to bring this necessary legislation to the House floor.

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 7337, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs.

CAROLYN B. MALONEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7337, 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. GOOD of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

QUANTUM COMPUTING CYBER-SECURITY PREPAREDNESS ACT

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7535) to encourage the migration of Federal Government information technology systems to quantum-resistant cryptography, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7535

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 "Quantum Computing Cybersecurity Preparedness Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

(1) Cryptography is essential for the national security of the United States and the functioning of the economy of the United States.

(2) The most widespread encryption protocols today rely on computational limits of classical computers to provide cybersecurity.

(3) Quantum computers might one day have the ability to push computational boundaries, allowing us to solve problems that have been intractable thus far, such as integer factorization, which is important for encryption.

(4) The rapid progress of quantum computing suggests the potential for adversaries of the United States to steal sensitive encrypted data today using classical computers, and wait until sufficiently powerful quantum systems are available to decrypt it.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) a strategy for the migration of information technology systems of the Federal Government to post-quantum cryptography is needed; and

(2) the Governmentwide and industrywide approach to post-quantum cryptography should prioritize developing applications, hardware intellectual property, and software that can be easily updated to support cryptographic agility.

SEC. 3. INVENTORY OF CRYPTOGRAPHIC SYSTEMS; MIGRATION TO POST-QUANTUM CRYPTOGRAPHY.

(a) INVENTORY.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of OMB shall establish, by rule or binding guidance, a requirement for each executive agency to establish and maintain an inventory of each cryptographic system in use by the agency.