

that and, by promoting consolidation, ensure taxpayer money isn't being wasted on unused real estate.

Transparency leads to accountability, and that is why this bill also requires Congress to be notified of significant increases in rent payments.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense proposal to rein in unnecessary spending and improve transparency in Federal real estate practices.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 6260, the Federal Oversight of Construction Use and Safety Act, introduced by my colleague, Representative CHAVEZ-DEREMER, makes a good faith effort at reducing the costs of GSA's capital projects.

I support this bill, and I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

So often our attention is pulled to the massive issues, the sexy fights that sometimes divide this Chamber. The bill before us, Mr. Speaker, of course, is not that. It is commonsense legislation. It is the kind of meat and potatoes, blocking and tackling legislation that so many Americans, I think, are hungry for. It is a data-driven proposal.

We heard from Mrs. CHAVEZ-DEREMER that 17 of 24 buildings in the study that she cited were dramatically underutilized. This is an opportunity for good managers within the GSA and good managers within Congress to use the data that her bill would provide to make better decisions. What a delightful outcome that would be.

As we have discussed, this bill would increase transparency, strengthen accountability, assist the committee in its oversight of Federal space utilization, and help us increase safety at our public buildings.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6260, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

IMPACT OF CRIME ON PUBLIC BUILDING USAGE ACT OF 2023

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6261) to direct the Comptroller General to conduct a review on the impact of crime on public building usage, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6261

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 "Impact of Crime on Public Building Usage Act of 2023".

SEC. 2. REPORT ON IMPACT OF CRIME ON PUBLIC BUILDING USAGE.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a review and submit to Congress a report outlining—

(1) the effects of increased crime rates and safety concerns, including use of fentanyl and other drugs and homelessness, in urban areas on building usage for in-person work at Federal buildings;

(2) how usage of different commuting modes of transportation to Federal buildings are affected by increased crime rates;

(3) the effects of low office utilization rates on safety around Federal buildings;

(4) any agency exceptions given to the policy set forth in the memorandum of the Office of Management and Budget titled "Measuring, Monitoring, and Improving Organizational Health and Organizational Performance in the Context of Evolving Agency Work Environments" and issued on April 13, 2023, due to unsafe commuting conditions; and

(5) any costs associated with safety issues impacting Federal building.

SEC. 3. REPORT ON COSTS OF CRIME AROUND PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the inspector general of the General Services Administration shall submit to Congress a report on the impacts on and costs associated with building operations related to crime and public safety in and around Federal buildings.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Dakota.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material in the RECORD on H.R. 6261.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Periodically, we get 1,000-page bills or 2,000-page bills or 4,000-page bills that we debate on this floor. It can be a little hard for the people in the gallery and the people at home to make sense of what we are doing. This bill is not that.

This excellent piece of legislation from Mrs. CHAVEZ-DEREMER fits on a single piece of paper. She and I were talking about that, Mr. Speaker, before we began debate on this bill, about how much good wisdom is packed into a single page. We will probably talk about the merits of this legislation for longer than it would take us to read the entirety of the bill, but it is just that good.

The Impact of Crime on Public Building Usage Act of 2023, which is this piece of paper, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 6261, directs the Government Accountability Office, or the GAO, to examine how crime in and around public buildings affects building usage, how it affects how workers might commute to the office, and how it might impose any additional costs to maintain those public buildings.

In 2020, Mr. Speaker, we saw crime rates spike across the country. In many of the downtown areas in many of our States, areas that used to be bustling with workers became near ghost towns that changed the crime profile in many of those areas, to be sure.

We are in a little bit different era today, and now we have differing, conflicting data community by community. In some, crime rates are continuing to go up. In some, they are going down. In some, the data might differ between property crimes and violent crimes.

One thing we do know, Mr. Speaker, is that, of course, the crime that exists can continue to have an impact—a perhaps profound impact—on how we use our Federal buildings.

I will just give you one example, Mr. Speaker, from perhaps 6 months ago. In August 2023, employees who worked in a Federal building in San Francisco were told not to come to work because of safety concerns. These weren't safety concerns related to an earthquake or to a blizzard, an occurrence that we might experience at Federal buildings in South Dakota but not in San Francisco. No, those weren't the safety concerns. They weren't weather related. They were crime related.

