

to not make draconian cuts to the Women, Infants, and Children program.

What is before us is a proposal to cut \$800 million out of the fruit and vegetables portion of the WIC program.

Study after study has shown that WIC improves birth outcomes, reduces the likelihood of preterm births and low birth weights, and helps lactating mothers. As of May, WIC has already served an average of 6.6 million monthly participants.

Mr. Speaker, this is our future workforce, and how we treat these babies is what shows us who is right to life and who is not. You want to be a right-to-life person? Feed the babies.

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 2 o'clock and 9 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1615

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. VAN DUYNE) at 4 o'clock and 15 minutes p.m.

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.

ISAKSON-ROE EDUCATION OVERSIGHT EXPANSION ACT

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3981) to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the methods by which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs conducts oversight of certain educational institutions, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3981

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 "Isakson-Roe Education Oversight Expansion Act".

SEC. 2. EXPANSION OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OVERSIGHT OF CERTAIN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

(a) *ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENT FOR APPROVAL.—Section 3675(b) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:*

"(5) The educational institution agrees to, not later than 30 days after any date on which such educational institution becomes subject to an

action or event described in section 3673(e)(3) of this title, submit to the State approving agency, or the Secretary when acting in the role of a State approving agency, a notification of such action or event in such form and containing such information as the Secretary determines appropriate."

(b) *ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENT FOR APPROVAL OF NONACCREDITED COURSES.—*

(1) *IN GENERAL.—Section 3676(c) of such title is amended—*

(A) *by redesignating paragraphs (14) through (16) as paragraphs (15) through (17), respectively; and*

(B) *by inserting after paragraph (13) the following new paragraph:*

"(14) The institution agrees to, not later than 30 days after any date on which such institution becomes subject to an action or event described in section 3673(e)(3) of this title, submit to the State approving agency, or the Secretary when acting in the role of a State approving agency, a notification of such action or event in such form and containing such information as the Secretary determines appropriate."

(2) *CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Such title is further amended—*

(A) *in section 3672(b)(2)(C), by striking "paragraph (14) or (15)" and inserting "paragraph (15) or (16)";*

(B) *in section 3675(b)(3), by striking "(14), (15), and (16)" and inserting "(15), (16), and (17)";*

(C) *in section 3679(d), by striking "described in paragraph (14) or (15)" and inserting "described in paragraph (15) or (16)"; and*

(D) *in section 3680A(a)(4)(C)(iii), by striking "section 3676(c)(14) and (15)" and inserting "section 3676(c)(15) and (16)".*

(c) *ADDITIONAL GROUNDS FOR SUSPENSION OF APPROVAL.—Section 3679(f)(1) of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:*

"(I) Comply with the notification requirements under sections 3675(b)(5) and 3676(c)(14) of this title, when applicable."

(d) *DEADLINE FOR RISK-BASED SURVEYS DATABASE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish the database required under section 3673A(c) of title 38, United States Code, by not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.*

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. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3981, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3981, as amended. This bill makes improvements to protect veterans while they are using their GI Bill.

Specifically, this bill would require schools to self-report adverse actions to their State approving agency in addition to the VA within 30 days.

State approving agencies are required to approve and review schools and training programs for the GI Bill.

This bill would also require VA to create a risk-based survey database within 180 days.

Congress has been waiting for the VA to implement this database for a long time. This proposal would make it clear to the VA that Congress still intends for this database to be implemented.

I appreciate the bipartisan work that has been done at the committee level to ensure that this bill supports veterans while also not increasing government spending.

I thank Mr. MCGARVEY for his work in introducing this proposal, and I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 3981, as amended.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise to express my support for H.R. 3981, as amended, the Isakson-Roe Education Oversight Expansion Act.

Madam Speaker, before I came to Congress, I was a teacher. When I was entrusted with the gavel as chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee in 2019, one of my primary focuses was helping student veterans. Now, I serve as ranking member. However, I am incredibly proud of what our committee did during our 4 years in the majority.

In 2021, we passed a significant student-veteran focused law: Representative MIKE LEVIN's Isakson-Roe Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act, named for former House and Senate chairmen Phil Roe and Johnny Isakson. That law was a massive leap forward in education quality and oversight for student veterans.

Representative MCGARVEY's legislation, H.R. 3981, builds upon the Isakson-Roe Act and further improves the system of oversight we established in the 2021 law. Now, schools will join the process of reporting violations, no longer waiting for State approving agencies or VA to uncover errors before it is too late.

The legislation before us also improves transparency for the risk-based surveys created by Isakson-Roe. VA started conducting these surveys in late 2022, but schools need to know how these surveys work so they can better deliver for our student veterans. The legislation improves schools' access to the risk-based survey database.

Madam Speaker, I support H.R. 3981, as amended.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. MCGARVEY), my good friend, who is a member of our Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity and also the sponsor of H.R. 3981.

Mr. MCGARVEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 3981, the Isakson-Roe Education Oversight Expansion Act. I am proud to sponsor this legislation, which builds

on Ranking Member LEVIN's comprehensive bill, the Isakson-Roe Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020.

My hometown and district in Louisville, Kentucky, is home to nearly 50,000 veterans. Veterans in Louisville and across our country deserve as much support from the government when they come out of Active Duty as when they go in. Today, we have an opportunity to show our vets that we are listening to their concerns and that we are going to do something about it.

H.R. 3981 will help the VA deliver on the promises it makes to servicemembers when they join the military. It improves oversight of and fosters accountability at institutions that receive GI Bill funding, ensuring that the men and women who put on the uniform of our country aren't defrauded by dishonest institutions that fail to set our veterans up for success.

