

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays. The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

COUNTERING WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION EXTENSION ACT OF 2023

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3224) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to extend the authorization of the Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3224

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 “Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Extension Act of 2023”.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZATION OF THE COUNTERING WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.

(a) EXTENSION.—

(1) TERMINATION DATE.—Section 1901 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 591) is amended by striking subsection (e) and inserting the following new subsection:

“(e) TERMINATION.—The Office shall terminate on the date that is two years after the date of the enactment of the Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Extension Act of 2023.”.

(2) EXCEPTION.—The termination date specified in subsection (e) of section 1901 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as amended by paragraph (1), shall not apply to sections 1931 and 1932 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 597 and 597a; relating to the Chief Medical Officer and the medical countermeasures program of the Department of Homeland Security).

(b) ORGANIZATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY.—

(1) EMPLOYEE MORALE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Assistant Secretary for the Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office of the Department of Homeland Security shall submit a report to and brief the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate regarding an employee engagement action plan and strategy to continuously improve morale within the Office.

(2) COMPTROLLER GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a review of and brief the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate regarding the following with respect to the Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office of the Department of Homeland Security:

(A) The efforts of the Office to prioritize the programs and activities that carry out the mission of the Office, including research and development.

(B) The consistency and effectiveness of the Office's stakeholder coordination across

the mission of the Department, including operational and support components of the Department and State and local entities.

(C) The efforts of the Office to manage and coordinate the lifecycle of research and development within the Office and with other components of the Department, including the Science and Technology Directorate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. D'ESPOSITO) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. IVEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. 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. 3224.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of my bill, H.R. 3224, the Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Extension Act of 2023.

Authorized in 2018, the mission of the Department of Homeland Security's Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office is to enable its operational partners at the Federal, State, and local levels to prevent the use of WMDs against the United States of America and to promote readiness for chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats.

At the Federal level, CWMD works with the United States Customs and Border Protection to acquire radiation portal monitors that scan cargo at U.S. ports of entry, as well as works with the U.S. Coast Guard to procure personal radiation detectors.

At the local level, the CWMD Office achieves its mission of supporting State, local, Tribal, and territorial partners through funding, equipment, and expertise.

In my home State of New York and in many other States across this great country, the CWMD Office operates the Securing the Cities program, which helps build regional capabilities to detect, analyze, and report nuclear and other radioactive materials.

My bill, the Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Extension Act of 2023, will extend the sunset clause to ensure that the vital work of the CWMD Office continues.

Additionally, my legislation takes meaningful steps to address some longstanding challenges the office has faced, such as dwindling employee morale, and requires the Assistant Secretary for the CWMD Office to submit a report to Congress on how the office will continuously improve morale and employee engagement within the office.

Further, my bill requires the Government Accountability Office to conduct

a review of the CWMD Office's coordination with stakeholders and efforts to provide the programs and activities that carry out the office's mission, among other items.

From aviation and border security to emergency response and cybersecurity, the Department of Homeland Security has one common mission, Mr. Speaker, and that is to keep America safe.

The Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office facilitates its mission by ensuring that operational partners have the tools and support needed to safeguard the United States of America against chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats.

Although we hope that we never ever see the day when one of our adversaries deploys a weapon of mass destruction against this great Nation, we cannot neglect the ever-present threat of terrorism that continues to exist today.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this common-sense bill, H.R. 3224, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that we are here today to consider H.R. 3224, the Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Extension Act of 2023. I commend my Republican colleague from New York for introducing this legislation.

The CWMD Office within the Department of Homeland Security plays a pivotal role in safeguarding our Nation's security by addressing the threat of weapons capable of causing harm to our communities and infrastructure.

CWMD improves our Nation's capability to plan for, detect, and guard against chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and health security threats, otherwise known as CBRN.

CWMD further enables CBRN detection programs, training, and other capabilities for State, local, Tribal, and territorial partners and provides ground support for national special security events such as Presidential inaugurations and major sporting events.

Without the support of dedicated DHS components like CWMD, terrorists could exploit the absence of comprehensive measures. It could leave the Nation vulnerable to catastrophic attacks with the potential for widespread harm, loss of life, and severe disruption to national security and public safety.

CWMD operates important programs such as Securing the Cities, which provides 14 local governments across the country with detection equipment, training, exercise support, operational and technical subject matter expertise, and programmatic support.

When CWMD was authorized in 2018, Congress included a sunset for December 21, 2023, with the idea that we could closely monitor the progress of the office. The last continuing resolution extended CWMD through February 2, 2024, but the office needs a longer extension to ensure that its programs and staff have continuity.

With the sunset quickly approaching, the Committee on Homeland Security has worked in a bipartisan fashion to extend CWMD by 2 years with H.R. 3224.

This bipartisan bill will also provide a report to Congress regarding a CWMD employee engagement action plan and strategy to improve morale within the office, which is important given that there have been significant workforce and morale issues. CWMD is consistently ranked low in morale, according to a survey done by the Best Places to Work in the Federal Government.