It seems like, as good managers, we would want to better understand that issue and what we can do to have it be less common in the future.

It is particularly true as we work to bring employees back to the office. We know there is study after study that shows that people working in close physical proximity can share real benefits. Remote work has benefits, too, but as we talk to employees about coming back to the office in those times and in those places where it makes sense, it is incumbent upon us to make sure that their public safety is well cared for—not just when they are in the building, but when they are on their way to or from work as well.

I thank the bill's sponsor, the gentleman from Oregon (Mrs. CHAVEZ-DEREMER). She has exhibited real leadership on this legislation. She has shown real advocacy to make sure that Federal employees are able to return safely to Federal office buildings and that, while they are there, they are effective and efficient.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY,

Washington, DC, March 4, 2024.

Hon. SAM GRAVES,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRAVES: Thank you for consulting with the Committee on Oversight and Accountability. The Committee on Oversight and Accountability agrees to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 6261, the Impact of Crime on Public Building Usage Act of 2023, so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House Floor.

I agree that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 6261 at this time, the Committee on Oversight and Accountability does not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation. The Committee on Oversight and Accountability should be appropriately consulted and involved on this or similar legislation as it moves forward. I support your effort to represent the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability on the conference committee if a conference on the bill becomes necessary.

As discussed, I appreciate your inclusion of a copy of our exchange of letters on this bill in the bill report filed by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and in the Congressional Record during House floor consideration thereof. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this bill and look forward to future opportunities to work together on matters of shared jurisdiction.

Sincerely,

JAMES COMER,
Chairman.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, March 4, 2024.

Hon. JAMES COMER,
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Accountability, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN COMER: I write to you concerning H.R. 6261, the *Impact of Crime on Public Building Usage Act of 2023*. The bill was referred primarily to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, with additional referrals to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability and the Committee on the Judiciary.

I ask that you allow the Committee on Oversight and Accountability to be discharged from further consideration of the bill so that it may be scheduled by the Majority Leader. This discharge in no way affects your jurisdiction over the subject matter of the bill, and it will not serve as precedent for future referrals. In addition, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I would support your request to have the Committee on Committee on Oversight and Accountability represented on the conference committee. Finally, I would be pleased to include this letter and any response in the *Congressional Record* during floor consideration, to memorialize our understanding.

Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

SAM GRAVES,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, March 4, 2024.

Hon. SAM GRAVES,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRAVES: I write regarding H.R. 6261, the Impact of Crime on Public

Building Usage Act of 2023. Provisions of this bill fall within the Judiciary Committee's Rule X jurisdiction, and I appreciate that you consulted with us on those provisions. The Judiciary Committee agrees that it shall be discharged from further consideration of the bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

The Committee takes this action with the understanding that forgoing further consideration of this measure does not in any way alter the Committee's jurisdiction or waive any future jurisdictional claim over these provisions or their subject matter. We also reserve the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees in the event of a conference with the Senate involving this measure or similar legislation.

I ask that you please include this letter in your committee's report to accompany this legislation or insert this letter in the Congressional Record during consideration of H.R. 6261 on the House floor. I appreciate the cooperative manner in which our committees have worked on this matter, and I look forward to working collaboratively in the future on matters of shared jurisdiction. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

JIM JORDAN,
Chairman.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, March 4, 2024.

Hon. JIM JORDAN,
Chairman, Committee on Judiciary,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN JORDAN: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 6261, the Impact of Crime on Public Building Usage Act of 2023. I appreciate your willingness to work cooperatively to ensure that H.R. 6261 is considered expeditiously before the House of Representatives.

In response to your letter, I recognize that this bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary. I also acknowledge that the Committee on the Judiciary's decision to forgo consideration would not prejudice your Committee regarding the appointment of conferees, to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matter contained in the bill, or to similar legislation falling under your Committee's Rule X jurisdiction. In addition, should a conference on this bill become necessary, I would support your request to have members of the Committee on the Judiciary represented on the conference committee.

