

I thank Representative FALLON and Representative PETTERSEN for their work on this important bipartisan bill, which impacts nearly every congressional district in our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill and reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7525.

The Special District Grant Accessibility Act is a bipartisan measure that takes a positive step forward toward ensuring that Federal policy better reflects the complexities of local governments and how they work.

Congress confronted these complexities when it acted to send aid to local governments during the coronavirus pandemic. This included committee Democrats' historic work with the Biden-Harris administration to provide \$350 billion in direct financial assistance to more than 30,000 governments across the country, the vast majority of which were small local governments, and many of whom received significant assistance for the first time.

This bill would provide further clarity around special districts, a special unit of local government. According to the National Special Districts Coalition, there are roughly 35,000 such special districts across the Nation that play an important role in delivering essential government services, like wastewater treatment and fire protection, to millions of Americans.

Special districts have reported challenges when trying to access Federal funding opportunities and have indicated that a unified Federal definition of "special district" would help clarify how entities can best assist local communities through Federal assistance programs.

To address these concerns, H.R. 7525 would codify a definition of the term and direct OMB to clarify how Federal agencies can recognize special districts as units of local government for the purpose of being eligible for Federal grants and other Federal assistance.

Congress and the Federal Government must continually work to ensure Federal assistance programs are authorized, funded, and implemented to best address the needs of local communities. This should include careful consideration of the intricacies of local governments and a rigorous commitment to ensuring Federal assistance promotes equal opportunity for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate subcommittee Chairman PAT FALLON and Representative BRITTANY PETTERSEN for their excellent bipartisan work and support of this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LATURNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FALLON), my friend.

Mr. FALLON. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. LATURNER), my good friend, for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 7525, the Special District Grant

Accessibility Act, introduced by myself and my colleague, Representative PETTERSEN, from the Centennial State of Colorado.

Mr. Speaker, special districts are a type of local government authorized by State law, which deliver specialized services to specific communities that would otherwise not be provided. In rural areas, for instance, special districts may provide fire protection, mosquito control, ambulatory services, et cetera. Special districts also occur in urban areas and can provide airport, road, and transit services.

According to the National Special Districts Coalition, as my colleague from Kansas (Mr. LATURNER) said, there are about 35,000 special districts in the country, and they are in every State.

In Texas, we have over 3,300 special districts providing all manner of government goods and services. Yet, as these lesser-known units of government, special districts have struggled to consistently access Federal financial assistance.

H.R. 7525 would remedy that and would emphasize that special districts are units of local government and are, therefore, eligible for Federal financial assistance by establishing a definition in law for special districts and requiring the Office of Management and Budget to issue guidance to Federal agencies, as well as grant-issuing agencies.

This bill also requires an OMB report to Congress on the agency's implementation and conformity to the guidance.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative PETTERSEN and the bipartisan coalition of Members who cosponsored this bill, and I encourage a "yes" vote.

Mr. LATURNER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. PETTERSEN).

Ms. PETTERSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Special District Grant Accessibility Act, and I thank my colleague, Representative FALLON, for his leadership and bipartisan collaboration on this bill. I also thank the advocates who raised this concern with our office and give a huge shout-out to my team for doing the work to get it to this point.

Special districts are local governments that are created by the people for a community to deliver specialized services. There are 35,000 special districts across the country, and this includes providing services ranging from drinking water and wastewater management to healthcare, transit, natural resource conservation, and much more.

This bipartisan bill will ensure Federal policies better reflect the complexities of local government by creating a Federal definition. I didn't realize that there were so many barriers at the local level to actually drawing down those Federal funds when it comes to community block grants, childcare

services, and even transportation needs.

We also saw significant barriers when it came to the pandemic and the ARPA funding that was going down to help support communities through that difficult time. We know that this is a very important and small step forward, but it is going to make a big difference for people across Colorado and the Nation.

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

Mr. LATURNER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 7525, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LATURNER. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill to emphasize that special districts are eligible for Federal financial assistance.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOST). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. LATURNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7525.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. LATURNER. 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.

□ 1700

ELIMINATE USELESS REPORTS ACT OF 2024

Mr. LATURNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2073) to amend title 31, United States Code, to require agencies to include a list of outdated or duplicative reporting requirements in annual budget justifications, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2073

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 "Eliminate Useless Reports Act of 2024".

