

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, today I missed rollcall No. 679 on the Rule (H. Res. 891) for three bills under consideration on the floor this week:

H.R. 5283, "Protecting our Communities from Failure to Secure the Border Act; H.R. 5961, "No Funds for Iranian Terrorism Act"; and S.J. Res. 32, "Providing for congressional disapproval, relating to "Small Business Lending Under the Equal Credit Opportunity Act".

Had I recorded my vote, I would have voted "no" on the Rule, H. Res. 891.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 678 and "yea" on rollcall No. 679.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. LEE of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, during Roll Call votes on the motion on ordering the previous question (H. Res. 891) and H. Res. 891, the Rule for H.R. 5283, H.R. 5961, and S.J. Res. 32, my vote was not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall No. 678 and "nay" on rollcall No. 679.

PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITIES FROM FAILURE TO SECURE THE BORDER ACT OF 2023

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. 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 H.R. 5283.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 891 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 5283.

The Chair appoints the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. McCLAIN) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1412

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 5283) to prohibit the use of Federal funds to provide housing to specified aliens on any land under the administrative jurisdiction of the Federal land management agencies, with Mrs. McCLAIN in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources, or their respective designees.

The gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN).

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, today I rise in support of H.R. 5283, legislation sponsored by my colleague from New York City, Congresswoman MALLIOTAKIS.

This legislation would protect our national parks, prevent wasteful spending, and hold the Biden administration accountable for its failed border policies.

The Protecting our Communities from Failure to Secure the Border Act of 2023 would prohibit the use of any Federal funding, leases, or contracts to construct housing facilities for illegal immigrants on our Nation's Federal lands.

It would also put an end to the legally questionable lease that the Biden administration signed with New York City to house thousands of migrants at Floyd Bennett Field, which is owned and managed by the National Park Service.

Madam Chair, our national parks have been described as America's best idea. They are places we go to experience the outdoors and spend time with our friends, family, and community.

That was true of Floyd Bennett Field, which drew an average of 1 million visitors per year for its ice skating rinks, petting zoos, UC cadet programs, bird watching, bike races, and much more.

□ 1415

If you go to Floyd Bennett Field today, you wouldn't see any children on playgrounds or fishermen dotting the shoreline. Instead, you would see massive tents, hastily thrown together over the last few weeks to house 2,000 migrants in semi-congregate facilities.

This tent city has been called a recipe for disaster.

Local Democrat and Republican elected officials, the U.S. Park Police Union, the Legal Aid Society, and the Coalition for the Homeless have all spoken out against using Floyd Bennett Field as a migrant housing facility.

The Park Police Union testified before the Committee on Natural Resources that it was a, "law enforcement nightmare and public safety disaster in the making."

Numerous organizations have raised concerns about inadequate bathroom facilities, cramped sleeping areas, and hazards for children.

The local fire department said the area is a fire trap and lacks basic safety features, like fire hydrants. If that wasn't enough, the entire facility is located in a flood plain that floods even on days with light rain.

Maybe the Biden administration would have known about these issues ahead of time had they not tried to get around the National Environmental Policy Act by improperly declaring this as an emergency.

Perhaps it is no surprise that when the first busloads of migrants started

arriving at Floyd Bennett Field, they turned right back around and refused to stay there.

Migrant families are now warning each other against staying there, saying that the site is freezing cold, babies are suffering, it is not suitable for children, and believe it or not, there are no televisions.

This entire boondoggle has been a colossal waste of time and American tax dollars.

Why are we here? Because of failed Democrat policies.

President Biden has failed to secure our border leading to a record number of migrant apprehensions last month.

Liberal New York Democrats have turned New York into a sanctuary city whose right-to-shelter laws will cost an estimated \$12 billion over the next 3 years just to house undocumented immigrants.

The mission of the National Park Service is to conserve the natural and cultural resources for the enjoyment of future generations, not bail out the failed border policies of the Biden administration.

The use of emergency declarations at Floyd Bennett Field is a result of a man-made problem that President Biden is responsible for.

The border crisis is now everywhere in America, and what is happening at Floyd Bennett Field is something that highlights the failures at the southern border. This is the Biden administration's legacy for the National Park Service.

Congresswoman MALLIOTAKIS' legislation will ensure that Federal lands throughout the country, including parks such as Hot Springs National Park in my district and the Grand Canyon in the ranking member's home State, remain natural wonders, not tent cities for illegal immigrants.

Madam Chair, I thank Representative MALLIOTAKIS for her strong leadership on this effort. I support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
Washington, DC, November 14, 2023.

Hon. BRUCE WESTERMAN,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This letter confirms our mutual understanding regarding H.R. 5283, the "Protecting our Communities from Failure to Secure the Border Act of 2023". Thank you for collaborating with the Committee on Agriculture on the matters within our jurisdiction.

The Committee on Agriculture will forego any further consideration of this bill. However, by foregoing consideration at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over any subject matter contained in this or similar legislation. The Committee on Agriculture also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees should it become necessary and ask that you support such a request.

We would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 5283, and request a copy of our letters on this matter be published in the

Congressional Record during Floor consideration.

Sincerely,

GLENN "GT" THOMPSON,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
Washington, DC, November 14, 2023.

Hon. GLENN "GT" THOMPSON,
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I write regarding H.R. 5283, the Protecting our Communities from Failure to Secure the Border Act of 2023, which was ordered reported by the Committee on Natural Resources on October 26, 2023.

I recognize that the bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Agriculture and appreciate your willingness to forgo action on the bill. I acknowledge that the Committee on Agriculture will not formally consider H.R. 5283 and agree that the inaction of your Committee with respect to the bill does not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained therein.

I am pleased to support your request to name members of the Committee on Agriculture to any conference committee to consider such provisions. I will ensure that our exchange of letters is included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation.

Sincerely,

BRUCE WESTERMAN,

Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the legislation. I am disappointed that today we once again are discussing the continued Republican insistence that immigration is a Federal land emergency.

I will continue to dispute this claim because instead of focusing on the root causes of our Nation's immigration crisis and challenges, my colleagues have chosen to double down on a distraction.

I oppose this bill because it is a political stunt that will invite even more hateful anti-immigration rhetoric from the extreme MAGA wing of the Republican Party.

The case of Floyd Bennett Field does not represent a threat to our public lands. Rather, it encapsulates the humanitarian crisis that we are facing caused by failed immigration policies from the past administration and from the failure of Congress to take any action to reform a broken immigration system.

The crisis can be solved but only with real comprehensive immigration reform.

Madam Chair, former President Trump, as I understand it, is still the frontrunner for the Republican Presidential nomination.

News flash: Nothing has changed. He has stated that he intends to return to the White House with his supercharged plan that one of his closest confidants and noted white nationalist Stephen Miller described as a "blitz."

Miller went on to say that, "Trump will unleash the vast arsenal of Federal

powers to implement the most spectacular migration crackdown."

Madam Chair, I include in the RECORD The New York Times article, "Sweeping Raids, Giant Camps and Mass Deportations: Inside Trump's 2025 Immigration Plans."

[From the New York Times, Nov. 11, 2023]

SWEEPING RAIDS AND MASS DEPORTATIONS:
INSIDE TRUMP'S 2025 IMMIGRATION PLANS

(By Charles Savage, Maggie Haberman and Jonathan Swan)

Former President Donald J. Trump is planning an extreme expansion of his first-term crackdown on immigration if he returns to power in 2025—including preparing to round up undocumented people already in the United States on a vast scale and detain them in sprawling camps while they wait to be expelled.

The plans would sharply restrict both legal and illegal immigration in a multitude of ways.

Mr. Trump wants to revive his first-term border policies, including banning entry by people from certain Muslim-majority nations and reimposing a Covid 19-era policy of refusing asylum claims—though this time he would base that refusal on assertions that migrants carry other infectious diseases like tuberculosis.

He plans to scour the country for unauthorized immigrants and deport people by the millions per year.

To help speed mass deportations, Mr. Trump is preparing an enormous expansion of a form of removal that does not require due process hearings. To help Immigration and Customs Enforcement carry out sweeping raids, he plans to reassign other federal agents and deputize local police officers and National Guard soldiers voluntarily contributed by Republican-run states.

To ease the strain on ICE detention facilities, Mr. Trump wants to build huge camps to detain people while their cases are processed and they await deportation flights. And to get around any refusal by Congress to appropriate the necessary funds, Mr. Trump would redirect money in the military budget, as he did in his first term to spend more on a border wall than Congress had authorized.

In a public reference to his plans, Mr. Trump told a crowd in Iowa in September: "Following the Eisenhower model, we will carry out the largest domestic deportation operation in American history." The reference was to a 1954 campaign to round up and expel Mexican immigrants that was named for an ethnic slur—"Operation Wet-back."

The constellation of Mr. Trump's 2025 plans amounts to an assault on immigration on a scale unseen in modern American history. Millions of undocumented immigrants would be barred from the country or uprooted from it years or even decades after settling here.

Such a scale of planned removals would raise logistical, financial and diplomatic challenges and would be vigorously challenged in court. But there is no mistaking the breadth and ambition of the shift Mr. Trump is eyeing.

In a second Trump presidency, the visas of foreign students who participated in anti-Israel or pro-Palestinian protests would be canceled. U.S. consular officials abroad will be directed to expand ideological screening of visa applicants to block people the Trump administration considers to have undesirable attitudes. People who were granted temporary protected status because they are from certain countries deemed unsafe, allowing them to lawfully live and work in the United States, would have that status revoked.

Similarly, numerous people who have been allowed to live in the country temporarily for humanitarian reasons would also lose that status and be kicked out, including tens of thousands of the Afghans who were evacuated amid the 2021 Taliban takeover and allowed to enter the United States. Afghans holding special visas granted to people who helped U.S. forces would be revetted to see if they really did.

And Mr. Trump would try to end birthright citizenship for babies born in the United States to undocumented parents—by proclaiming that policy to be the new position of the government and by ordering agencies to cease issuing citizenship-affirming documents like Social Security cards and passports to them. That policy's legal legitimacy, like nearly all of Mr. Trump's plans, would be virtually certain to end up before the Supreme Court.