The bill further requires the Government Accountability Office to brief Congress regarding CWMD and how it is carrying out its mission. While Congress will continue to provide oversight of CWMD and, in the future, provide a permanent authorization for the office, passage of H.R. 3224 is a positive step.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 3224, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. IVEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. CARTER), the ranking member of the Emergency Management and Technology Subcommittee of the Committee on Homeland Security and an original cosponsor of this measure.

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, let me say a huge thank-you to Representative IVEY for yielding and particular appreciation and thanks to Congressman D'ESPOSITO, the chairman of the subcommittee.

I am pleased that we are here today to consider Representative D'ESPOSITO's bill, H.R. 3224, the Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Extension Act of 2023, of which I am a proud original cosponsor.

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The Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction, CWMD, office within the Department of Homeland Security was established to elevate and consolidate the Department's effort to protect our Nation from chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats.

CWMD supports Federal, State, and local law enforcement and first responders to defend against CBRN attacks and accomplishes this through programs such as the Securing the Cities program, STC, which holds significant importance for the residents of my home of New Orleans.

The Securing the Cities program bolsters our cities' capacity to identify and thwart potential terrorist threats, particularly during major events like Mardi Gras, Sugar Bowl, Super Bowl, and so many other events that are home to the State of Louisiana.

Another critical program deployed by CWMD is the National Biosurveillance Integration Center, NBIC. NBIC plays a pivotal role in early detection, rapid response, and coordinated efforts by identifying and tracking biological

events and distributing its products to Federal, State, and local, congressional, and private sector partners. NBIC's coordination helps ensure a more effective and unified response to mitigate the impact of biological threats.

CWMD's expertise is instrumental in formulating and implementing strategies, coordinating intelligence efforts, and providing essential resources to fortify the Nation's CBRN capabilities.

Recognizing the pivotal role of this office, I am pleased that we could unite on a bipartisan basis to bring H.R. 3224, the Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Extension Act of 2023, to the floor today.

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

Mr. IVEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. This bipartisan legislation extends CWMD's authorization for 2 years and mandates a Congressional report on the office's plans to enhance morale—an ongoing concern. The bill also requires the Government Accountability Office to brief Congress regarding the CWMD and how it is carrying out its mission.

CWMD is a critical asset, ensuring a safer and more secure nation for present and future generations. Continued support for this office is paramount, therefore, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 3224.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. IVEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3224 is crucial for sustaining our Nation's capabilities to counter chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats.

The expertise provided by CWMD is essential in the fight against weapons of mass destruction.

Passage of this legislation is vital to maintaining our preparedness and ensuring the security of the Nation against the evolving challenges posed by bad actors.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my House colleagues to support H.R. 3224, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, I think that it is very clear that this bill, H.R. 3224, is not a partisan issue. It is one that the American people will benefit from in order to keep this great homeland safe.

Mr. Speaker, I, again, urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3224, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. D'ESPOSITO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3224, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

PROHIBITING RUSSIAN URANIUM IMPORTS ACT

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1042) to prohibit the importation into the United States of unirradiated low-enriched uranium that is produced in the Russian Federation, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1042

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 “Prohibiting Russian Uranium Imports Act”.

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON IMPORTS OF LOW-ENRICHED URANIUM FROM THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION.

(a) PROHIBITION ON IMPORTS.—Section 3112A of the USEC Privatization Act (42 U.S.C. 2297h–10a) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) PROHIBITION ON IMPORTS OF LOW-ENRICHED URANIUM.—

“(1) PROHIBITION.—Beginning on the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of this subsection, and subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), the following may not be imported into the United States:

“(A) Unirradiated low-enriched uranium that is produced in the Russian Federation or by a Russian entity.

“(B) Unirradiated low-enriched uranium that is determined to have been exchanged with, swapped for, or otherwise obtained in lieu of unirradiated low-enriched uranium described in subparagraph (A) in a manner designed to circumvent the restrictions under this section.

“(2) WAIVER.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraphs (B) and (C), the Secretary of Energy, in consultation with the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Commerce, may waive the application of paragraph (1) to authorize the importation of low-enriched uranium described in that paragraph if the Secretary of Energy determines that—

“(i) no alternative viable source of low-enriched uranium is available to sustain the continued operation of a nuclear reactor or a United States nuclear energy company; or

“(ii) importation of low-enriched uranium described in paragraph (1) is in the national interest.

“(B) LIMITATION ON AMOUNTS OF IMPORTS OF LOW-ENRICHED URANIUM.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The importation into the United States of low-enriched uranium described in paragraph (1), including low-enriched uranium obtained under contracts for separative work units, whether or not such low-enriched uranium is derived from highly enriched uranium of weapons origin, may not exceed—

“(I) in calendar year 2024, 476,536 kilograms;

“(II) in calendar year 2025, 470,376 kilograms;

“(III) in calendar year 2026, 464,183 kilograms; and