

merit-based reforms to the civil service hiring system and would replace degree-based hiring with skills- and competency-based hiring.

It is critically important that we make skills- and competency-based hiring, the fundamental method of assessment for hiring in the competitive civil service.

No person, with the requisite skill, training, and competency should be prevented from securing a job because of a requirement that they hold a higher education degree.

As modern industry and technology evolve, so too do the pathways to professional achievement.

Recently, apprenticeship programs are an increasingly viable alternative to a traditional degree as they give students new opportunities to gain both knowledge of the subject matter and a skill set tailored specifically to their chosen profession.

These programs allow them to pursue jobs which align with their passions and strengths while still providing the students with important recognition in the form of a certificate which demonstrates their expertise in the field.

Undeniably, these skills focused models have opened doors for many who have been marginalized economically—giving them access to well-deserved dignity and success within their communities.

It is past time that the competitive civil service do away with degree requirements and make skills- and competency-based hiring the fundamental method of assessment.

This change will expand the pipeline of candidates who can access the competitive civil service jobs.

I have long been a champion of education and workforce development.

Several institutions in my district, including Houston Independent School District, Lone Star College, and Houston Community College have very successful trade and skills and based training programs.

These programs cover the gamut from culinary arts to auto-mechanic programs, to certificate programs for estheticians.

In 2017, Hurricane Harvey, killed 67 people, flooded 154,000 homes and 500,000 vehicles, and inflicted \$125 billion in damage, primarily from catastrophic rainfall—triggering the worst flooding in the Houston metropolitan area history.

In the aftermath, I advocated for funding for Houston Community College for a water disaster resilience training, certification and onboarding of skills, technologies, and training for first responders and the public to better prepare for the unique challenges posed by massive urban flood events.

This and other programs offer the opportunity to gain practical and in-demand skills needed to build a successful career in today's economy.

The Chance to Compete Act of 2023 will open new pathways for those without a degree, and allow them to access job roles in the competitive civil service that may have otherwise been inaccessible which gives them the opportunity to advance their lives and careers.

Furthermore, access to jobs in the competitive civil service based on skill and competency will grant people an unprecedented level of access to the dignity of work that fulfills a great need in today's society.

We must remain committed to recognizing the power and potential of non-degree based

assessments for access to new employment paths, especially in light of today's changing job market.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, the civil service is the lifeblood of our government and provides taxpayers, small businesses, and vulnerable populations vital resources and services throughout the country.

As Chairman of the Subcommittee on Government Operations for the past 4 years, I held a series of hearings focused on revitalizing and rejuvenating the federal workforce.

What we found is that proposals like Chance to Compete should exist in a constellation of improvements to federal workforce recruitment that includes better pay, reforming federal internships to improve the intern to employee pipeline, and remaining competitive with the private sector in areas such as hybrid work—all of which are the subjects of legislation produced by the Government Operations Subcommittee last Congress (FAIR Act, Next Gen Feds Act, and Telework and Metrics Cost Savings Act).

I am proud to be the lead-cosponsor of the Chance to Compete Act, which leverages skill assessments to build a more competitive, equitable, and inclusive workforce.

This bill has bipartisan support and through demonstration projects at agencies proven empirical success.

In short, this legislation allows an agency that has an open position to develop a skills-based assessment to evaluate candidates in a way that goes above and beyond the traditional review of past work and education experience.

Furthermore, this bill:

Enables agencies to share their assessment findings with other agencies, streamlining the overall hiring process and ensuring competitive candidates do not fall between the cracks if they have already proven their ability to perform.

And deploys talent teams at agencies to ensure the development and implementation of the goals of this bill.

I thank Representative VIRGINIA FOXX, for her hard work and leadership on this bill as well as the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), Partnership for Public Service (PPS), the Senior Executives Association (SEA), Professional Managers Association (PMA), and others who have endorsed this legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 159, 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. COMER. 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.

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT INFORMATION DATABASE ACT OF 2023

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill

(H.R. 300) to amend chapter 3 of title 5, United States Code, to require the publication of settlement agreements, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 300

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 “Settlement Agreement Information Database Act of 2023”.

SEC. 2. INFORMATION REGARDING SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS ENTERED INTO BY FEDERAL AGENCIES.

(a) REQUIREMENTS FOR SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS.—Chapter 3 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§307. Information regarding settlement agreements
“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—The term ‘local government’ has the meaning given that term in section 6501 of title 31.