I will ensure that our exchange of letters is included in our Committee report to accompany this legislation and in the Congressional Record during consideration of H.R. 6261 on the House floor. Thank you again, I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with you as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

SAM GRAVES,
Chairman.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6261. This bill introduced by my colleague, Representative CHAVEZ-DEREMER, directs the Government Accountability Office to study and report to Congress on the effects that crime and safety concerns have on in-person work in Federal buildings.

Federal buildings must be safe and secure places for Federal employees, contractors, and the American public.

Evaluating the safety in and around Federal buildings is a good idea. I recommend that the GAO gather and include in the report data from the Federal Protective Service, the agency responsible for protecting Federal buildings and assessing the security of Federal buildings, as well as the employees who populate them.

I also recommend that GAO include the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security in the development of the report. DHS' OIG has access to historical data and current trends which may assist in the evaluation of the impacts noted in the bill.

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

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Mrs. CHAVEZ-DEREMER).

Mrs. CHAVEZ-DeREMERE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6261, which would commission a Federal study on public safety issues in and around public office buildings.

In Oregon and in communities across the country, rampant fentanyl use and homelessness understandably cause workers to worry about their safety, and some just might choose to stay home as a result.

Public buildings are running parallel to private buildings. Let me quote from an article in Willamette Week from August 16, 2023—I know my colleague recognized San Francisco—titled:

Empty and Unwanted, the Iconic Buildings of Portland's Skyline Are in Trouble. The question—and it is a contentious one—is whether Portland is worse than any place else because of blight. Plywood that went up during the protests is still there. Homeless camps that took root during the pandemic are only now being removed. On some downtown blocks, you will see someone smoking fentanyl while drinking a Frappuccino.

That has the same effect on our Federal buildings. Additionally, the GAO would be required to examine any costs that are associated with safety issues at these buildings.

To make more informed spending decisions on Federal real estate moving forward, Congress needs to understand how factors like crime contribute to building costs and employee decisions.

H.R. 6261 will shine a light on public safety concerns and help Congress identify improvements that can be made to protect Federal workers.

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, Federal buildings must be safe and secure places for Federal employees, contractors, and the American public.

I believe evaluating the safety in and around Federal buildings is a good idea, which is why I support this bill and encourage my colleagues to do the same.

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

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Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for closing.

As we encourage Federal employees to return to an in-person working posture, at those times when it is appropriate, it is crucial that we ensure that they are coming back to a safe work environment.

I urge support of H.R. 6261 so we can ultimately address the unsafe working conditions deterring employees from returning to work.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6261.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

OCEAN SHIPPING REFORM IMPLEMENTATION ACT OF 2023

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1836) to amend title 46, United States Code, to make technical corrections with respect to ocean shipping authorities, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1836

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 “Ocean Shipping Reform Implementation Act of 2023”.

TITLE I—FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSION

SEC. 101. PURPOSES.

Section 40101 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1) by striking “with” and all that follows through “regulatory costs”;

(2) in paragraph (2) by striking “in the ocean commerce of the United States” and inserting “for the common carriage of goods by water in the foreign commerce of the United States”;

(3) in paragraph (3) by striking “and” at the end;

(4) in paragraph (4)—

(A) by striking “promote” and inserting “support”; and

(B) by striking “, and” and all that follows through the period and inserting “; and”; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) promote reciprocal trade in the common carriage of goods by water in the foreign commerce of the United States.”.

SEC. 102. DEFINITIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 40102(9) of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively and by moving the margins of clauses (i) and (ii), as redesignated, accordingly;

(2) by striking “means an ocean common carrier” and inserting the following: “means—

“(A) an ocean common carrier”;

(3) in subparagraph (A)(ii), as so redesignated, by striking the period and inserting “; or”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) such a carrier that is owned or controlled by, a subsidiary of, or otherwise related legally or financially (other than a minority relationship or investment) to a corporation based in a country—

“(i) identified as a nonmarket economy country (as defined in section 771(18) of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1677(18))) as of the date of enactment of this paragraph;

“(ii) identified by the United States Trade Representative in the most recent report required by section 182 of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2242) as a priority foreign country under subsection (a)(2) of that section; or

“(iii) subject to monitoring by the United States Trade Representative under section 306 of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2416).”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 46106(b)(7) of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking “ocean common carriers, particularly such carriers that are controlled carriers” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting “controlled carriers”;

SEC. 103. COMPLAINTS AGAINST SHIPPING EXCHANGES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 40504(c) of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading by striking “EXEMPTION” and inserting “EXEMPTION AND INVESTIGATION”;

(2) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(3) by striking “may exempt” and inserting the following: “may—

“(1) exempt”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) investigate complaints submitted under section 40505.”.