SEC. 2. SUNSETS FOR AGENCY REPORTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1125 of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d);

(2) by striking subsections (a) and (b) and inserting the following:

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) BUDGET JUSTIFICATION MATERIALS.—The term ‘budget justification materials’ has the meaning given the term in section 3(b)(2) of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (31 U.S.C. 6101 note; Public Law 109-282).

“(2) PLAN OR REPORT.—The term ‘plan or report’ means any plan or report submitted

to Congress, any committee of Congress, or subcommittee thereof, by not less than 1 agency—

“(A) in accordance with Federal law; or

“(B) at the direction or request of a congressional report.

“(3) RECURRING PLAN OR REPORT.—The term ‘recurring plan or report’ means a plan or report submitted on a recurring basis.

“(4) RELEVANT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE.—The term ‘relevant congressional committee’—

“(A) means a congressional committee to which a recurring plan or report is required to be submitted; and

“(B) does not include any plan or report that is required to be submitted solely to the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives or the Senate.

“(b) AGENCY IDENTIFICATION OF UNNECESSARY REPORTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of each agency shall include in the budget justification materials of the agency the following:

“(A) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), the following:

“(i) A list of each recurring plan or report submitted by the agency.

“(ii) An identification of whether the recurring plan or report listed in clause (i) was included in the most recent report issued by the Clerk of the House of Representatives concerning the reports that any agency is required by law or directed or requested by a committee report to make to Congress, any committee of Congress, or subcommittee thereof.

“(iii) If applicable, the unique alphanumeric identifier for the recurring plan or report as required by section 7243(b)(1)(C)(vii) of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (Public Law 117–263).

“(iv) The identification of any recurring plan or report the head of the agency determines to be outdated or duplicative.

“(B) With respect to each recurring plan or report identified in subparagraph (A)(iv), the following:

“(i) A recommendation on whether to sunset, modify, consolidate, or reduce the frequency of the submission of the recurring plan or report.

“(ii) A citation to each provision of law or directive or request in a congressional report that requires or requests the submission of the recurring plan or report.

“(iii) A list of the relevant congressional committees for the recurring plan or report.

“(C) A justification explaining, with respect to each recommendation described in subparagraph (B)(i) relating to a recurring plan or report—

“(i) why the head of the agency made the recommendation, which may include an estimate of the resources expended by the agency to prepare and submit the recurring plan or report; and

“(ii) the understanding of the head of the agency of the purpose of the recurring plan or report.

“(2) AGENCY CONSULTATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In preparing the list required under paragraph (1)(A), if, in submitting a recurring plan or report, an agency is required to coordinate or consult with another agency or entity, the head of the agency submitting the recurring plan or report shall consult with the head of each agency or entity with whom consultation or coordination is required.

“(B) INCLUSION IN LIST.—If, after a consultation under subparagraph (A), the head of each agency or entity consulted under that subparagraph agrees that a recurring plan or report is outdated or duplicative, the head of the agency required to submit the recurring plan or report shall—

“(i) include the recurring plan or report in the list described in paragraph (1)(A); and

“(ii) identify each agency or entity with which the head of the agency is required to coordinate or consult in submitting the recurring plan or report.

“(C) DISAGREEMENT.—If the head of any agency or entity consulted under subparagraph (A) does not agree that a recurring plan or report is outdated or duplicative, the head of the agency required to submit the recurring plan or report shall not include the recurring plan or report in the list described in paragraph (1)(A).

“(3) GOVERNMENT-WIDE OR MULTI-AGENCY PLAN AND REPORT SUBMISSIONS.—With respect to a recurring plan or report required to be submitted by not less than 2 agencies, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall—

“(A) determine whether the requirement to submit the recurring plan or report is outdated or duplicative; and

“(B) make recommendations to Congress accordingly.

“(4) PLAN AND REPORT SUBMISSIONS CONFORMITY TO THE ACCESS TO CONGRESSIONALLY MANDATED REPORTS ACT.—With respect to an agency recommendation, citation, or justification made under subparagraph (B) or (C) of paragraph (1) or a recommendation by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget under paragraph (3), the agency or Director, as applicable, shall also provide this information to the Director of the Government Publishing Office in conformity with the agency submission requirements under section 7244(a) of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (Public Law 117–263; chapter 41 of title 44 note) in conformity with guidance issued by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget under section 7244(b) of such Act.