H.R. 3981 is a commonsense, bipartisan bill which came out of our committee on a bipartisan basis. It will ensure our veterans and their benefits are supported and protected. We have a sacred responsibility to look after all Americans, especially those who have sacrificed for our country. Any veteran who wants to get an education, an education they have earned, should be able to do so without fear of being defrauded, losing their benefits, or being left behind.

Every man and woman who puts on a uniform is willing to risk everything to keep us safe. The least we can do is protect them when they get home. Veterans earn their GI Bill education benefits, and no veteran should lose that benefit to bad actors or fraudulent institutions. Not a single one.

I thank Chairman BOST, Chairman VAN ORDEN, Ranking Members TAKANO and LEVIN, and all of those involved, for their support of this bill. I ask my colleagues to support H.R. 3981.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 3981, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I encourage the Members on our side the aisle and all of our colleagues to support this good piece of legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3981, the Isakson-Roe Education Oversight Expansion Act of 2023.

Members of the armed forces are important to our nation, and we show them our appreciation by taking care of them after they have completed their service by legislation such as H.R. 3981.

Many of our nation's veterans have earned federal support to help pay for college, graduate school, and training programs through their GI Bill education benefits.

They can even transfer unused benefits to family members and do so in many cases.

Unfortunately, some predatory programs have exploited veterans by aggressively attracting them and their GI benefits to fraudulent, falsified, or substandard programs.

The comprehensive Isakson-Roe Education Oversight Expansion Act would seek to rein in these abuses by increasing the Department of Veterans Affairs oversight capacity.

Additionally, it would look to restore benefits to defrauded veterans, and improve oversight, faster accountability, and most of all, help our veterans access the quality education they have earned.

Similarly, H.R. 3981 would require educational institutions that offer certain courses to people who are eligible for educational benefits administered by the VA.

Reportable events would include punitive actions by state or federal agencies, heightened monitoring of federal student aid, and the potential loss of accreditation.

Institutions that fail to report those events would become ineligible to receive benefit payments from the VA.

Unfortunately, our nation's recognition of those who served in subsequent conflicts has been less than adequate.

We have, in recent decades, too often failed to overcome our political differences to recognize the truly remarkable achievements of our courageous veterans.

We must be united in seeing that every soldier, sailor, airman, and marine in welcoming them back with all the care and compassion this grateful nation can bestow.

Our nation has a proud legacy of appreciation and commitment to the men and women who have worn the uniform in defense of this country.

Veterans continue to have many unanswered needs, and I will continue to fight for the rights of our most patriotic Americans.

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. 3981, 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. BOST. Madam 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.

VETERANS BENEFITS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2023

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1530) to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the requirement to publish disability benefit questionnaire forms of Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1530

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

This Act may be cited as the "Veterans Benefits Improvement Act of 2023".

SEC. 2. IMPROVEMENT OF PUBLICATION OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS DISABILITY BENEFIT QUESTIONNAIRE FORMS.

Section 5101 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(A), by inserting “, including (except as provided in paragraph (4)(A)) all disability benefit questionnaire forms available to personnel of the Veterans Health Administration and covered non-Department providers for the completion of examinations with respect to medical disability of applicants for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary” before the semicolon; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4)(A) The Secretary may exclude from publication under clauses (i) and (ii) of paragraph (1)(A) any form described in subparagraph (B) of this paragraph that the Secretary determines could not reasonably be completed to a clinically acceptable standard by someone not an employee or a contractor of the Department.

“(B) A form described in this subparagraph is a form that—

“(i) was available or in use at any time after the date of the enactment of the Veterans Benefits Act of 2023; and

“(ii) has not been published under paragraph (1).

“(C) The Secretary shall include on the same internet website as the website on which forms are published under paragraph (1)(A) a list of forms that have been excluded from publication pursuant to subparagraph (A), and for each such form, a justification for the exclusion of the form from publication.”; and

(2) in subsection (e), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) The term ‘covered non-Department provider’ means a medical provider who is not an employee of the Department and who provides examinations with respect to medical disability of applicants for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary pursuant to a contract with the Department.”.

SEC. 3. IMPROVEMENT OF PROVISION OF MEDICAL DISABILITY EXAMINATIONS BY CONTRACTORS.

(a) REPORT ON IMPROVING REIMBURSEMENT FOR TRAVEL RELATING TO MEDICAL DISABILITY EXAMINATIONS.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, after consulting with the Secretary of State and the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration, shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report on the efforts of the Secretary to reimburse veterans for expenses incurred traveling to a facility of the Department or of a covered non-Department provider incident to an examination with respect to the medical disability of the veteran for purposes of benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary, regardless of whether the facility is located inside or outside the United States.

(b) COMMUNICATION BY NON-DEPARTMENT PROVIDERS PROVIDING MEDICAL DISABILITY EXAMINATIONS WITH INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS DESIGNATED FOR PREPARATION, PRESENTATION, AND PROSECUTION OF CLAIMS.—Any contract entered into by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs after the date of the enactment of this Act under which a covered non-Department provider agrees to provide examinations with respect to medical disability for applicants for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary, shall include a requirement that every communication from the covered non-Department provider to such an applicant regarding the scheduling of a covered medical disability examination be contemporaneously transmitted to any person or organization—

(1) designated by the applicant by a power of attorney filed with the Secretary; and

(2) recognized under sections 5902, 5903, and 5904 of title 38, United States Code, for the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims.

(c) DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OUTREACH REGARDING CONTACT INFORMATION FOR