“(2) ORDER TYPE.—The term ‘order type’ means the type of action or instrument used to settle a civil or criminal judicial action.

“(3) SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT.—The term ‘settlement agreement’ means a settlement agreement (including a consent decree) that—

“(A) is entered into by an Executive agency; and

“(B) relates to an alleged violation of Federal civil or criminal law.

“(4) STATE.—The term ‘State’ means each of the several States, the District of Columbia, each territory or possession of the United States, and each federally recognized Indian Tribe.

(b) SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT INFORMATION DATABASE.—

“(1) EXECUTIVE AGENCY REQUIREMENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the head of each Executive agency shall, in accordance with guidance issued pursuant to paragraph (2), submit the following information to the database established under paragraph (3):

“(i) A list of each settlement agreement, in a categorized and searchable format, entered into by the Executive agency, as a party to a lawsuit, which shall include, for each settlement agreement—

“(I) the order type of the settlement agreement;

“(II) the date on which the parties entered into the settlement agreement;

“(III) a list of specific violations that specify the basis for the action taken, with a description of the claims each party settled under the settlement agreement;

“(IV) the amount of attorneys’ fees and other litigation costs awarded, if any, including a description of the statutory basis for such an award;

“(V) the amount each party settling a claim under the settlement agreement is obligated to pay under the settlement agreement;

“(VI) the total amount the settling parties are obligated to pay under the settlement agreement;

“(VII) the amount, if any, the settling party is obligated to pay that is expressly specified under the settlement agreement as a civil or criminal penalty or fine;

“(VIII) any payment made under the settlement agreement, including a description of any payment made to the Federal Government;

“(IX) the projected duration of the settlement agreement, if available;

“(X) a list of State or local governments that may be directly affected by the terms of the settlement agreement;

“(XI) a brief description of any economic data and methodology used to justify the terms of the settlement agreement;

“(XII) any modification to the settlement agreement, when applicable;

“(XIII) notice and comments, when applicable; and

“(XIV) whether the settlement agreement is still under judicial enforcement and any period of time by which the parties agreed to have certain conditions met.

“(i) A copy of each—

“(I) settlement agreement entered into by the Executive agency; and

“(II) statement issued under paragraph (4).

“(B) NONDISCLOSURE.—The requirement to submit information or a copy of a settlement agreement under paragraph (A) shall not apply to the extent the information or copy (or portion thereof)—

“(i) is subject to a confidentiality provision that prohibits disclosure of the information or copy (or portion thereof); and

“(ii) would not be disclosed under section 552, if the Executive agency provides a citation to the applicable exemption.

“(C) CLARIFICATION OF RESPONSIBLE AGENCY.—In a case in which an Executive agency is acting at the request or on behalf of another Executive agency (referred to as the originating agency), the originating agency is responsible for submitting information under subparagraph (A).

“(2) GUIDANCE.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall issue guidance for Executive agencies to implement paragraph (1). Such guidance shall include the following:

“(A) Specific dates by which submissions must be made, not less than twice a year.

“(B) Data standards, including common data elements and a common, nonproprietary, searchable, machine-readable, platform independent format.

“(C) A requirement that the information and documents required under paragraph (1) are publicly available for a period starting on the date of the settlement through not less than 5 years after the termination of the settlement agreement.

“(3) ESTABLISHMENT OF DATABASE.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget, or the head of an Executive agency designated by the Director, shall establish and maintain a public, searchable, downloadable database for Executive agencies to directly upload and submit the information and documents required under paragraph (1) for immediate publication online.

“(4) STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY.—If the head of an Executive agency determines that a confidentiality provision in a settlement agreement, or the sealing of a settlement agreement, is required to protect the public interest of the United States, the head of the Executive agency may except the settlement agreement from the requirement in paragraph (1) and shall issue a written public statement stating why such action is required to protect the public interest of the United States, which shall explain—

“(A) what interests confidentiality protects; and

“(B) why the interests protected by confidentiality outweigh the public's interest in knowing about the conduct of the Federal Government and the expenditure of Federal resources.”.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 3 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“307. Information regarding settlement agreements.”.

(c) DEADLINE TO ESTABLISH DATABASE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the

Office of Management and Budget shall issue guidance required by section 307(b)(2) of title 5, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), and establish the settlement agreement information database required by section 307(b)(3) of title 5, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(d) DEADLINE FOR FIRST SUBMISSION.—Not later than 90 days after the Director issues guidance under section 307(b)(2) of title 5, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), the head of each Executive agency (as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code) shall begin submitting information to the database established under such section 307.