“(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION ON AGENCY REQUIREMENTS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to exempt the head of an agency from a requirement to submit a recurring plan or report.”; and

(3) in subsection (d), as so redesignated, by striking “in the budget of the United States Government, as provided by section 1105(a)(37)” and inserting “in the budget justification materials of each agency”.

(b) BUDGET CONTENTS.—Section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking paragraph (39).

(c) CONFORMITY TO THE ACCESS TO CONGRESSIONALLY MANDATED REPORTS ACT.—

(1) AMENDMENT.—Subsections (a) and (b) of section 7244 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (Public Law 117–263; chapter 41 of title 44, United States Code, note), are amended to read as follows:

“(a) SUBMISSION OF ELECTRONIC COPIES OF REPORTS.—Not earlier than 30 days or later than 60 days after the date on which a congressionally mandated report is submitted to either House of Congress or to any committee of Congress or subcommittee thereof, the head of the Federal agency submitting the congressionally mandated report shall submit to the Director the information required under subparagraphs (A) through (D) of section 7243(b)(1) with respect to the congressionally mandated report. Notwithstanding section 7246, nothing in this subtitle shall relieve a Federal agency of any other requirement to publish the congressionally mandated report on the online portal of the Federal agency or otherwise submit the congressionally mandated report to Congress or specific committees of Congress, or subcommittees thereof.

“(b) GUIDANCE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this subsection and periodically thereafter as appro-

priate, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Director, shall issue guidance to agencies on the implementation of this subtitle as well as the requirements of section 1125(b) of title 31, United States Code.”.

(2) UPDATED OMB GUIDANCE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall issue updated guidance to agencies to ensure that the requirements under subsections (a) and (b) of section 1125 of title 31, United States Code, as amended by this Act, for agency submissions of recommendations and justifications for plans and reports to sunset, modify, consolidate, or reduce the frequency of the submission of are also submitted as a separate attachment in conformity with the agency submission requirements of electronic copies of reports submitted by agencies under section 7244(a) of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (Public Law 117–263; chapter 41 of title 44, United States Code, note) for publication on the online portal established under section 7243 of such Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. LATURNER) and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LATURNER. 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 this measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, every year numerous laws require Federal agencies to produce thousands of reports, with a single report costing tens of thousands of taxpayer dollars.

While many reports help inform Congress and the public, some are outdated or duplicative.

With nearly 100 agencies issuing annual reports as required under law, there is a great opportunity for cost savings and improving government efficiency by addressing outdated reports.

Agencies are already required to compile lists of the reports they generate, but this information is not included in an agency's annual budget document which Congress scrutinizes on an annual basis.

The Eliminate the Useless Reports Act requires each agency to identify and reduce the frequency of duplicative or outdated reports in its regular budget justification documents.

This bill would increase government efficiency and save taxpayer dollars by eliminating unnecessary reports.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representatives ROBERT GARCIA and GROTHMAN for their leadership on this issue and Budget Committee Chairman ARRINGTON for

his collaboration with the House Oversight Committee for advancing this bill today.

I encourage my colleagues to support this bipartisan commonsense bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I rise today in support of S. 2073. I thank my colleague from California, Ranking Member ROBERT GARCIA, for introducing the House companion to the Eliminate Useless Reports Act of 2023. I am proud to support this bipartisan legislation. The accumulation of outdated and redundant reports is something that the Oversight Committee has tried to deal with several times over the past few decades.

The Eliminate Useless Reports Act takes an innovative approach. It would establish clear procedures for Federal agencies to request the elimination or modification of duplicative or outdated reports in their annual budget justifications. This would ensure that the correct committee of jurisdiction with the appropriate expertise considers this request. This bill would better inform Congress and the executive branch and ensure that agencies are not wasting time or resources on redundant or archaic reports.

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

Mr. LATURNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I will get this done in less than 5 minutes. As has been pointed out, anybody around here a while knows that frequently when a bill passes we include requirements that an agency provide reports.