(b) COMPLAINTS AGAINST SHIPPING EXCHANGES.—Chapter 405 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 40505. Complaints against shipping exchanges

“(a) IN GENERAL.—A person may submit to the Federal Maritime Commission, and the Commission shall accept, information concerning alleged incidents of market manipulation or other anticompetitive practices by shipping exchanges registered under section 40504.

“(b) INVESTIGATION.—Upon receipt of a submission of information under subsection (a), the Commission shall promptly investigate the accuracy of such information.

“(c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Commission shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate the results of any investigation in which the Commission finds incidents of market manipulation or anticompetitive practices by shipping exchanges registered under section 40504.”.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 405 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“40505. Complaints against shipping exchanges.”.

SEC. 104. REPEAL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 40706 of title 46, United States Code, is repealed.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 407 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 40706.

SEC. 105. DATA COLLECTION.

Section 41110 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “The Federal Maritime Commission” and inserting “(a) QUARTERLY REPORT.—The Federal Maritime Commission”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) LIMITATION ON DUPLICATION.—Unless the data described in paragraphs (1) and (2) is not

available in a timely manner or in a form that allows the Commission to meet the requirements of subsection (a), data required to be reported under subsection (a) may not duplicate information—

“(1) submitted to the Corps of Engineers pursuant to section 11 of the Act entitled ‘An Act authorizing the construction, repair, and preservation of certain public works on rivers and harbors, and for other purposes’, approved September 22, 1922 (33 U.S.C. 555), by an ocean common carrier acting as a vessel operator;

“(2) submitted pursuant to section 481 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1481) to U.S. Customs and Border Protection by merchandise importers; or

“(3) submitted to the Department of Commerce pursuant to section 301 of title 13.”.

SEC. 106. NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES.

(a) NATIONAL SHIPPER ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—Section 42502 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a) by striking “Committee.” and inserting “Committee (in this section referred to as the ‘Shipper Committee’)”;

(2) by striking subsection (b);

(3) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (b); and

(4) in subsection (b), as so redesignated, by striking “Committee” each place it appears and inserting “Shipper Committee”.

(b) NATIONAL PORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—Chapter 425 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating section 42503 as section 42506; and

(2) by inserting after section 42502 the following:

“§ 42503. National Port Advisory Committee

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a National Port Advisory Committee (in this section referred to as the ‘Port Committee’).

“(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Port Committee shall consist of 13 members appointed by the Commission in accordance with this section.

“(2) EXPERTISE.—Each member of the Port Committee shall have particular expertise, knowledge, and experience in matters relating to the function of the Port Committee.

“(3) REPRESENTATION.—Members of the Port Committee shall be appointed as follows:

“(A) 5 members shall represent marine terminal operators, as defined in section 40102.

“(B) 5 members shall represent port authorities.

“(C) 3 members shall represent longshore and maritime labor.

“§ 42504. National Ocean Carrier Advisory Committee

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a National Ocean Carrier Advisory Committee (in this section referred to as the ‘Carrier Committee’).

“(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Carrier Committee shall consist of 9 members appointed by the Commission in accordance with this section.

“(2) EXPERTISE.—Each member of the Carrier Committee shall have particular expertise, knowledge, and experience in matters relating to the function of the Committee.

“(3) REPRESENTATION.—Members of the Carrier Committee shall represent ocean carriers serving such seaports and terminals, of which at least three shall be ocean transportation intermediaries (as such term is defined in section 40102).”.

“§ 42505. Function

“The covered Committees shall advise the Federal Maritime Commission on policies relating to the competitiveness, reliability, and efficiency of the international ocean freight delivery system.”.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—Section 42501 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following: