

the chief information officer, chief procurement officer, and program managers as they work to improve agency operations and implement policy reforms.

H.R. 5887's expansion of the Bipartisan 21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act of 2018 will improve congressional oversight over the administration's government service delivery reform efforts.

I am thankful for the work of my colleagues, Representatives KHANNA and TIMMONS, for their work on this important legislation. Of course, I encourage all of my colleagues to support this commonsense, bipartisan bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentlewoman, again, from South Carolina, and I thank my wonderful colleague from California, Mr. RO KHANNA, for his leadership on H.R. 5887, the Government Service Delivery Improvement Act. I am really proud to declare our support for this bipartisan legislation.

Federal Government services should be accessible and responsive to the American people. This means ensuring agencies have the resources and staffing they need to fulfill their missions, as well as the infrastructure and technology they need to have effective interactions with the public. Committee Democrats have fought for adequate funding so that the government makes the necessary Federal IT modernization investments that our agencies need to deliver for the people. It also means strengthening and standardizing Federal agencies' efforts to improve the delivery of government services.

Mr. KHANNA's bill would create a Federal Government service delivery lead position in the Office of Management and Budget to coordinate government-wide efforts to improve the delivery of services. Working with lead service delivery officials designated at each Federal agency, the service delivery lead at OMB would develop and oversee the implementation of government-wide standards, policies, and guidelines to improve government service delivery, and would evaluate agency progress, including by collecting and reporting information, data, and metrics.

This bipartisan bill will help ensure the Federal government is providing the best service possible to the people and that it is acting in transparent, methodical, and accountable ways to improve our delivery of government services.

I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 5887.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. KHANNA).

Mr. KHANNA. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Government Service Delivery Improvement Act, H.R. 5887. I did want to say a word

about our ranking member. I appreciate his support, but I have also come to appreciate at these times his erudition from the House floor. Every time he speaks about history, I learn something, and I have really appreciated his leadership and statements recently.

I appreciate Representative MACE, Representative TIMMONS, Representatives DONALDS, LOUDERMILK, and, of course, our Ranking Members RASKIN and CONNOLLY for truly making this a bipartisan effort, and Selene Ceja on our team and the Oversight and Accountability Committee staff who have been incredible on both sides.

I am proud to say that this bipartisan legislation passed unanimously in the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability with a vote of 44-0.

The Government Service Delivery Improvement Act builds upon the progress made by the 21st Century Integrated Digital Experience, or 21st Century IDEA. While the IDEA Act primarily focused on digital services, this bill takes the next step by addressing all service channels, including online, in-person, and by phone.

What sets this bill apart is its whole-of-government approach. It recognizes that improving service delivery requires collaboration. The bill directs the head of Federal agencies to each designate a senior official responsible for improving services, and it requires the Office of Management and Budget to select a senior official to coordinate efforts across Federal agencies.

We really appreciated working with the OMB and with both the Democratic and Republican oversight staffs who have been excellent. These officials will help agencies implement best practices, measure progress, and enhance coordination.

The Government Service Delivery Improvement Act prioritizes constituents' experience by mandating agencies to incorporate service delivery into their strategic plan.

Madam Speaker, the Government Service Delivery Improvement Act represents a significant step forward in creating a more responsive, efficient, and service-delivery oriented Federal Government. It is a commonsense approach to improving government services.

I thank, again, Representative MACE, who has always been a pleasure to work with, and our lead, Ranking Member RASKIN.

Madam Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to join me in voting "yes" on H.R. 5887.

Ms. MACE. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. TIMMONS).

Mr. TIMMONS. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, RO KHANNA, for his leadership on this bill.

Over the past year and a half, the Oversight and Accountability Committee has investigated numerous instances of our government failing to provide adequate service to the American people. From passport backlogs to

delays for veterans requesting personnel records, we simply need to do better.

As Members of Congress, some of our most rewarding work is helping our constituents who are caught up in the web of government red tape. Whether they are a small business trying to get records from the IRS, someone in need of an emergency passport, or a senior requiring a long overdue answer from Social Security, our assistance is often how we make our most immediate impact on our communities. However, frankly, many of these issues we deal with most shouldn't require our assistance at all. They are a failure of agencies to prioritize innovation and customer service.

In order to fix this failure, this Government Service Delivery Improvement Act tasks OMB with designating a senior official to coordinate agency efforts to work more efficiently and deliver services in a timely and un wasteful manner. This bill will also require the designation of a senior official for every Federal agency that will be responsible for improving the service delivery of that particular agency.

This bill allows Congress to further hold agency heads accountable to drive necessary changes, enhance services, and ultimately foster greater trust with the people they serve.

The Government Service Delivery Improvement Act isn't just about streamlining processes, it is about rebuilding trust between the government and its people. It is about ensuring that when Americans turn to their government for assistance, they are met with efficiency, reliability, and, above all, respect.

With that, Madam Speaker, I, again, thank my friend, Mr. KHANNA, for his leadership on this bill and Chairman MACE for her assistance in bringing this to the floor.

Madam Speaker, I urge all Members of this House to support the bill.

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, I urge everyone to support the legislation, and I yield the back the balance of my time.

Ms. MACE. In closing, Madam Speaker, I encourage all my colleagues to support this bill which will improve Federal Government programs service delivery for the American people, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from South Carolina (Ms. MACE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5887, 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.

FEDERAL PRISON OVERSIGHT ACT

Ms. MACE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill

(H.R. 3019) to establish an inspections regime for the Bureau of Prisons, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3019

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 “Federal Prison Oversight Act”.

SEC. 2. CREATION OF AN INSPECTIONS REGIME FOR THE BUREAU OF PRISONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 413 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(e) INSPECTIONS REGIME.—

“(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ‘appropriate congressional committees’ means—

“(i) the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

“(ii) the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Oversight and Accountability of the House of Representatives.

“(B) BUREAU.—The term ‘Bureau’ means the Bureau of Prisons.

“(C) COVERED FACILITY.—The term ‘covered facility’—

“(i) means a correctional facility operated by the Bureau; and

“(ii) does not include a post-incarceration residential re-entry center.

“(D) FAMILY ADVOCATE.—The term ‘family advocate’ includes—

“(i) a grandparent, parent, sibling, spouse or domestic partner, child, aunt, uncle, cousin, niece, nephew, grandchild, or any other person related to an individual by blood, adoption, marriage, civil union, a romantic or fostering relationship; or

“(ii) a friend of—

“(I) the incarcerated person; or

“(II) the family of the incarcerated person.

“(E) INSPECTOR GENERAL.—The term ‘Inspector General’ means the Inspector General of the Department of Justice.

“(F) OMBUDSMAN.—The term ‘Ombudsman’ means the Ombudsman established under paragraph (3)(A).

“(G) REPRESENTATIVE OF AN INCARCERATED PERSON.—The term ‘representative of an incarcerated person’ includes paid or unpaid legal counsel or any other person or entity chosen by an incarcerated person to represent the interests of the incarcerated person.

“(H) SEXUAL ABUSE.—The term ‘sexual abuse’ has the meaning given that term in section 115.6 of title 28, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor thereto).

“(I) STAFF.—The term ‘staff’ means employees and contractors of the Bureau.

“(2) INSPECTIONS OF COVERED FACILITIES BY THE INSPECTOR GENERAL.—

“(A) ESTABLISHMENT OF INSPECTIONS REGIME.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Inspector General shall conduct periodic inspections of covered facilities pursuant to the requirements of this subsection.

“(ii) ACCESS TO COVERED FACILITIES.—The Attorney General shall ensure that the Inspector General has access to—

“(I) any covered facility (including the incarcerated people, detainees, staff, bargaining unit representative organization) in accordance with paragraph (4); and

“(II) any other information that the Inspector General determines is necessary to carry out the provisions of this subsection.

“(iii) NOTICE OF INSPECTIONS.—An inspection of a covered facility under this subsection may be announced or unannounced.

“(iv) COMMUNITY INPUT.—In developing the inspections regime under this subsection, the Inspector General is encouraged to consult formerly incarcerated people, family or representatives of incarcerated people, and community advocates.

“(B) INSPECTION CRITERIA.—An inspection of a covered facility under this subsection may include an assessment of the following:

“(i) The policies, procedures, and administrative guidance of the facility.

“(ii) The conditions of confinement.

“(iii) Working conditions for staff.

“(iv) The availability of evidence-based recidivism reduction programs and productive activities, as such terms are defined in section 3635 of title 18, and the application of earned time credits pursuant to section 3632 of title 18.

“(v) The policies and procedures relating to visitation.

“(vi) The policies and practices relating to classification and housing.

“(vii) The policies and practices relating to the use of single-cell confinement, administrative segregation, and other forms of restrictive housing.

“(viii) The medical facilities and medical and mental health care, programs, procedures, and policies, including the number and qualifications of medical and mental health staff and the availability of sex-specific and trauma-responsive care for incarcerated people.

“(ix) Medical services and mental health resources for staff.

“(x) Lockdowns at the facility.

“(xi) Credible allegations of incidents involving excessive use of force, completed, attempted, or threatened violence, including sexual abuse, or misconduct committed against incarcerated people.

“(xii) Credible allegations of incidents involving completed, attempted, or threatened violence, including sexual violence or sexual abuse, committed against staff.

“(xiii) Adequacy of staffing at the covered facility, including the number and job assignments of staff, the ratio of staff to inmates at the facility, the staff position vacancy rate at the facility, and the use of overtime, mandatory overtime, and augmentation.

“(xiv) Deaths or serious injuries of incarcerated people or staff that occurred at the facility.

“(xv) The existence of contraband that jeopardizes the health or safety of incarcerated people or staff, including incident reports, referrals for criminal prosecution, and confirmed prosecutions.

“(xvi) Access of incarcerated people to—

“(I) legal counsel, including confidential meetings and communications;

“(II) discovery and other case-related legal materials; and

“(III) the law library at the covered facility.

“(xvii) Any aspect of the operation of the covered facility that the Inspector General determines to be necessary over the course of an inspection.

“(C) INSPECTION SCHEDULE.—An inspection of a covered facility under this subsection shall be conducted on a schedule based on the combined risk score of the covered facility as described in subparagraph (E) and the following considerations:

“(i) Higher risk facilities shall receive more frequent inspections.

“(ii) The Inspector General shall reevaluate the combined risk score methodology and inspection schedule periodically and may alter 1 or both to ensure that higher risk facilities are identified and receiving the appropriate frequency of inspection.

“(iii) A determination by the Inspector General that 1 or more of the criteria listed

in subparagraph (B) should be inspected, with regard to a covered facility or group of covered facilities.

“(D) REPORT.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 6 months after the completion of an inspection of a covered facility under this subsection, or a group of inspections that assess the same or similar issues at more than 1 facility, the Inspector General shall submit a final copy of the report to the Attorney General, the appropriate congressional committees, employee representative organizations, and the public, that addresses 1 or more of the following topics:

“(I) A characterization of the conditions of confinement and working conditions, including a summary of the inspection criteria reviewed under clauses (ii) and (iii) of subparagraph (B).

“(II) Recommendations made to the covered facility to improve safety and conditions within the facility, including recommendations regarding staffing.

“(III) A recommended timeline for the next inspection and assessment, which shall not limit the authority of the Inspector General to perform additional inspections and assessments, announced or unannounced.

“(IV) Any other issues or matters identified during the inspection of the facility or facilities.

“(ii) CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS.—In developing the recommendations described in clause (i), the Inspector General may consult with stakeholders, including employee representative organizations.

“(E) RISK SCORE.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the Federal Prison Oversight Act, the Inspector General shall establish methodology and protocols for determining the combined risk score of a covered facility, which—

“(i) shall be delivered to the appropriate congressional committees; and

“(ii) may be based on—

“(I) frequency and duration of lockdowns;

“(II) availability of programming;

“(III) staffing levels;

“(IV) access to adequate physical and mental health resources;

“(V) incidences of physical assault, neglect, or sexual abuse;

“(VI) opportunity to maintain family ties through phone calls, video calls, mail, email, and visitation;

“(VII) adequacy of the nutrition provided;

“(VIII) amount or frequency of staff discipline cases;

“(IX) amount or frequency of misconduct by people incarcerated at the covered facility;

“(X) access of incarcerated people to—

“(aa) legal counsel, including confidential meetings and communications;

“(bb) discovery and other case-related legal materials; and

“(cc) the law library at the covered facility; and

“(XI) other factors as determined by the Inspector General.

“(F) BUREAU RESPONSE TO REPORT.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date on which the Inspector General issues a report under subparagraph (D), the Bureau shall respond in writing to the inspection report, which shall include a corrective action plan.

“(ii) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—Each response and action plan described in clause (i) shall be made available to the public on the website of the Inspector General.

“(iii) COMPLIANCE WITH CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN.—The Inspector General may conduct additional inspections or investigations, announced or unannounced, to monitor the compliance of the Bureau with a corrective action plan described in clause (i).

“(G) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The authority in this paragraph is consistent with and does not supersede, conflict with, or otherwise alter the authority provided to the Inspector General under section 406.

“(3) OMBUDSMAN.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Federal Prison Oversight Act, the Attorney General shall establish in the Department of Justice an Ombudsman who may—

“(i) receive a complaint from an incarcerated person, a family advocate, a representative of an incarcerated person, staff, a representative of staff, a Member of Congress, or a member of the judicial branch of the Federal Government regarding issues that may adversely affect the health, safety, welfare, or rights of incarcerated people or staff, including—

“(I) abuse or neglect;

“(II) the conditions of confinement, including the availability of health care;

“(III) working conditions of staff;

“(IV) decisions, administrative actions, or guidance of the Bureau, including those relating to prison staffing;

“(V) inaction or omissions by the Bureau, including failure to consider or respond to complaints or grievances by incarcerated people or staff promptly or appropriately;

“(VI) policies, rules, or procedures of the Bureau, including gross mismanagement; and

“(VII) alleged violations of non-criminal law by staff or incarcerated people that may adversely affect the health, safety, welfare, or rights of any person;

“(ii) refer a complainant and others to appropriate resources or Federal agencies;

“(iii) make inquiries and recommend actions to appropriate entities on behalf of a complainant, the Ombudsman, or others; and

“(iv) decline to investigate or take any action with respect to any complaint and, in any case in which the Ombudsman declines to investigate or take any action, shall notify the complainant in writing of the decision not to investigate or take any action and the reasons for the decision.

“(B) LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORITY.—The Ombudsman—

“(i) may not investigate—

“(I) any complaints relating to the underlying criminal conviction of an incarcerated person;

“(II) a complaint from staff that relates to the employment or contractual relationship of the staff member with the Bureau, unless the complaint is related to the health, safety, welfare, working conditions, gross mismanagement of a covered facility, or rehabilitation of incarcerated people; or

“(III) any allegation of criminal or administrative misconduct, as described in subsection (b)(2), and shall refer any matter covered by subsection (b)(2) to the Inspector General, who may, at the discretion of Inspector General, refer such allegations back to the Ombudsman or the internal affairs office of the appropriate component of the Department of Justice; and

“(ii) may not levy any fees for the submission or investigation of complaints.

“(C) DECISION ON THE MERITS OF A COMPLAINT.—At the conclusion of an investigation of a complaint, the Ombudsman shall—

“(i) render a decision on the merits of each complaint;

“(ii) communicate the decision to the complainant, if any, and to the Bureau; and

“(iii) state the recommendations and reasoning of the Ombudsman if, in the opinion of the Ombudsman, the Bureau or any employee thereof should—

“(I) consider the matter further;

“(II) modify or cancel any action;

“(III) alter a rule, practice, or ruling;

“(IV) explain in detail the administrative action in question; or

“(V) rectify an omission.

“(D) ACTIONS FOLLOWING A DECISION BY THE OMBUDSMAN.—

“(i) REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ABOUT ACTIONS TAKEN.—If the Ombudsman so requests, the Bureau shall, within the time specified, respond to any inquiry or request for information from the Ombudsman and inform the Ombudsman about any action taken on the recommendations provided by the Ombudsman or the reasons for not complying with any request for information or recommendations.

“(ii) REPORTING OF CONTINUING ISSUES.—If the Ombudsman believes, based on an investigation conducted by the Ombudsman, that there has been or continues to be a significant health, safety, welfare, working conditions, or rehabilitation issue, the Ombudsman shall report the finding to the Attorney General and the appropriate congressional committees.