Another way for a Congressman to pass a bill is just to pass a freestanding bill that requires another report. Obviously, these reports aren't cheap. There is a great deal of hours spent as the agencies compile the reports. It is time to have a look at these reports and see how many are necessary and how many we can do away with.

The President's most recent budget request identified 53 reports that were outdated or duplicative. Some examples: Department of Commerce report on business licensing activities in Iraq. This report was signed into law in 2003 during the start of the Iraq war. As our presence there diminished, the need for regular reporting on Iraq-bound business licenses has outlived its usefulness.

There is the Department of Labor report on a community college and career training grant. This is another report that is outdated. The authorization of the appropriations has expired, and no funds have been appropriated for this program since 2014; nevertheless, the requirement for the report lives on.

There is the annual FTC report on the market concentration of the ethanol industry. The FTC has submitted the report every year since 2005, but

each and every year the ethanol market has not been overly concentrated, entry into the market is easy, and the present circumstances do not justify a presumption that a single ethanol producer could set prices. In other words, the usefulness of the report is no longer in existence.

The Eliminate Useless Reports Act simply requires each agency to identify and recommend eliminating, modifying, or reducing the frequency of duplicative reports. Recommendations from agencies will be considered by the relevant committees so they can take appropriate legislative steps.

This bill would increase the efficiency of identifying outdated or duplicative reports.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to co-lead the House version in a nice bipartisan effort with my Oversight Subcommittee colleague, Congressman ROBERT GARCIA from California.

I am also thankful for the bipartisan Senate cosponsors to this bill, Senators OSSOFF and LANKFORD.

I urge adoption of Senate bill S. 2073, an important bipartisan step toward improving the efficiency of the Federal Government.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I urge support for S. 2073, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LATURNER. Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support this bill that will increase government efficiency, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. LATURNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 2073, 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.

GSA TECHNOLOGY ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Mr. LATURNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7524) to amend title 40, United States Code, to require the submission of reports on certain information technology services funds to Congress before expenditures may be made, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7524

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 "GSA Technology Accountability Act".

SEC. 2. TRANSPARENCY OF GSA FUNDED INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES.

(a) TRANSPARENCY ON USE OF THE FEDERAL CITIZEN SERVICES FUND.—Section 323 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(g) REQUIREMENT FOR ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than September 30 of each year, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report that includes, at a minimum, a list of each program funded by expenditures during the previous fiscal year, or that have been funded by expenditures in the previous 5-year period, including the following:

"(1) An explanation of the program.

"(2) Information about how the program is funded, including the amount of expenditures the program received in the previous fiscal year and total amount.

"(3) The amount of reimbursements associated with or anticipated to be associated with the program from another source of funds or another agency, if applicable.

"(4) A description of projects or initiatives associated with the program, including—

"(A) information about when the projects or initiatives were initiated and completed; and

"(B) funding information, to the extent practicable.

"(5) Any additional information, data, or analysis used to determine the information estimated within the report, if applicable.

"(h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term 'Administrator' means the Administrator of General Services.

"(2) EXPENDITURE.—The term 'expenditure' means any obligation of funds from the Fund."

(b) TRANSPARENCY ON USE OF THE ACQUISITION SERVICES FUND.—Section 321 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(h) REQUIREMENT FOR ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than September 30 of each year, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report that includes, at a minimum, a list of each program within the Technology Transformation Services funded by expenditures during the previous fiscal year, or that have been funded by expenditures in the previous 5-year period, including the following:

"(1) An explanation of the program.

"(2) Information about how the program is funded, including the amount of expenditures the program received in the previous fiscal year and total amount.

"(3) The amount of reimbursements associated with or anticipated to be associated with the program from another source of funds or another agency, if applicable.

"(4) A description of projects or initiatives associated with the program, including—

"(A) information about when the projects or initiatives were initiated and completed; and

"(B) funding information, to the extent practicable.

"(5) Any additional information, data, or analysis used to determine the information estimated within the report, if applicable.

"(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term 'Administrator' means the Administrator of General Services.

"(2) EXPENDITURE.—The term 'expenditure' means any obligation of funds from the Acquisition Services Fund for programs referenced in subsection (h)."

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this Act shall take effect on the commencement of the first fiscal year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from