SEC. 3. AMENDMENTS TO THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.

Section 552(a)(2) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) through (E) as subparagraphs (C) through (F), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraph:

“(B) each settlement agreement (as defined in section 307) entered into by an Executive agency, with redactions for information that the agency may withhold under paragraph (8) and subsections (b) and (c) of this section;”.

SEC. 4. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this Act, or the amendments made by this Act, shall be construed to require the disclosure of information or records that any agency may properly withhold from public disclosure under section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the “Freedom of Information Act”).

SEC. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE; APPLICABILITY.

This Act shall be effective 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply—

(1) with respect to any settlement agreement (as such term is defined in section 307 of title 5, United States Code, as added by section 2), entered into on or after the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(2) to the extent practicable, any such settlement agreement (as such term is defined in section 307 of title 5, United States Code, as added by section 2) that remains in effect on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COMER. 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 measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 300, the Settlement Agreement Information Database Act.

Transparency and public participation are vital to ensure the public's continued trust in our government. Federal agencies frequently use settlement agreements to resolve litigation

without going through lengthy public trials. However, it is impossible for Congress and the public to determine the impact these settlement agreements have on State and local governments and private-sector entities because they must continue to follow the agency requirements these agreements mandate.

Such secret negotiations and agreements essentially prevent the public from participating in important policy decisions.

These Federal settlements agreements impose a tremendous burden. They are often difficult to see and hard to understand.

Further, State and local governments, industry stakeholders, and taxpayers can be directly affected by the settlements for years, yet they can't provide input. This legislation seeks to correct that problem.

The Settlement Agreement Information Database Act, or SAID Act, requires Federal agencies to submit information regarding consent decrees and settlement agreements to a public electronic database.

This public resource, to be overseen by the Office of Management and Budget, will include dates, payments, attorney's fees awards, and a list of State and local governments and other entities impacted by each settlement.

Currently, agencies release information about settlements at their discretion and will only publicize the facts that reflect favorably upon the agency. Furthermore, the terms of the settlement agreements are often deemed confidential.

Under the requirements of the SAID Act, if an agency believes that information regarding an agreement should remain confidential, the agency head must publish an explanation of why it is confidential. This will increase transparency and shine a much-needed light on agency settlement agreements.

I thank my Committee on Oversight and Accountability colleagues GARY PALMER and GERRY CONNOLLY for preparing this important legislation for consideration today.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this commonsense legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I do indeed support this significant, commonsense, and bipartisan legislation. I thank the chairman again, and I thank Representatives PALMER and CONNOLLY for their hard work on it.

The Settlement Agreement Information Database Act will create a database of settlement agreements entered into by Federal agencies relating to alleged violations of Federal civil or criminal law. The OMB will manage the database and set deadlines for submission.

The heads of executive agencies will be required to submit details about the

types of settlement agreements they have entered into, the parties who are actually involved in them, the specific violations, and the dates upon which such settlement agreements were made. All information about the settlement agreements would remain public until 5 years after they terminate.

The information in the agreements would remain subject to the Freedom of Information Act, but if the head of the agency decided to keep an entire agreement confidential, he or she would be required to provide a specific explanation of that action.

□ 1745

This legislation will substantially improve the transparency surrounding so many settlement agreements, which in the past have been very difficult for the public to access or even to find. Transparency is, of course, central to the rule of law.

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

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. PALMER).

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 300, the Settlement Agreement Information Database Act.

The principle of open government is a hallmark of our system of governing, dating as far back as the Enlightenment.

The open government doctrine maintains that citizens have a right to access the Federal Government's records and operations to facilitate oversight of the public business.

Open government principles are key to fulfilling the promise of a nation ruled by the consent of the governed.

Open government requires transparency and public participation, which are vital to ensure the public's continued trust in our government.

Increasingly, however, Federal agencies have entered into legally binding settlement agreements to resolve litigation without going through lengthy public trials that often provide the transparency.

Unfortunately, agencies generally release limited information about these settlements. When information is published, it is usually in the form of a press release focused more on self-promoting than informing.

Furthermore, Federal agencies can unilaterally deem the terms of a settlement agreement confidential with no explanation.

Such secret negotiations and agreements prevent the public from participating in important policy decisions made on their behalf.

As a result, it is impossible for Congress and the public to determine the comprehensive impact of these settlement agreements on State and local governments, private sector entities, and taxpayers.

These parties are often barred from providing input but must continue to follow the mandated requirements which often remain in effect for decades.

Today, I am pleased to join my colleagues on both sides of the aisle as we take this first step to correct this problem.

The Settlement Agreement Information Database Act, or the SAID Act, will increase the transparency of the Federal Government and shine a much-needed light on settlement agreements.

The bill requires Federal agencies to submit information regarding settlement agreements to a public, electronic database.

This public resource, to be overseen by the Office of Management and Budget, would include dates, payments, attorney's fees awards, and a list of States, municipalities, and other entities impacted by these settlements.

Under the requirements of the SAID Act, if the agency believes that the information regarding an agreement should remain confidential, the agency head must publish an explanation of why it is confidential.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for supporting this bipartisan legislation. They include Chairman COMER, Ranking Member RASKIN, Representatives AMI BERA, SCOTT PETERS, ANDY BARR, and FRENCH HILL.

I especially thank my colleague across the aisle, Representative GERRY CONNOLLY, for his leadership in introducing this bill jointly with me.

In a time when Americans feel divided, it is important to come together to support commonsense, good government legislation.

I am happy we could, once again, expedite its consideration in the House, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this commonsense legislation.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), my colleague.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me express my appreciation to the members of this committee, GERRY CONNOLLY, and then to look at my friend, Mr. RASKIN, I am delighted to be on the floor with him and delighted to be on the floor with the manager of this legislation as well.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 300, the Settlement Agreement Information Database Act of 2023, which would help increase the transparency of executive agencies to the public and allow the public to hold the government accountable.

This is the people's House. We were just discussing, even today, the enormity of the work that we have done in the powerful infrastructure bill, the CHIPS bill, and the Inflation Reduction Act. But if there are aspects of a bill that should be directed to the people, if there is information that lets them have a fullness of what has happened on behalf of the American people—what have we accomplished?

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 300 would make public certain information included in settlement agreements entered into by executive agencies by establishing a public database for the reporting of agreements that cover alleged violation of civil or criminal law.

The information that will be disclosed to the public include: what type of settlement it is, any costs of money involved in the settlement agreement, what State and local governments are affected by the settlements, and the duration and modifications of such.

This ties into my point earlier of knowing information about what is going on in the government in terms of our legislation. This specifically provides the information to families and businesses and communities if there has been a settlement on a matter that they are interested in.

True transparency is for the government to be known by American citizens on everything we do, and one of the most hidden is the idea of settlements of cases. Maybe it has impacted a city, an individual, a family, a school, and it is important to know what these agreements are.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have this legislation in the name of transparency, and I rise to support H.R. 300, and I ask my colleagues to support it enthusiastically as well.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 300, the 'Settlement Agreement Information Database Act of 2023,' which would help increase transparency of executive agencies to the public and allow the people to hold the government accountable.

H.R. 300 would make public certain information included in settlement agreements entered into by Executive agencies by establishing a public database for the reporting of agreements that cover alleged violation of Federal civil or criminal law.

The information that will be disclosed to the public include the following: what the type of settlement agreement it is, who is involved, any costs or money involved in the settlement agreement, what state and local governments are affected by the settlement agreements, the duration and modifications of the settlement agreement and any justifications for the settlement agreement.

This bill also allows for confidentiality in situations where the interests of the confidentiality provision would protect public interest.

An information database is important in the oversight of executive agencies, to ensure they are properly carrying out and enforcing laws we have passed.

As a senior member of the Homeland Security Committee, this information would be vital to the security of the country.

This information is important in knowing what secret deals are being made that relate to the violation of federal civil or criminal law, and to whom and where settlement payments are being sent.

H.R. 300 is a crucial step in protecting democracy.

By making settlement agreements public information, the public will feel more confident that there are no secret deals to cover bad behavior by corrupt government officials.

Additionally, this act serves as a deterrent for potential bad behavior in any government agency because the information database would ensure that bad behavior could not be hidden.

We work in an office of public trust, and the best way to ensure that the people trust us and listen to us, is to be as transparent as possible in any actions we take.

H.R. 300 helps the people to keep the government and check and hold us accountable.

By becoming transparent in how settlements are paid, taxpayers can be confident in how their money is being spent and what ways settlement agreements are impacting fiscal health.

It is important that we know the financial burden these settlements have on state and local governments.

The people deserve to be informed on where their money is being put and how that affects their communities and public services.