In interviews with The New York Times, several Trump advisers gave the most expansive and detailed description of Mr. Trump's immigration agenda in a potential second term. In particular, Mr. Trump's campaign referred questions for this article to Stephen Miller, an architect of Mr. Trump's first-term immigration policies who remains close to and is expected to serve in a senior role in a second administration.

All of the steps Trump advisers are preparing, Mr. Miller contended in a wide-ranging interview, rely on existing statutes; while the Trump team would likely seek a revamp of immigration laws, the plan was crafted to need no new substantive legislation. And while acknowledging that lawsuits would arise to challenge nearly every one of them, he portrayed the Trump team's daunting array of tactics as a "blitz" designed to overwhelm immigrant-rights lawyers.

"Any activists who doubt President Trump's resolve in the slightest are making a drastic error: Trump will unleash the vast arsenal of federal powers to implement the most spectacular migration crackdown," Mr. Miller said, adding, "The immigration legal activists won't know what's happening."

Todd Schulte, the president of FWD.us, an immigration and criminal justice advocacy group that repeatedly fought the Trump administration, said the Trump team's plans relied on "xenophobic demagoguery" that appeals to his hardest-core political base.

"Americans should understand these policy proposals are an authoritarian, often illegal, agenda that would rip apart nearly every aspect of American life—tanking the economy, violating the basic civil rights of millions of immigrants and native-born Americans alike," Mr. Schulte said.

Since Mr. Trump left office, the political environment on immigration has moved in his direction. He is also more capable now of exploiting that environment if he is re-elected than he was when he first won election as an outsider.

The ebbing of the Covid-19 pandemic and resumption of travel flows have helped stir a global migrant crisis, with millions of Venezuelans and Central Americans fleeing turmoil and Africans arriving in Latin American countries before continuing their journey north. Amid the record numbers of migrants at the southern border and beyond it in cities like New York and Chicago, voters are frustrated and even some Democrats are calling for tougher action against immigrants and pressuring the White House to better manage the crisis.

Mr. Trump and his advisers see the opening, and now know better how to seize it. The aides Mr. Trump relied upon in the chaotic early days of his first term were sometimes at odds and lacked experience in how to manipulate the levers of federal power. By

the end of his first term, cabinet officials and lawyers who sought to restrain some of his actions—like his Homeland Security secretary and chief of staff, John F. Kelly—had been fired, and those who stuck with him had learned much.

In a second term, Mr. Trump plans to install a team that will not restrain him.

Since much of Mr. Trump's first-term immigration crackdown was tied up in the courts, the legal environment has tilted in his favor: His four years of judicial appointments left behind federal appellate courts and a Supreme Court that are far more conservative than the courts that heard challenges to his first-term policies.

The fight over Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals provides an illustration.

DACA is an Obama-era program that shields from deportation and grants work permits to people who were brought unlawfully to the United States as children. Mr. Trump tried to end it, but the Supreme Court blocked him on procedural grounds in June 2020.

Mr. Miller said Mr. Trump would try again to end DACA. And the 5-4 majority of the Supreme Court that blocked the last attempt no longer exists: A few months after the DACA ruling, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg died and Mr. Trump replaced her with a sixth conservative, Justice Amy Coney Barrett.

Mr. Trump's rhetoric has more than kept up with his increasingly extreme agenda on immigration.

His stoking of fear and anger toward immigrants—pushing for a border wall and calling Mexicans rapists—fueled his 2016 takeover of the Republican Party. As president, he privately mused about developing a militarized border like Israel's, asked whether migrants crossing the border could be shot in the legs and wanted a proposed border wall topped with flesh-piercing spikes and painted black to burn migrants' skin.

As he has campaigned for the party's third straight presidential nomination, his anti-immigrant tone has only grown harsher. In a recent interview with a right-wing website, Mr. Trump claimed without evidence that foreign leaders were deliberately emptying their "insane asylums" to send the patients across America's southern border as migrants. He said migrants were "poisoning the blood of our country." And at a rally on Wednesday in Florida, he compared them to the fictional serial killer and cannibal Hannibal Lecter, saying, "That's what's coming into our country right now."

Mr. Trump had similarly vowed to carry out mass deportations when running for office in 2016, but the government only managed several hundred thousand removals per year under his presidency, on par with other recent administrations. If they get another opportunity, Mr. Trump and his team are determined to achieve annual numbers in the millions.

Mr. Trump's immigration plan is to pick up where he left off and then go much farther. He would not only revive some of the policies that were criticized as draconian during his presidency, many of which the Biden White House ended, but also expand and toughen them.

One example centers on expanding first-term policies aimed at keeping people out of the country. Mr. Trump plans to suspend the nation's refugee program and once again categorically bar visitors from troubled countries, reinstating a version of his ban on travel from several mostly Muslim-majority countries, which President Biden called discriminatory and ended on his first day in office.

Mr. Trump would also use coercive diplomacy to induce other nations to help, includ-

ing by making cooperation a condition of any other bilateral engagement, Mr. Miller said. For example, a second Trump administration would seek to re-establish an agreement with Mexico that asylum seekers remain there while their claims are processed. (It is not clear that Mexico would agree; a Mexican court has said that deal violated human rights.)

Mr. Trump would also push to revive "safe third country" agreements with several nations in Central America, and try to expand them to Africa, Asia and South America. Under such deals, countries agree to take would-be asylum seekers from specific other nations and let them apply for asylum there instead.

While such arrangements have traditionally only covered migrants who had previously passed through a third country, federal law does not require that limit and a second Trump administration would seek to make those deals without it, in part as a deterrent to migrants making what the Trump team views as illegitimate asylum claims.

At the same time, Mr. Miller said, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention would invoke the public health emergency powers law known as Title 42 to again refuse to hear any asylum claims by people arriving at the southern border. The Trump administration had internally discussed that idea early in Mr. Trump's term, but some cabinet secretaries pushed back, arguing that there was no public health emergency that would legally justify it. The administration ultimately implemented it during the coronavirus pandemic.

Saying the idea has since gained acceptance in practice—Mr. Biden initially kept the policy—Mr. Miller said Mr. Trump would invoke Title 42, citing "severe strains of the flu, tuberculosis, scabies, other respiratory illnesses like R.S.V. and so on, or just a general issue of mass migration being a public health threat and conveying a variety of communicable diseases."

Mr. Trump and his aides have not yet said whether they would re-enact one of the most contentious deterrents to unauthorized immigration that he pursued as president: separating children from their parents, which led to trauma among migrants and difficulties in reuniting families. When pressed, Mr. Trump has repeatedly declined to rule out reviving the policy. After an outcry over the practice, Mr. Trump ended it in 2018 and a judge later blocked the government from putting it back into effect.

Soon after Mr. Trump announced his 2024 campaign for president last November, he met with Tom Homan, who ran ICE for the first year and a half of the Trump administration and was an early proponent of separating families to deter migrants.

In an interview, Mr. Homan recalled that in that meeting, he "agreed to come back" in a second term and would "help to organize and run the largest deportation operation this country's ever seen."

Trump advisers' vision of abrupt mass deportations would be a recipe for social and economic turmoil, disrupting the housing market and major industries including agriculture and the service sector.

Mr. Miller cast such disruption in a favorable light.

"Mass deportation will be a labor-market disruption celebrated by American workers, who will now be offered higher wages with better benefits to fill these jobs," he said. "Americans will also celebrate the fact that our nation's laws are now being applied equally, and that one select group is no longer magically exempt."

One planned step to overcome the legal and logistical hurdles would be to significantly expand a form of fast-track deportations

known as "expedited removal." It denies undocumented immigrants the usual hearings and opportunity to file appeals, which can take months or years—especially when people are not in custody—and has led to a large backlog. A 1996 law says people can be subject to expedited removal for up to two years after arriving, but to date the executive branch has used it more cautiously, swiftly expelling people picked up near the border soon after crossing.

The Trump administration tried to expand the use of expedited removal, but a court blocked it and then the Biden team canceled the expansion. It remains unclear whether the Supreme Court will rule that it is constitutional to use the law against people who have been living for a significant period in the United States and express fear of persecution if sent home.

Mr. Trump has also said he would invoke an archaic law, the Alien Enemies Act of 1798, to expel suspected members of drug cartels and criminal gangs without due process. That law allows for summary deportation of people from countries with which the United States is at war, that have invaded the United States or that have engaged in "predatory incursions."

The Supreme Court has upheld past uses of that law in wartime. But its text seems to require a link to the actions of a foreign government, so it is not clear whether the justices will allow a president to stretch it to encompass drug cartel activity.

More broadly, Mr. Miller said a new Trump administration would shift from the ICE practice of arresting specific people to carrying out workplace raids and other sweeps in public places aimed at arresting scores of unauthorized immigrants at once.

To make the process of finding and deporting undocumented immigrants already living inside the country "radically more quick and efficient," he said, the Trump team would bring in "the right kinds of attorneys and the right kinds of policy thinkers" willing to carry out such ideas.

And because of the magnitude of arrests and deportations being contemplated, they plan to build "vast holding facilities that would function as staging centers" for immigrants as their cases progress and they wait to be flown to other countries.

Mr. Miller said the new camps would likely be built "on open land in Texas near the border."

He said the military would construct them under the authority and control of the Department of Homeland Security. While he cautioned that there were no specific blueprints yet, he said the camps would look professional and similar to other facilities for migrants that have been built near the border.

Such camps could also enable the government to speed up the pace and volume of deportations of undocumented people who have lived in the United States for years and so are not subject to fast-track removal. If pursuing a longshot effort to win permission to remain in the country would mean staying locked up in the interim, some may give up and voluntarily accept removal without going through the full process.

The use of these camps, Mr. Miller said, would likely be focused more on single adults because the government cannot indefinitely hold children under a longstanding court order known as the Flores settlement. So any families brought to the facilities would have to be moved in and out more quickly, he said.

The Trump administration tried to overturn the Flores settlement, but the Supreme Court did not resolve the matter before Mr. Trump's term ended. Mr. Miller said the Trump team would try again.

To increase the number of agents available for ICE sweeps, Mr. Miller said, officials from other federal law enforcement agencies would be temporarily reassigned, and state National Guard troops and local police officers, at least from willing Republican-led states, would be deputized for immigration control efforts.

While a law known as the Posse Comitatus Act generally forbids the use of the armed forces for law enforcement purposes, another law called the Insurrection Act creates an exception. Mr. Trump would invoke the Insurrection Act at the border, enabling the use of federal troops to apprehend migrants, Mr. Miller said.

"Bottom line," he said, "President Trump will do whatever it takes."

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Chair, apparently, the plan that has Mr. MILLER salivating includes mass roundups, mass incarceration, permanently ending DACA, and the construction of camps to hold migrants waiting to be processed and presumably later expelled from the country.

This is the leader from the Republican Party—his platform on immigration.

I wonder if MAGA Don thinks that he will build these camps on public lands. I hope not, but who knows, perhaps he even thinks Mexico will pay for it.

Seeking asylum is a human right. We should be discussing how we can best support migrants in this time of crisis by providing additional resources to guarantee safety and well-being during the immigration process.

We should be supporting cities like New York that are responding proactively to this crisis. Instead, we are taking up a bill that micromanages and limits local decisionmaking authority.

If the Republicans wanted to protect our parks, they would have passed an appropriations bill that would not cut nearly half a billion dollars from the National Park budget. Such a cut would result in the loss of 1,000 park staff and will reduce the agency's maintenance and preservation funding.

These extreme cuts are going nowhere in the Senate, and President Biden has promised to veto, so why waste that time.

To protect our parks, we should empower our Federal land management agencies by providing them with the necessary resources to fulfill their mission and the mission to the American people. Instead, this bill would interfere with that work.

Historically, the National Park Service has the authority to lease its property if the agency head determines that the lease will not obstruct the preservation of the property. Well, in the case of Floyd Bennett Field, the temporary lease will have minimal environmental impact.

New York City will be investing millions of dollars to address the deferred maintenance and improve visitor amenities, leaving the site actually better than before. This idea that leasing the field this way will somehow degrade it is a red herring.

The temporary lease will also have minimal impact on recreation. The

park at Floyd Bennett Field we are talking about in this instance is the disused runway at an abandoned airport. That is why the site has a long history of leasing for nonrecreational purposes.

It has been used for emergency responses, like during Hurricane Sandy, and even now it is used by NYPD and the New York City Department of Sanitation for exercises, including training their drivers in the use of heavy-duty vehicles.

Madam Chair, New York City is urgently responding to a humanitarian crisis. We need to support that effort. Evicting the migrants at Floyd Bennett Field with no plan for keeping them from being homeless is not a real solution for New Yorkers. It is not a real solution for our national immigration debate. We need real immigration reform, not more unserious attempts to distract from the root of the problem.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Chair, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. MALLIOTAKIS), the lead sponsor of this bill.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Madam Chair, I thank the chairman for yielding.

On September 15, 2023, against the strong public outcry from the local community in Brooklyn and across New York City, the lease signed by the Biden administration proposes to house at least 2,000 migrants at Floyd Bennett Field, Brooklyn, at a monthly rent of \$1.7 million.

Under the terms of the lease, the city, who will be reimbursed by the State, will pay the first 3 months up front and the city will be able to use 30 acres of land at the location. The total cost of the agreement is over \$20.8 million.

According to the mayor of New York City, Eric Adams, who himself has said this migrant crisis will destroy New York City, so far in fiscal year 2023, New York City has spent \$1.4 billion to deal with this crisis. It is estimated that the taxpayers will be forced to pay \$12 billion by 2025 if this crisis is not handled, meaning, if we do not stop the unsustainable and unsafe flow of individuals coming through our southern border.

Additionally, the mayor has said because of this crisis, he has to propose a 15 percent across-the-board cut for New York City services for our actual citizens. He wants to bring the number of cops to 1990 levels; thousands of fewer cops on our streets than we had on September 11, 2001.

We are having a hiring freeze for not just the cops, but the school safety officers. There is no difference than the left's defund the police agenda than this. This is defunding the police to pay for citizens of other countries to receive free housing and services. They are just not calling it that.

The gentleman who spoke prior on the other side of the aisle says that we

have to get to the root of the problem. You are absolutely right. Our mayor, by the way, is misinterpreting the right-to-shelter decree, which is intended for homeless New Yorkers, mandating the city to house homeless New Yorkers, not citizens of other countries.

Madam Chair, if there is any question about that, we sued, and a judge on Staten Island reaffirmed what we have been saying, that the city has no obligation to house citizens of other countries, and the decree was meant for homeless New Yorkers.

However, the mayor continues to use luxury hotel rooms, crushing tourism in New York. They are using school spaces, whether they are former Catholic schools—and they have even used public school gyms and cafeterias at one point—or public and open spaces such as park land, and even assisted living facilities. They actually went so far as to kick a bunch of seniors out of assisted living facilities in my district and then turned around and made it a migrant shelter.

How is that fair for the citizens of New York?

Let's get to the root of the problem. The root of the problem is that the President of the United States chose to put in place executive orders that dismantled public safety, that took away the tools of our Customs and Border Patrol agents, that allowed for a free flow of individuals into the country, 1.7 million of them.

We don't know who they are, where they are, or what their intention is. Then the other 6-million-plus that applied for asylum, guess what, 50 percent of those cases are denied in court. People are abusing the asylum system to gain entry into this country, to be released into this country. Most don't show up to court. When they do, 50 percent of those cases are denied.

We need to go back to enforcing the laws, making sure there is a proper process in this country for people, yes, to apply for asylum.

My mother is a Cuban refugee. I support people coming to this country and applying for asylum the right way.

What is the right way? The right way is you go to the next safe country.

We have people from over 120 countries coming through the southern border. We only have two countries bordering the United States, yet we have people from 120 countries, which means the process is not being followed.

Madam Chair, I will tell you something else. This is very unfair to immigrants. I don't know if the other side understands what this President is doing. He has a "last in, first in approach," which means that the people coming over the border are having their cases heard first.

So the people who have been waiting in line for years—and there is a 10-year backlog right now because of this crisis the President created—those people are not being heard and they are having their cases pushed back even further. How is that right?

Maybe you are the party that is anti-immigrant, that you are letting people who applied the right way, who came to this country the right way, to be stuck and pushed to the back of the line.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ), a distinguished member of the Natural Resources Committee.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Chair, I thank Ranking Member GRIJALVA for yielding.

I rise today in opposition to this disingenuous bill introduced under the guise of protecting National Park Service land.

If Republicans were really concerned about protecting our national parks, why did they vote to cut the National Park Service budget by approximately half a billion dollars in the appropriations bill that they passed less than a month ago?

□ 1430

The point here is not to protect the National Park Service. The point here is cruelty.

If extreme MAGA Republicans really wanted to preserve public lands, why have they passed bills that include shameless giveaways of our public lands and waters to the destructive oil, gas, and mining industries?

If Republicans really cared about our Federal lands, why have they continuously tried to gut bedrock environmental laws, like the Endangered Species Act, since taking the majority?

Republicans do not care about our national parks. They are simply looking for more excuses to spread anti-immigrant rhetoric.

I know firsthand that the situation in New York is a humanitarian crisis and not a partisan issue. If you want to tackle the root cause of this, let's get together to draft legislation. We have legislation that has been introduced—in many instances, bipartisan legislation. Let's get real and deal with the broken system that we have in this country and address comprehensive immigration reform.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. MOYLAN). The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. We must ensure that people fleeing violence and persecution, regardless of nationality or other demographics, can access asylum and the refugee resettlement system in this country, as required by law.

New York City is doing all it can to accomplish this, but it cannot do it alone. The real solution here is to increase support for the city and the individuals exercising their protected right to seek asylum in the United States.

The bill before us today is performative and vilifies migrants, making it harder for New York City to meet this moment.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. TIFFANY), the chair of the Subcommittee on Federal Lands.

Mr. TIFFANY. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of this legislation, which would prohibit the housing of illegal immigrants on Federal lands. I only wish it was not necessary.

Unfortunately, thanks to the open borders policies of the Biden administration, America's public lands are now in danger of being converted into public flophouses for foreign migrants. Here we are.

In an effort to house the exploding number of foreigners illegally flooding into our country, the Biden administration is already allowing the construction of an encampment at the Floyd Bennett Field in Brooklyn's Gateway National Recreation Area.

They even waived NEPA, the National Environmental Policy Act, to permit it. You do not see any of the environmental groups raising a ruckus like they normally do when productive companies in the United States of America want to do something with natural resources. Where is the Sierra Club? Where is the National Resources Defense Council? Where is the Center For Biological Diversity when NEPA is being flouted once again?

What is next? Illegal alien Bidenvilles on The National Mall here right in Washington, D.C.? Makeshift migrant towns on the rim of the Grand Canyon? Maybe they are going to the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore in my district to build encampments there on Lake Superior.

As the President is fond of saying, this is no joke, folks.

For decades, we have worked together across party lines to protect our iconic national parks, pristine wildlife refuges, and resource-rich national forests and rangelands. We have done so to conserve these areas for the wise use and future enjoyment of the American people.

We can do that again by passing this bill and ensuring that the public lands we all cherish are not transformed into squatting grounds for a never-ending stampede of migrants.

I will close with this. On January 20, 2021, the first day that President Biden was in office, he closed down energy independence in America by shutting down the Keystone pipeline, and he opened up the pipeline down to Panama to be able to bring millions of illegal immigrants into America.

It is amazing to me to watch my colleagues on the other side of the aisle as they twist themselves into pretzels as we advance bill after bill, including the Floyd Bennett bill here, and they are in complete denial. "Hey, America, everything is just fine." It is not.

Mr. Chair, I support this bill, and I urge a "yes" vote.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Maine (Ms. PINGREE).

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Chair, I thank my friend, Mr. GRIJALVA, for yielding me the time.

Mr. Chair, this bill does nothing to address the immigration crisis facing our Nation. It does not help New York City, and it doesn't help the asylum seekers.

I represent Portland, Maine, which, like New York, has welcomed an influx of asylum seekers this year. Portland has also struggled to find sufficient housing for our new neighbors.

If Republicans are serious about getting asylum seekers out of shelters, then we should be debating my amendment to replace this misguided bill with my plan to get asylum seekers to work faster. Currently, asylum seekers must wait at least 6 months before they are eligible to receive work authorization. The bipartisan Asylum Seeker Work Authorization Act would cut this waiting time to 30 days, allowing asylum seekers to get to work faster and no longer rely on social safety net programs to survive.