This way, when the people feel violated or that a community issue is not addressed, they can better advocate for themselves and participate in the democratic process.

As elected officials, our job is to make sure we are helping our constituents and advocating for their issues.

If we limit information, we are stopping our citizens from getting the help they need from us or understanding who they should hold accountable for a problem.

That would be a detriment to democracy.

H.R. 300 is necessary because it is an important step in creating government transparency which is crucial to the democratic process.

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I would say, in closing, that I was moved by what Mr. PALMER had to say, that democracy is based on consent, and consent is based on access, but there is no access if you don't have transparency.

I think about something that James Madison said: "And a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power that knowledge gives." So people need to have knowledge of everything that our government is doing. We don't want government entities entering into secret, sweetheart settlements with different litigants. It has got to be open to the whole public.

Mr. Speaker, I thank him and I thank the chairman for bringing this forward, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I am happy we could expedite the Settlement Agreement Information Database Act's consideration today.

This Chamber has passed the SAID Act with broad support three separate times, in the 115th, 116th, and 117th Congresses. It is time the Senate acted on this important legislation.

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

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Settlement Agreement Information Database Act, which I'm co-leading with my colleague from Alabama, Mr. PALMER.

This bipartisan legislation was considered under suspension and agreed to in the House of Representatives by a voice vote in previous Congresses.

I am glad to note that the first couple of bills from the Oversight and Accountability Committee coming to the Floor in the 118th Congress are bipartisan measures.

That continues the tradition from the 117th Congress, when the first bill on the Floor from the Oversight Committee was the FedRAMP Authorization Act (117th), a bipartisan bill I wrote, co-led, and passed with now-Chairman JAMES COMER.

Federal settlement agreements, negotiated behind closed doors, cannot continue to be shrouded in secrecy when they directly affect States, municipalities, and local stakeholders.

The SAID Act bring these binding agreements into the light by requiring federal agencies to publicly publish their documents or provide the public with written justification to keep the records confidential.

Details of the settlement agreements would remain public until 5 years after the termination of the agreements.

Increased transparency and better intergovernmental collaboration help form the foundation of good government, and this bill is one more tool to ensure government accountability.

I am a former local government official who served on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors for 14 years, including 5 years as Chairman.

I currently chair the Congressional Caucus on Former Local Elected Officials, and I have authorized legislation, the Restore the Partnership Act, which would revive the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations.

I am committed to enhancing the intergovernmental partnership, which often entails requiring the federal government to be more transparent and proactive in its relationship with local governments.

When it comes to settlement agreements that have the potential of tying the hands of local governments on everything from stormwater management to public education the default should be transparency.

I welcome this bipartisan legislation, urge my colleagues to support it, and ask the Senate to act on this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 300, 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. COMER. 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.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 53 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WITTMAN) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Motions to suspend the rules and pass:

H.R. 159; and

H.R. 300; and

Agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, if ordered.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

CHANCE TO COMPETE ACT OF 2023

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. 159) to implement merit-based reforms to the civil service hiring system that replace degree-based hiring with skills- and competency-based hiring, and for other purposes, 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 Kentucky (Mr. COMER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 422, nays 2, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 32]

YEAS—422

Adams	Bost	Cherfilus-
Aderholt	Bowman	McCormick
Aguilar	Boyle (PA)	Cicilline
Alford	Brecheen	Ciscomani
Allen	Brown	Clark (MA)
Allred	Brownley	Clarke (NY)
Amodei	Buck	Cleaver
Armstrong	Bucshon	Cline
Arrington	Budzinski	Cloud
Auchincloss	Burchett	Clyburn
Babin	Burgess	Clyde
Bacon	Burlison	Cohen
Baird	Bush	Cole
Balderson	Calvert	Collins
Banks	Cammack	Comer
Barr	Caraveo	Connolly
Barragán	Carbajal	Correa
Bean (FL)	Cárdenas	Costa
Beatty	Carey	Courtney
Bentz	Carl	Craig
Bera	Carson	Crane
Bergman	Carter (GA)	Crawford
Beyer	Carter (LA)	Crenshaw
Bice	Carter (TX)	Crockett
Biggs	Cartwright	Crow
Billakis	Casar	Cuellar
Bishop (GA)	Case	Curtis
Bishop (NC)	Casten	D'Esposito
Blumenauer	Castor (FL)	Dauids (KS)
Blunt Rochester	Castro (TX)	Davidson
Boebert	Chavez-DeRemer	Davis (IL)