I have spoken to countless asylum seekers who are anxious to get to work and start supporting themselves and their families and contribute to their communities. We just need to get out of their way.

I have also heard from employers from across the country who would jump at the chance to hire asylum seekers. At present, there are 9.5 million job openings in the United States and only 6.5 million unemployed workers. That leaves a gap of 3 million job openings that businesses need asylum seekers to fill. That is why business groups like the United States Chamber of Commerce have endorsed my bill.

My commonsense proposal would make no changes to the asylum process. It would simply reduce the amount of time that asylum seekers are barred from filling critical job openings.

As President Reagan once said, immigrants are one of the most important sources of America's greatness.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues across the aisle to join me in supporting this commonsense, bipartisan solution.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER).

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of H.R. 5283, the Protecting our Communities from Failure to Secure the Border Act, which I am proud to cosponsor.

Plenty of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will stand here today and protest that this bill is unnecessary. They will complain Republicans shouldn't be taking up this piece of legislation. The truth is, if it weren't for the disastrous policies of this administration, I don't think we would find ourselves even considering this bill. It is plain and simple: Republicans are taking action to address our southern border crisis because the Biden administration has failed to do so. They have failed to protect the American people.

Mr. Chair, 2 weeks ago, they broke a record. In just 1 week, 15,000 illegals came across our southern border.

The district I represent in northern Minnesota contains hundreds of miles of northern border with Canada. The 547 miles of border shared with Canada are patrolled by only two mobile agents right now because the current agents are being reassigned to in-process the illegals coming through our southern border. Now, our northern border is not secure because of this administration. There are 547 miles of border that are wide open, and the carrels and coyotes have figured it out.

Earlier this fall, in Bemidji, Minnesota, an 11-year-old girl was sexually assaulted, and 11 illegal immigrants were found at the scene of that crime.

For those of you who don't know where Bemidji is, it is not along our southern border. It is over 2,000 miles away. Bemidji and every community across this Nation have been turned into a border community, putting Americans at risk.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. STAUBER. Now, even our Federal lands meant for conservation, recreation, and development of our great natural resources are being turned into campgrounds for traffickers and terrorists who are marching into our country and breaking our immigration laws.

Northern Minnesota is also home to vast amounts of public lands, including the Chippewa and Superior National Forests, Voyageurs National Park, and the Grand Portage National Monument.

It is a shame that we even have to consider this piece of legislation because of the Biden administration's open border policy that is making our Nation less secure. We have no idea who is coming into this Nation, and it is not appropriate that we keep this open border.

Mr. Chair, I support this piece of legislation.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I think a soft reminder is important now, as we point to these asylum seekers and those who are seeking refugee status in this country and those who are going through the immigration process.

It is important to note that they are not the first. Almost everybody who speaks on this floor today can trace their lineage to somebody who wasn't here in this country when the indigenous people, the first Americans in this country, were here.

I think we need to be careful not to stereotype, not to be ugly, and not to be abusive about a crisis and human tragedy that we see before us that we should be attending to rather than exploiting.

Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), a valued colleague.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Chair, I thank my friend and colleague from Arizona

for yielding and for his leadership on this issue.

I rise today because while House Republicans vilify families that are coming to the United States for refuge, House Democrats and the Biden administration are working to address immigration challenges with real solutions.

As many cities are welcoming asylum seekers and migrant families, House Democrats are fighting to provide resources to local governments that are processing migrant arrivals. House Democrats are fighting to relieve the immigration court backlog and provide stability for those stuck in the system. House Democrats are fighting to allow people to work and support their families. House Democrats are fighting to improve processing at the border.

To be clear, this bill does not provide any solutions for our communities. This bill does not address the core issues driving migration. It does not provide resources to local governments that are handling migrant arrivals. It does nothing. In fact, it does the exact opposite of being productive by limiting available facilities to house migrants while they go through a process to which they are legally entitled. This bill has no purpose other than to score cheap political points for House Republicans.

When House Republicans are ready to discuss real solutions, we will be ready to work with them. Right now, I encourage all of my colleagues to vote "no" on H.R. 5283.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Wyoming (Ms. HAGEMAN).

Ms. HAGEMAN. Mr. Chair, as if Biden's border crisis isn't bad enough, this administration is now seeking to convert our national parks, America's most cherished national treasures and historical sites, into tent cities for illegal aliens.

Such actions not only debase our national heritage but blatantly violate numerous Federal statutes, including those covering management and protection of our national parks, NEPA, and the Administrative Procedure Act.

How bad is this latest move to convert our national parks to ungovernable tent cities? While Wyoming's efforts to prevent catastrophic wildfires destroying our national forests are met with intensive scrutiny from the unelected bureaucrats in this administration, President Biden is categorically exempting the housing of thousands of individuals in our national parks from any type of environmental review.

This double standard is indefensible, and the Biden administration's refusal to engage with Congress on this bill only confirms that fact. We need serious reforms to end the flood of illegal immigrants into our Nation, not half measures that fail to correct the disaster of this administration's own making and endanger what is the very best idea America ever had.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to protect our national parks by voting in favor of the bill.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GARCÍA).

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Mr. Chair, I rise today in strong opposition to this extreme anti-immigrant bill put forward by my colleague from New York.

I represent Chicago, a city founded by an immigrant and a city that to this day welcomes immigrants. Although this year has tested us, Chicagoans have stepped up to embrace our new neighbors.

As a proud immigrant representing a predominantly immigrant, diverse district, I take offense to the blatant attacks against my constituents. Outrage about public lands is just another excuse for Republicans to vilify immigrant communities. If they really cared, they wouldn't bulldoze through public lands and wildlife habitats while destroying our environment in their zeal for a border wall. They also wouldn't try to sell our public lands off to the highest corporate bidder.

There are many ways to create a more just immigration system. This bill is certainly not one of them, and I urge my colleagues to oppose it.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mrs. KIGGANS).

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Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of H.R. 5283, the Protecting our Communities from Failure to Secure the Border Act.

For 3 years, Americans have experienced the repercussions of the Biden administration's failed border policies.

In fiscal year 2023 alone, over 2.4 million migrants were apprehended illegally crossing our southern border with drug smugglers, human traffickers, terrorists, and other dangerous criminals taking advantage of our porous border.

This crisis has affected every facet of our Nation, including our National Park Service.

In September, the Biden administration signed a lease with New York City to house at least 2,000 illegal migrants in a tent encampment at Floyd Bennett Field in Brooklyn which sits on Federal land.

This encampment conflicts with Federal law, takes away from the field's taxpayer-funded recreational activities, and raises serious safety concerns both for those who would be housed there and for those who live nearby, as it puts an undue burden on law enforcement.

A couple of months ago in the Natural Resources Committee, we actually heard from people who represented the Park Service and lived and worked in New York City, including law enforcement. I feel that it is our job as Representatives to be listening to the people who actually live and work in those communities to have legislation that makes an impact there.

They are the ones that told us about the security concerns and the concerns from tourists. What were the children and people who are encamped there doing on a daily basis?

Some of the issues they had were with criminal activity and how it interfered with the recreational purposes of that park. Americans shouldn't be deprived access to national parks and lands paid for by their tax dollars because of this administration's destructive immigration policies.

This bill, that I was proud to work on as a member of the Natural Resources Committee, would reverse the decision to lease Park Service land to New York City to house illegal migrants and prohibit the Biden administration from doing so with any Federal lands in the future.

Mr. Chair, I came to Washington to restore commonsense leadership, and with this bill we have an opportunity to do just that.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 5283.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GOLDMAN).

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chairman, boy, you would think this was the Congress of New York State, given how much focus my colleagues on the other side of the aisle put on New York State. I will tell you, as a Member of Congress from New York City, we are doing just fine.

This bill, however, is not at all just fine. It is yet another ploy by the Republicans to score political points without actually addressing the desperately needed reforms to our immigration system.

Immigration is a Federal issue, yet New York City, where both this bill's sponsor and I come from, is bearing the financial burden of this issue.

This bill would make it harder for cities and States to get Federal support for immigrants who, like so many of our descendants, are fleeing horrible conditions in their home countries to seek a better life in the United States.

On both sides of the aisle, we agree we have to fix our broken immigration system. Defunding migrant housing sites is not the solution.

Instead of closing down these sites and sending children potentially into the street and the cold, let's focus on legislation that actually does make our communities safer. Let's focus on fixing the fentanyl trade problem we have and the human trafficking problem that is plaguing our southern border.

That is why, as an amendment to this bill, I proposed my Disarming Cartels Act, that would stop the flow of more than 500,000 American-manufactured guns into the hands of the drug cartels in Mexico, who are responsible for the bulk of the crime that occurs on the southern border.

Over 70 percent of the guns recovered from crime scenes in Mexico come from the United States. Hundreds of thou-

sands of American-made guns are sent to Mexico every year because you cannot get a gun quickly in Mexico. That, of course, is too much common sense. That would actually solve the problem. That doesn't score political points.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Chair, that does solve the problem. This does not solve the problem. This is just a political ploy, a messaging bill, that does nothing to solve our open borders.

Every single Republican witness that has come before the Homeland Security Committee this Congress has acknowledged that the outflow of American-made weapons of war to the cartels in Mexico is a massive cause of crime at the border.

Why won't you address it? Why won't you join it?

Why won't you even allow the bill to come to the floor?

Is it the gun lobby?

Is it because you just want to use immigration as a political cudgel, and you don't want to find solutions?

Instead of fear-mongering, let's get some solutions together. Let's work together. We are ready. We just need a partner that will stop messaging and start solving problems.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, it sounds like we have bipartisan support for H.R. 2, the Secure our Borders Act, which was passed out of this Chamber that would secure our border and would address the fentanyl crisis. Maybe some of our colleagues weren't paying attention when we brought that up and debated it and passed it. Hopefully, they can go talk to Senator SCHUMER who represents New York, and get that bill through the Senate and on President Biden's desk.

Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA).

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the effort here today. Now it is a gun problem. I believe we are moving illegal immigrants into national parks in New York, and I suppose around the rest of the country, because we have a numbers problem. No, it isn't a gun problem.

It isn't even that the immigration system is so broken, it is just not being enforced. We have laws in place that would actually work if they were enforced. It is crazy. No wonder people think Congress is out of its mind with some of the stuff that goes on because we, oh, are going to fill up the parks, starting in New York and other areas of the country, and it will end up in the West because we don't have enough space.

There is a green light at our open border. We have had sanctuary cities inviting them in, and now they are seeing the results, finally, of Democrat policies that have put us in this place.

Indeed, this is not a long-term problem, so much as it has been intense the last 3 years during the Biden administration. This is not a commonsense solution I hear on the other side about guns or filling the parks with illegal immigrants. It is about controlling the border where the root cause is and not trying to gloss over it with this sort of policy.

Mr. Chair, this is a good policy to get started in the right direction.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GARCIA).

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong opposition to this bill.

If MAGA Republicans want a real, bipartisan solution for our broken immigration system, they should sign up and support my American Dream and Promise Act.

Today, our country is home to millions of Dreamers. These are people who were brought to the United States as children and grew up here. In their heart, in their mind, and in their soul they are Americans except on paper.

This is their country. This is their home. If Congress does nothing, we will lose our neighbors, our family members, and friends. We will lose fellow Americans.

With the American Dream and Promise Act, House Democrats have a plan—with bipartisan support—to finally create a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers and immigrant families.

Make no mistake, this is not a partisan issue. Over 70 percent of Americans favor a law providing permanent legal status to Dreamers. This is a real solution. The American Dream and Promise Act will have a life-changing effect on every single district in this country.

Take it from me, I was born and raised in south Texas. I recognize the importance of securing our border to protect the integrity of our Nation.

Extreme MAGA Republicans have introduced a pitiful excuse to spread anti-immigrant rhetoric. Their bill fails to protect this country. It will not make us safer.

Their bill weaponizes the Federal Government against those who have the least. It mocks what this country stands for.

The gentlewoman from New York should look out into the New York Harbor to the statue that embodies the American promise: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free."

In America, we welcome those fleeing harm. We welcome those who believe in the American Dream. Americans support Dreamers and Dreamers support America. I am opposed to this bill.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. CARL).

Mr. CARL. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this important bill, H.R. 5283, the Protecting our Communities from Failure to Secure our Border Act of 2023.

In a time where the security of our Nation is at great risk because of illegal immigrants, this bill takes huge steps to address the challenges we face at our borders and prohibits the housing of illegal immigrants on federally managed lands, including those under the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

We have got a real crisis in this country. We can't wait any longer to address it.

Since President Biden has taken office, there are over 6.5 million illegal crossings in the U.S. that we know of—that we know of is the important part.

It is absolutely critical we secure our borders and enact measures that discourage further waves of illegal immigrants. We can't keep encouraging further waves of illegal immigrants to come here by offering free housing on Federal lands.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS), the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to say to my Republican colleagues: Stop the xenophobic rhetoric about asylum seekers and draft some meaningful policy that addresses the migrant crisis in New York and across this country.

Deception and extremism are what my colleagues across the aisle are spewing. In this so-called piece of legislation, they claim that Federal land will be hurt. The Floyd Bennett Field lease does not put any of our public lands in harm's way.

In fact, this same field was used 11 years ago during Superstorm Sandy as a disaster relief center for New Yorkers displaced by the hurricane. Republicans had zero opposition to that.

Those who are voicing their feigned concern for our public lands are the same people who have repeatedly pushed policies to defund and degrade our public lands. In this Congress alone, Republicans are trying to slash the National Park Service's budget by nearly half a billion dollars. These are not ideas of a party that has actual concerns about our public lands and parks.

Instead, this is an example of extremists trying to push policies that vilify migrants rather than provide sensible solutions to a real crisis.

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Democrats, on the other hand, are working every day to put people over politics. The Biden administration, for example, granted temporary protected status to one-half million Venezuelans so they can financially support their families and join the American workforce as they await their asylum court dates. Now those are real results in putting people over politics.

Democrats are ready to work on legislation that addresses the migrant crisis in a humanitarian manner, but we

need Republicans to stop wasting time with their terrible and extreme bills and join us in getting back to work.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS).

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Chairman, you would think by just listening to this debate that we were sitting here debating funding and we were debating guns, and that is actually not the case.

You see, Mr. Chair, what the Biden administration is trying to do is just another glaring example in a long list of glaring examples of what they have done to destroy the American fabric as we know it.

Mr. Chair, you can look at inflation, and you can look at the wokeness in the military, but this is actually about an invasion, and now they are wanting to take a national park and turn it into a migrant camp.

I want to tell you something, Mr. Chair: If you give this administration an inch, they will take a mile. That is just the beginning of this.

People want to go see their national parks. They want to go see the Grand Canyon. They don't want to see a grand caravan.

Instead of punishing Americans for its failures, the Biden administration should look to actual long-lasting solutions to the border crisis. House Republicans, Mr. Chairman, knew exactly right. We have already acted by passing H.R. 2, the Secure the Border Act.

Mr. Chair, I want to urge all of my colleagues to support this bill and protect our national parks.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, as a reminder, seeking asylum is a human, legal right protected by international law and United States law, period.

Instead of wishing that that was not the case, Republicans should work with Democrats and the administration to move a meaningful response to this humanitarian crisis and dealing with the issue of comprehensive immigration reform. Unfortunately, we are here debating a senseless stunt of a bill instead.

Mr. Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Chicago, Illinois (Mrs. RAMIREZ).

Mrs. RAMIREZ. Mr. Chair, we just got back from a week with family. Many of us sat around the table, and we thanked God for the family, for the children, and for the ability to have a roof over their head. Some of you remembered that your family came 100, 200 years ago. In my case they came 40 years ago from Guatemala, and now we are back here with the same rhetoric that we continue to play over and over. Republicans are using human beings as bargaining chips to try to realize their extreme and their very harmful policies.

Despite their efforts to cut funding for land protection, cut social safety net services, and bankrupt our Federal infrastructure, they also want us to believe that providing emergency refuge and services to asylum seekers is what is causing all our economic problems.

Now, let me talk about that for a second. Immigrants are not the problem. They are an asset. They are actually a solution to improve our economy.

If you go to the neighborhood ALDI like I do, Mr. Chair, I see three people working there, and when I talk to the cashiers, they say to me: Congresswoman, get those work permits. We need workers.

There are 11.5 million people ready to help fill the almost 9 million open jobs right now. Those open jobs are disrupting the supply chain, and they are increasing inflation. These immigrants are ready to support the 245 million Americans, many of them living in our own communities, living in counties with shrinking populations. They are ready to invest in housing markets, and they are ready to grow our local economies.

Mr. Chair, if you actually ask our people: What keeps you up at night?

It is not being able to pay rent.

What keeps people up at night is that they have to work two jobs just to raise two children.

What keeps people up at night is that they can't afford milk and they can't afford other things.

It is not an undocumented person.

So let's talk about the economy because that is exactly what people want us to be able to address.

Immigrants are ready to increase our national GDP by up to \$1.7 trillion over the next decade.

We should be working to address the root cause of this issue by ensuring their successful resettlement and integration instead of shaming them and then going back home and thanking God for family, community, and country.

I ask my colleagues to reject this bill. Let's get to the real work of delivering work permits for all and establishing pathways to citizenship today and improving our economy.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I would first remind the Democrats that illegal immigration is not a human right. It is a Federal crime.

Now, the national parks were set aside for the use and enjoyment of the American people, but President Biden is now expropriating these lands for the benefit of the 3 million illegal immigrants whom he has deliberately released into our country. This bill would halt that abomination, and I wholeheartedly support it.

Nevertheless, the misuse of our public lands is, frankly, the least of our problems. The impact this is having on social services, our schools, our hospitals, our homeless shelters, the safety of our neighborhoods, the security of our country, and the rule of law itself has been catastrophic.

Elections have consequences. The American people need to decide whether they want this to continue or whether they will replace this President with

one who is determined to recover not only our Nation's lands but our Nation's sovereignty.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, yes, elections do have consequences, and one of the responsibilities that elections provide to the United States Congress and the House of Representatives, let me remind my colleagues, is our broken immigration system, and that is a problem only Congress can solve.

We have seen what happens when Republicans try to solve this from the White House. The Trump administration set an unprecedented pace for executive action on immigration. These restrictive policies did not solve the crisis. Instead, they increased the backlog in immigration proceedings, separated children from their families, banned foreign nationals from predominantly Muslim countries, and cut refugee numbers to the lowest in decades, among other things. So this is on Congress to fix.

Unfortunately, as long as Republicans refuse to support real, substantive reform that is fair, humane, and equitable for all parties, then we will continue to see immigration-related crises of the makings of Congress and in this particular instance of the making of the House majority Republicans.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. CISCOMANI).

Mr. CISCOMANI. Mr. Chairman, I thank Chairman WESTERMAN for yielding.

Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of this bill in my district which includes parts of the Tucson sector where we are currently seeing record levels of illegal crossings of over 15,000 per week.

The administration's efforts to turn our national parks into shelters not only does not solve the problem or even address it, but it only further exacerbates and furthers the crisis which is both one of national security and one of humanitarian consequences, as well.

Migrants are literally dying as they make their journey into the United States. Turning these national parks into shelters only encourages migrants to make this dangerous journey.

As an immigrant myself, I can say that this is no way to help immigrants seeking asylum. The reality is that the asylum system has been abused.

My State, along with every State in the country, is feeling the impact of this administration's failures.

I support this bill, as I cannot stand for migrants and asylum seekers being treated inhumanely and sheltered in national parks while our local communities bear the burden of this administration's failures.

Our CBP agents are undermanned, underserved, overwhelmed, and unsupported. Our security is threatened, and migrants continue to be abused. This is unacceptable. We are better than this, Mr. Chair, and this bill begins to address this crisis.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, it is interesting to hear my Republican counterparts wax eloquently about their concerns for our national parks during this debate. They didn't say a word about the tremendous damage done to cultural resources by Trump's disastrous border wall along the southern border in Arizona primarily. They did not speak to that issue at all.

In fact, now they want to condition aid to Ukraine and possibly Israel, who are key U.S. allies, on the construction of even more miles of an ineffective and destructive border wall.

It is one thing to have a debate about a basic philosophical difference and policy difference that we have in terms of immigration reform. It is another to use half-truths and disinformation and to be disingenuous in presenting what is a reality. The reality on the southern border in Arizona is serious, and I have not denied and will not deny that it is a crisis.

Nevertheless, this is a crisis that must be worked on humanely and not by stereotyping and profiling people because of their country of origin as the reason that we make the harsh comments that are being heard today.

Pandering is not the solution. Constructive and pragmatic immigration reform is what we need to do. That is not being done, and this bill doesn't do it.

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. LALOTA).

Mr. LALOTA. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the Protecting Our Communities from Failure to Secure the Border Act of 2023.

Since President Biden took office and Secretary Mayorkas took charge of the Homeland Security Department, the United States has seen 7.5 million encounters nationwide, 6.2 million encounters at the Southwest border, and 1.7 million known got-aways who evaded U.S. Border Patrol.

New York City is where many of these 1.7 million got-aways now live, and that is because of two policy choices: the administration's open border policy and New York's sanctuary city policies.

Instead of changing his open border policies, President Biden has decided the way they are going to fix this mess is to lease Federal land, national parks, to build tent cities.

Are they kidding me?

Mr. Chair, this is not the solution. We also need to be disincentivizing sanctuary city policies, and I believe we should end Federal funding for the purpose of aiding this crisis in those jurisdictions.

Mr. Chair, I urge all of my colleagues to vote "yes" on this legislation.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, may I get an update on the time remaining.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. CLINE). The gentleman from Arkansas has 6 min-

utes remaining. The gentleman from Arizona has 4½ minutes remaining.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

We have heard the argument today, and indeed for years now, that migrants crossing our border are the primary ones responsible for the tens of thousands of American lives tragically lost to fentanyl overdoses each year. It is a tragedy that we can all not only sympathize with but want to do something desperately about.

Nevertheless, that story is simply false. Fentanyl is overwhelmingly smuggled into the United States by American citizens where it is then also consumed by American citizens. That is a fact.

In 2021 more than 86 percent of convicted fentanyl traffickers were U.S. citizens. More than 90 percent of fentanyl seizures occur at legal crossing points and interior checkpoints, not illegal immigration routes, and just 0.02 percent of migrants arrested by Border Patrol are found to possess fentanyl.

Mr. Chair, I include in the RECORD a piece from *The American Prospect* exploring how customs loopholes allow smugglers to ship fentanyl and its precursor chemical to the United States without inspection or law enforcement.

[*The American Prospect*, Nov. 27, 2023]

THE AMAZON LOOPHOLE IS DRIVING THE
FENTANYL CRISIS
(By David Dayen)

One of the more frustrating things about public policy in the United States is how the dominance of corporate interests makes simple reforms that could save thousands of lives impossible. To wit: Here is the story of how Amazon and other retailers are facilitating the epidemic of deaths from fentanyl.

We know that fentanyl deaths rose 279 percent from 2016 to 2022. Two-thirds of the 110,000-plus overdose deaths in America last year were due to fentanyl. It is the leading killer of Americans aged 18 to 49, and it has devastated communities across the country.

Drug enforcement efforts in the U.S. have historically targeted supply through a so-called "war on drugs." But reducing the amount of fentanyl on the street need not involve military-style operations in Central and South America. China is the source of most of the chemical compounds that cartels use to make fentanyl in illicit drug labs. Without these raw materials, much of the fentanyl trade would be stopped.

Now, of course this would not halt opioid addiction or use by itself; traditional smuggled heroin would likely fill in the gap. But fentanyl is orders of magnitude more dangerous than heroin thanks to its extreme potency, which is a principal cause of the overdose epidemic. The tiniest of measurement errors can lead to an overdose, and black-market drug dealers are not exactly known for their responsible metrology.

Customs enforcement officials have begun to charge Chinese firms that produce and ship these precursor chemicals (and produced fentanyl as well, and President Biden, in a summit earlier this month, pressured Chinese President Xi Jinping on the matter. The U.S. and China agreed in principle to a deal where China would limit the flow of fentanyl

in exchange for the U.S. rolling back restrictions on China's forensic police institute.

But while Chinese cooperation is welcome, the bigger problem is that the vast majority of fentanyl chemicals sent from China are not inspected at all. That's because of something called the "de minimis" rule.

Section 321 of the Tariff Act of 1930 allows for goods under a certain value to be shipped into the U.S. without tariffs, fees, or inspections. Anyone who has flown on international travel is familiar with this from their declaration card when they return to the U.S.; if you got some trinkets from abroad that are of a nominal value, you don't have to submit them to customs officials.

In 2016, that nominal, or de minimis, value, went up from \$200 to \$800. There are only two countries in the world that have a higher de minimis value than the U.S.; China's de minimis value is less than \$10.

Why did this change happen? Because e-commerce firms, primarily Amazon, wanted to be able to bring in goods from China to their warehouses or even directly to their customers without any taxes or tariffs. In fact, it's often been characterized as the "Amazon loophole."

Chinese shippers have been known to package shipments in separate boxes to keep under the \$800 threshold, or send goods to distribution centers just outside the United States, where packages are broken up to get under the de minimis threshold and sent into the country.

These small shipments have exploded in frequency. In fiscal year 2018, 410.5 million de minimis packages were sent. By fiscal year 2022, that number was up to 685.1 million. Some experts put that number much higher. One analysis estimates that the official figure for the trade deficit with China last year was short by \$188 billion after accounting for de minimis shipments.

While there's practically no information available about these shipments (many have no data at all except for a mailing label), there is mounting evidence that one of the most common de minimis items is fentanyl, as Michael Stumo of the Coalition for a Prosperous America has written. This stands to reason, as fentanyl's potency means it is highly valuable by weight. "The overwhelming volume of small packages and lack of actionable data," the U.S. Office of Customs and Border Protection wrote earlier this year, "impacts CBP's ability to identify and interdict high-risk shipments that may contain narcotics, merchandise that poses a risk to public safety, counterfeits, or other contraband." It's highly likely that precursor chemicals are moving from China to Mexico under de minimis rules as well.

It was not the original intention of de minimis rules to build a parallel, off-the-books customs system, used often for illegal goods shipping. But that's what the Amazon loophole has facilitated. Congress is aware of the problem. A bill from Sens. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Bill Cassidy (R-LA) would reduce de minimis thresholds to the level of trading partners (meaning that the de minimis threshold on Chinese goods would fall to under \$10). A separate bipartisan, bicameral bill would simply ban de minimis shipments from "non-market" economies, as well as countries on a priority watch list for using de minimis, which would target China.

The House Select Committee on China has investigated rampant use of the Amazon loophole from fast-fashion companies using forced labor. One textile industry official described de minimis as akin to "handing a free trade agreement to China and the rest of the world." The chairman of the China committee, Rep. Mike Gallagher (R-WI), has expressed optimism that legislation reforming

de minimis would pass this year (though passing anything in Congress is incredibly optimistic).

Of course, this is terrible news for the companies exploiting the loophole for tax benefits, like Amazon and other online retailers. So they are firing up their lobby engines. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Foreign Trade Council (a trade group of importers) deny that counterfeit goods or fentanyl enter the U.S. through de minimis shipments at all, while arguing that CBP gets plenty of information about what's in the packages. Lobbyists and their allies are also complaining about higher CBP costs for inspections of small packages, while not mentioning that it would be the importer who would have to pay those charges.

Keep in mind that when indictments were handed down on the companies sending precursor chemicals for fentanyl to drug cartels, they were reportedly packaged to appear as dog food, nuts, or motor oil. The "benefits of free trade" are hard to discern in a recently expanded loophole intended mostly to save Amazon money that is now facilitating the fentanyl crisis.

There's another beneficiary of the de minimis loophole: digital advertising companies, which benefit from ads from Chinese fast-fashion firms like Shein and Temu that make liberal use of the loophole. Financial Times reporter Rana Foroohar reported recently that one-third of the revenue growth from Meta this year is due to these two fast-fashion firms.

The Biden administration could actually use executive authority to remove certain de minimis exceptions. But in a meeting last week about combating the entry of fentanyl, administration officials actually claimed that reauthorizing the warrantless spying provisions of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act was critical to stopping the supply. There isn't much evidence that surveillance dragnets would deal with the fentanyl trade, and Congress is highly unlikely to rubber-stamp government spying once again.

Drug addiction is largely a medical issue, and expanding treatment is likely to pay higher dividends than a loser's game of trying to stem the flow of supply. But the fact that fentanyl is coming in through ordinary shipping services without inspection seems to be the low-hanging fruit here. The process of customs inspection has been almost totally circumvented, to the benefit of two groups: e-commerce companies raking in cheap goods from China, and drug traffickers. The latter may be a universally hated scourge, but the former is quite powerful. And so abuse of the loophole continues.

The question for lawmakers and the White House then becomes: How many Americans are they willing to sacrifice so Amazon doesn't have to pay a little bit in import fees?

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, U.S. citizens are providing both the supply and the demand for fentanyl and other illegal drugs. The organized criminal syndicates on both sides of the borders are the ones profiting off the billions and billions of dollars from the misery and deaths that fentanyl has caused.

Instead of addressing these root causes that have led to the tragic opioid epidemic, Republicans want to lay the blame on migrants seeking a life in this great Nation of ours, being free from persecution and free from hatred and fear.

That is another piece of disinformation. I think it is important

to know that we are talking about an issue where that bitter taste and that deadly taste was introduced to the American people by Big Pharma, nice homegrown American corporations that provide pharmaceuticals to this country.

They introduced the habit to the country. Organized crime has taken it over. American citizens are being hurt, and American citizens are hurting other citizens.

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

□ 1515

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chair, I rise in support of H.R. 5283, the Protecting our Communities from Failure to Secure the Border Act of 2023.

Mr. Chair, these days, every State is a border State, even New York State. Our national parks are treasures that should be enjoyed by the public, not used to house illegal immigrants. That is what the Biden administration wants to do, and we have already seen this unfolding on Federal land in New York. Not only is this unsightly, but there are tremendous security concerns given the lack of oversight; not to mention that this is a horrible misuse of taxpayer dollars, which should be used to enhance our Federal lands for our citizens.

Under this bill, President Biden and Secretary Mayorkas will no longer be able to use your tax dollars to shelter illegal immigrants who could be threats to our national security and personal safety.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. D'ESPOSITO).

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Mr. Chair, I am a proud cosponsor of H.R. 5283, Protecting our Communities from Failure to Secure the Border Act, and I thank my fellow New Yorker, Congresswoman MALLIOTAKIS, for introducing this critical legislation.

President Biden's border crisis has made every State a border State, every city a border city, every county a border county.

As the crisis continues, we have seen migrants being housed in a facility at JFK Airport and, more recently, we have witnessed migrant shelters being erected at Floyd Bennett Field. The Floyd Bennett Field shelter will house hundreds and eventually thousands of migrants on land owned and operated by the National Park Service, a plan I continuously have been critical of.

I am proud to be a former member of the NYPD, having spent well over a decade investigating crimes in the Big Apple. Floyd Bennett Field houses

many critical components of the NYPD, and as the NYPD works to negotiate a new lease to stay on Floyd Bennett Field for years to come, the city is moving in thousands of migrants. This decision is both unwise and unsafe.

We must find solutions to the migrant crisis, and the answer is securing our border.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS).

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of H.R. 5283 by Representative MALLIOTAKIS, the Protecting our Communities from Failure to Secure our Border Act of 2023.

Our national parks should be used by our families for recreation. They should not be used as a cover-up for President Biden's failed border policies. Since President Biden took office, there have been over 6.4 million illegal crossings of our southern border, including 169 on the terrorist watch list. Yet, instead of implementing more border security and reinstating the policies that worked, this administration is housing migrants in our schools and now in our national parks.

Meanwhile, there are ICE facilities that are sitting empty, such as the Adelanto ICE processing facility in California. This 2,000-bed facility, which is already fully funded, has sat empty since April 2020 due to a court injunction.

We must be fully utilizing the ICE facilities we already have that are prepared to care for migrants versus burdening our communities that don't have the proper resources or facilities.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to stop this lawlessness at our southern border and protect our national parks from becoming tent cities for illegal immigrants.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from the State of Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE).

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Chair, the Biden administration has failed to secure our border and has allowed historic levels of illegal migrant crossings. Now, they have decided to house migrants on America's public lands. This is simply unacceptable.

Our national parks should serve as areas of recreation for Americans to enjoy. Instead, our lands are being used as a backup plan for housing migrants because of a failure to secure the border and a refusal to work with Congress to find commonsense solutions.

As chairman of the Western Caucus and as a member of the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Appropriations, I am proud to support this legislation to ensure America's public lands serve the American people, their interests, and to prevent the misuse of our national parks.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. FULCHER).

Mr. FULCHER. Mr. Chair, our Nation's security is at risk. This is due to the Biden administration's failure to secure our southern border. Since he took office, over 6.4 million illegal immigrants have entered our country from the South. There are at least 279 on the FBI's terrorist watch list and that is just what we know of.

Terrorists from across the world see our southern border as an easy way to enter the U.S. Lord only knows what other threats are coming into our country with bad intent. My home State of Idaho is comprised of over 62 percent Federal land, so this is beyond just concerning to me. Idaho has also been gravely impacted by this border crisis, despite its geographical separation from the South.

Mr. Chair, I am proud to support Protecting our Communities from Failure to Secure the Border Act of 2023. I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I believe I have about as much time left as the Biden administration put into the permitting process on Floyd Bennett Field. I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, in closing, we are having a debate on a piece of legislation that is not really the intent of the legislation. The intent of this legislation is to begin to continue to develop the narrative anti-immigrant, xenophobic rhetoric that the Republican majority feels is going to be their pathway to electoral success in 2024.

I think the American people are going to be able to see that if you want to talk about our national parks and the public use as being the priority, Democrats are prepared to work with the Republican majority to protect them and to enhance those resources.

If we are going to talk about immigration and we are going to talk in an atmosphere where the dog whistles don't become barks on this issue, Democrats are prepared to do that. We are prepared to sit down and look at the aspects of legalization, security, and fighting the syndicated crime that is causing much hurt in this country and in Mexico. We are prepared to do that, but we are not prepared to deal with this issue as a ruse, as a stunt, as a political performative act leading to 2024.

If they are serious about immigration reform, if we are serious about protecting our public lands and waters, we are serious about it, too.

Mr. Chair, I urge all Members of the House to vote "no" on this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, again, I encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 5283, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources, printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 118-15, shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as the original bill for the purpose of further amendment under the 5-minute rule and shall be considered as read.

H.R. 5283

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 "Protecting our Communities from Failure to Secure the Border Act of 2023".

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON PROVIDING HOUSING TO SPECIFIED ALIENS.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—No Federal funds may be used to provide housing to specified aliens on any land under the administrative jurisdiction of the Federal land management agencies, including through leases, contracts, or agreements.

(b) *REVOCATION OF LEASE.*—The lease between the United States of America/United States Department of the Interior/National Park Service and the City of New York for the Premises known as Portions of Floyd Bennett Field, in the Jamaica Bay Unit of Gateway National Recreation Area (NPS Lease# L-GATE912-2023, Commencement Date - September 15, 2023) is hereby revoked.

(c) *DEFINITIONS.*—In this section:

(1) *FEDERAL LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCIES.*—The term "Federal land management agencies" means the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Forest Service.

(2) *HOUSING.*—The term "housing" means a temporary or permanent encampment used for the primary purpose of sheltering specified aliens.

(3) *SPECIFIED ALIEN.*—The term "specified alien" means an alien who has not been admitted, as such terms are defined in section 101(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)).

The Acting CHAIR. No further amendment to the bill, as amended, shall be in order except those printed in Part A of House Report 118-280. Each such further amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by the Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for the division of the question. All points of order against such further amendments are waived.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. OGLES

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part A of House Report 118-280.

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 3. REPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture shall jointly submit to the appropriate congressional committees an annual report that includes—

(1) the number of specified aliens that have been provided housing on any land under the administrative jurisdiction of the Federal land management agencies; and

(2) information regarding the countries of origin of such specified aliens.

(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(1) the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives; and

(2) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 891, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. OGLES) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chair, \$451 billion, that is the cost of the American taxpayer of caring for illegals who broke our laws and unlawfully entered our country.

My amendment simply requires the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to jointly submit an annual report, just a report, to Congress that includes the number of aliens that have been provided housing on federally managed lands and information regarding such aliens' countries of origin.

This will be critical data, Mr. Chairman, and this amendment should have bipartisan support.

This administration is extending an open invitation for foreign nationals to invade our country and undermine the sovereignty of the United States. As a reward, they are going to have their housing, education, and every cost taken care of. If these illegal aliens need a trip to the hospital, they don't need to meet a deductible because the American taxpayer pays for it.

Between 16.8 million and 29 million illegals currently reside in the United States, an incentive for more to come freely. There were 341,000 apprehensions at U.S. borders to the north and southwest made in September. That is 1 month; setting an all-time record. There were 309,000 apprehensions calculated in October.

Mr. Chairman, this has to stop. We are a sovereign Nation. We have a right to manage our lands. We have a right to say no.

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Arizona is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, this amendment is, frankly, completely unnecessary. It would require preparation

and submission of an annual report in perpetuity regarding the migrants housed on certain public lands. Yet, the underlying bill would essentially ban any such housing.

It is a permanent requirement for reporting on nothing, paid for by the taxpayer.

Over the years, I have heard plenty of skepticism from my Republican colleagues about some of the reports that Congress requires of the executive branch. Usually, though, I can at least see the argument for those other reports, but I have to say it is interesting to see my Republican colleagues in favor of this one.

That said, I don't think this amendment is worth fighting over either. Having these reports would not be useful, but it would not be actively harmful either. I only hope that House Republicans would change their minds about slashing the budgets of these departments and will instead give Federal workers the funding they need to carry out their missions, which will now also include generating these annual reports.

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

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chairman, I acknowledge my colleague's comment regarding laws; that this bill, if passed, would essentially ban folks from being housed on Federal lands. It should also be noted that there are laws on the books that require our border to be secure, and, yet, this administration ignores those laws. This amendment requires accountability to the aforementioned.

Mr. Chair, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN).

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of this commonsense amendment offered by the gentleman from Tennessee. This good amendment will provide transparency and hold the Biden administration accountable for their ongoing failure to secure the southern border.

Now, it is unfortunate that this amendment is necessary, but the Biden administration has refused repeated requests from the committee over the past several months to produce documentation regarding the exact number of illegal immigrants housed on our Federal lands.

We must ensure that our Federal lands, which have been specifically set aside for the enjoyment and benefit of American people, are not used to bail out the Biden administration from their manmade crisis and emergency and their unwillingness to secure our southern border.

The Biden administration has allowed millions of illegal immigrants to flood into our country, staggering figures that have strained communities from our border all the way to New York City.

As Republicans continue to push for border security measures, it is vital that we ensure that our Federal lands

are not being co-opted as housing for massive floods of illegal immigrants.

□ 1530

This amendment and the underlying bill will ensure that our Federal lands are not misused.

Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman from Tennessee for offering this thoughtful amendment, and I encourage my colleagues to join me in support of the amendment.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, again, in our view, this amendment is unnecessary, but it is not actively harmful, either. I hope we can move on. I hope that everybody is satisfied, that they got their little clips done in terms of being strong, hard, anti-immigrant people and got those little sound bites done already. I think it is time that we move on.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OGLES. Mr. Chair, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Chairman, with this bill, part of what we are trying to accomplish is securing our border, securing our country. There are hard-earned taxpayer dollars being sent to house illegals.

In New York alone, Mayor Adams has said that housing illegals could cost up to \$12 billion. That is \$12 billion that could be used for children in need, to educate our children, for children who are underperforming in school. That is \$12 billion that the city of New York could use for our veterans.

We have to prioritize Americans. We have to prioritize the security of our border.

I was in Tucson in August, and I was in an area that was even then controlled by the cartel. Now, we hear because of the war, the shooting, the lawlessness in that very sector, that the Border Patrol has had to pull back.

There is a war going on at our southern border, and it could be stopped, Mr. Chairman. It is time to close, to secure, our border. You have women and children who are being raped daily at our southern border, and this administration is doing nothing about it. I have had enough. All this amendment does is require a report. It requires accountability.

Mr. Chairman, I urge adoption, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. HUNT). The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. OGLES).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MS. VELÁZQUEZ
The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part A of House Report 118-280.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

(d) APPLICABILITY.—The prohibition in subsection (a) does not apply to housing that

the Secretary of the Interior certifies meets the following criteria:

(1) The proposed housing is for specified aliens who were transported to the State of the proposed housing (the "Destination State") from another State (the "Originating State").

(2) Such transport was funded, arranged, or otherwise assisted by the Originating State.

(3) The Originating State—

(A) failed to provide more than 48 hours of notice to the Governor of the Destination State of such transport;

(B) failed to provide the specified aliens being transported with full and truthful information regarding their destination and regarding the Destination State's assessment of the likely conditions for the specified aliens at their destination;

(C) willfully, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresented, including through omission, to the transported specified aliens their destination, their right to refuse the transport, and the expected conditions for them at their destination; or

(D) otherwise inveigled the specified aliens into such transport.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 891, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of my amendment, which would allow the Secretary of the Interior to provide housing when States sending asylum seekers to New York City fail to meet certain conditions.

Today, there are over 65,900 asylum seekers currently in the care of the city. To respond to this influx, our city has opened 213 sites, including 18 large-scale humanitarian relief centers.

A guiding principle of New York City's response has been that people fleeing violence and persecution deserve a functioning asylum and refugee resettlement system in this country.

To my colleagues who are intent on labeling these people illegal, I ask, do they not have the legal right to seek asylum enshrined under the Geneva Refugee Convention and U.S. law?

Asylum seekers are human beings who have fled disaster, conflict, and persecution to come to the United States for a better life. They deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. They should not be used as pawns in cruel political stunts.

Politicians from States like Texas and Florida have bused asylum seekers to New York to get on cable news. These buses are often sent with little to no communication from officials in those States. Tens of thousands of migrants have been sent to New York from various originating States, no matter if they wanted to come or not. They may not have a clue about the conditions they will find in New York or the resources available to them.

As temperatures fall below freezing, there are lines of asylum seekers waiting outside of centers because they have reached their 30-day limit at city-run shelters. They have nowhere else to go. However, here we are, debating a

bill that will close Floyd Bennett Field.

My amendment will ensure that asylum seekers—not illegal aliens but asylum seekers—who are bused from State to State without support, scant information, and no other options can access the resources they deserve. Specifically, my amendment allows the Secretary of the Interior to authorize the use of land controlled by the National Park Service for the purpose of housing migrants when a State fails to provide 48 hours' notice to the receiving State or provide truthful information to the migrants about where they are being transported to or provide the opportunity to refuse the busing.

We have heard hundreds of migrant stories about not knowing where they are being sent. We cannot allow this practice to continue without consequences. My amendment will help create an accountability system for the States that decide to deceptively bus migrants to other States like New York.

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

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Mr. Chair, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Mr. Chair, the sponsor of this amendment asked the question: Do these individuals have a legal right to apply for asylum? The answer is yes. The thing is, they are supposed to be applying from the next safe country. We have over 120 countries represented at our southern border. We are only bordered by two. Therefore, they are not following the process and are coming illegally.

The cartels are the ones benefiting from the current process as it is. I hope the other side understands that these individuals, every single one of them, are paying the cartels thousands of dollars to be trafficked into the United States. That money is then used to continue to pump fentanyl into the United States, killing Americans. Let's stop bankrolling the drug cartels that are profiting from this human trafficking.

Next, let me point out that this process is not safe for anyone—not the migrants, either. That is why I don't understand why my colleagues want to continue to encourage people, instead of applying from the next safe country, to take this treacherous journey at the hands of the drug cartels.

By the way, my colleague TONY GONZALES, who represents Eagle Pass, just told me that 14 individuals drowned this Thanksgiving weekend alone in Eagle Pass.

We have the Doctors Without Borders report that says in Panama alone, in just 1 month, hundreds of women and children were raped. We know that is a common occurrence, so why are we encouraging people to take that treach-

erous journey instead of applying from the next safe country?

Lastly, Floyd Bennett Field, it was mentioned that it was unsafe, as indicated in the lawsuit brought by the councilwoman and others. I am a party to that lawsuit. It floods. There was no NEPA process. All of a sudden, my colleagues on the other side don't want to conduct a full, thorough NEPA environmental impact statement as required by law.

Why did they bypass that? If they didn't, they would know that it is a flood zone and unsafe for people to be living there.

Mr. Chair, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN).

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York.

If this amendment were adopted, it would make this bill probably worse than where we are with the status quo because it would require the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to provide housing when the States couldn't provide the housing.

Therefore, States that have declared themselves sanctuaries, like New York, could just say they are not providing housing. It is then back to the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior to provide the housing, which would probably result in more migrant shelters on Federal lands.

Our Federal lands were not designed or intended to encamp migrants, especially not our national parks. Again, the mission of the National Park Service is to conserve these areas "in such a manner and by such a means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." Nothing about constructing tent cities for illegal migrants protects this land for the enjoyment of current or future generations.

The mission of the National Park Service also specifies conserving unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System. Nothing about constructing tent cities for illegal immigrants conserves the natural and cultural resources of Floyd Bennett Field or the Gateway National Recreation Area.

This amendment cannot be implemented in a practical manner. It creates a complex verification system based on subjective standards for which the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture have no expertise. This amendment would entangle these agencies further into our immigration debacle rather than acknowledging they should never have been included in this debate in the first place.

Mr. Chair, I strongly oppose this amendment.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Mr. Chair, the bottom line here is that we need to secure the border. We passed H.R. 2, which can stem this unsustainable flow. Unfortunately, a lot of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle

voted against H.R. 2. That is the real solution. We need to secure our border.

Let's revert to the policies that were working previous to Joe Biden dismantling our border and making it open. It is unsafe and unsustainable for both American citizens as well as the individuals who are taking the treacherous journey at the hands of the drug cartels, which are profiting off of this human trafficking. Our government should not allow it to continue.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chair, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA).

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of this amendment. This amendment draws attention to the dubious and deceptive strategy of placing migrants on buses under false pretenses and without any coordination or even a courtesy call.

Both Governor Abbott and Governor DeSantis have demonstrated that they are more interested in ginning up the MAGA base on Twitter than finding meaningful solutions to the challenges facing our immigration system, the refugee crisis both nationally and particularly in their States.

Migrants are people, not political pawns. We can have disagreements over immigration policy. That is fair game. However, the dehumanizing games and political stunts need to stop.

Mr. Chair, I associate myself with the remarks of the gentlewoman from New York, the sponsor of the amendment.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. LAMALFA). The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York will be postponed.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Chair, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HUNT) having assumed the chair, Mr. LAMALFA, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5283) to prohibit the use of Federal funds to provide housing to specified aliens on any land under the administrative jurisdiction of the Federal land management agencies, had come to no resolution thereon.

□ 1545

BORDER SECURITY IS NATIONAL SECURITY

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, as the conversation has been, we know that border security actually is national security.

President Biden's open border policies have incentivized a historic surge in illegal immigration at our southern and northern borders and the impact we are seeing lately on our national parks.

Since President Biden taking office, there have been over 6.4 million illegal crossings of our southern border and 1.7 million known got-aways who evaded U.S. Border Patrol.

Every State is now a border State. Every town is now a border town. Democrats are using the national parks to house illegal immigrants—think how absurd that is—which only further encourages this crisis.

Republicans and Democrats alike have condemned Biden's border crisis. We must stop incentivizing further waves of illegal immigrants by providing them with free housing—again, the latest scheme being housing them in our national parks.

We will continue to fight to secure our border and eliminate the financial burdens these illegal immigrants are putting on American taxpayers and our towns.

That is why earlier this year we passed H.R. 2, the Secure the Border Act, which is the strongest border security package in American history.

HONORING XINH DWELLEY

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

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, my region just lost an extraordinary woman, Xinh Dwelley, after her lengthy battle with cancer.

Xinh was so many things to so many people. She was an outstanding chef who treated so many people to amazing meals, who published cookbooks and took immense joy in feeding people.

She was an inspiration, someone with a powerful immigrant story who loved America mightily. In fact, one of my favorite moments in this job was gifting her a flag that was flown over the United States Capitol in her honor, and she was just so proud.

She was a community icon who supported local people and local causes with a generous heart and a warm smile. Perhaps most importantly, she was a friend to so many.

She was kind and caring. She treated me and others like family. She would give you a long, loving smile and say, I want to cook for you. I last saw Xinh in August and feel lucky to have been able to celebrate and appreciate her.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in offering condolences to Xinh's family and to all who loved her. She will be missed by so many.

NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. TOKUDA) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. TOKUDA. 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 for the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. TOKUDA. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to rise today as co-chair of the Bipartisan Rural Health Caucus to commence hosting the Special Order hour in celebration of National Rural Health Month.

Every year, National Rural Health Month is a time for us all to bring attention to the unique healthcare needs in rural America and honor the incredible efforts of rural healthcare providers, organizations, and other stakeholders.

It has been more than a decade since Congress last had a bipartisan coalition focused on promoting and advancing healthcare solutions for our Nation's rural and remote communities.

Sadly, during that time, the prognosis and progress has only gotten worse for those who live in rural America. The health and wellness of our people has not improved.

Especially given the divisions in our country and in Congress today, we need to find more ways that we can come together around common issues and common ground and develop solutions that ensure rural Americans do not get left behind.

That is one of the reasons why earlier this year, I re-launched the Bipartisan Rural Health Caucus with my distinguished colleague from the great State of Tennessee, DIANA HARSHBARGER.

Earlier this year, we came together with a shared desire for Congress to play a more active role in improving and promoting life and access to healthcare in rural America.

Today, nearly 50 Members of Congress, Republicans and Democrats, have joined the Bipartisan Rural Health Caucus, representing rural areas across the country from Guam to West Virginia to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan down to central Texas.

Whether political, demographic, or geographic, the diversity of our caucus is our strength because rural America is America.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. HARSHBARGER), my distinguished co-chair.