“(iii) MONITORING OF INTERNAL DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS OF THE BUREAU.—In the event that the Bureau conducts an internal disciplinary investigation or review of 1 or more staff members of the Bureau as a result of an investigation by the Ombudsman, the Ombudsman may monitor the internal disciplinary action to ensure a fair and objective process.

“(4) INSPECTOR GENERAL AND OMBUDSMAN ACCESS TO BUREAU OF PRISONS FACILITIES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—

“(i) ACCESS TO BUREAU FACILITIES.—Except as provided in clause (ii), upon demand, in person or in writing and with or without prior notice, the Inspector General and the Ombudsman shall be granted access to all Bureau facilities, which shall include—

“(I) all areas that are used by incarcerated people, all areas that are accessible to incarcerated people, and access to programs for incarcerated people at any time of day; and

“(II) the opportunity to—

“(aa) conduct private and confidential interviews with any incarcerated person, staff, employee representative organization, or other person; and

“(bb) communicate privately and confidentially, both formally and informally, with incarcerated people or staff by telephone, mail, electronic communication, and in person, which shall not be monitored or recorded by or conducted in the presence of staff.

“(ii) EXCEPTION.—Clause (i) shall not apply in situations where the head of the covered facility provides evidence to the Inspector General or the Ombudsman that there is risk of serious and immediate physical harm to visitors due to an ongoing event that requires restricting access to the facility.

“(B) PURPOSE OF VISITS.—Access to Bureau facilities under subparagraph (A) is for the purposes of—

“(i) conducting announced or unannounced inspections by the Inspector General as described in paragraph (2), including inspections to monitor the compliance of the Bureau with a corrective action plan described in paragraph (2)(F)(i);

“(ii) conducting an investigation or other activity by the Ombudsman as described in paragraph (3); and

“(iii) inspecting, viewing, photographing, and video recording all areas of the facility that are used by incarcerated people or are accessible to incarcerated people.

“(C) ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Inspector General and the Ombudsman have the right to access, inspect, and copy all relevant information, records, or documents in the possession or control of the Bureau that either the Inspector General or the Ombudsman considers necessary in an inspection, investigation, or

other activity, and the Bureau shall assist the Inspector General and the Ombudsman in obtaining the necessary releases for those documents that are specifically restricted or privileged for use by the Bureau.

“(ii) PRODUCTION OF RECORDS.—Following notification from the Inspector General or the Ombudsman with a written demand for access to Bureau records, the Bureau shall provide access to the requested documentation in a manner consistent with section 552a (commonly known as the ‘Privacy Act of 1974’)—

“(I) not later than 30 business days after receipt of the written request; or

“(II) in the case of records pertaining to the death of an incarcerated person or staff, threats of bodily harm including sexual or physical assaults, or the denial or delay of necessary medical treatment, not later than 10 business days after receipt of the written request, unless the Inspector General or the Ombudsman consents to an extension of that time frame.

“(D) MINIMIZE DISRUPTION OF OPERATIONS.—The Inspector General and the Ombudsman shall—

“(i) develop procedures—

“(I) to ensure that the Inspector General has access to, and the right to review and investigate, any allegations received by the Ombudsman to ensure that the Inspector General may carry out the authorities provided to the Inspector General under this chapter; and

“(II) that may provide that the Inspector General and the Ombudsman will determine certain categories of allegations that are not necessary for the Inspector General to review prior to the Ombudsman proceeding;

“(ii) work with the Bureau to minimize disruption to the operations of the Bureau due to inspections, investigations, or other activity;

“(iii) comply with the security clearance processes of the Bureau, provided these processes do not impede the activities described in this subsection; and

“(iv) limit the public release of any photographs or video recordings that would jeopardize—

“(I) the safety, security, or good order of a covered facility or the Bureau; or

“(II) public safety.

“(E) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The authority in this paragraph is consistent with and does not supersede, conflict with, or otherwise alter the authority provided to the Inspector General under section 406.

“(5) CONFIDENTIALITY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Correspondence and communication with the Inspector General and the Ombudsman, including communication regarding an issue described in section 4051 of title 18 is confidential and shall be protected as privileged correspondence in the same manner as legal correspondence or communications.

“(B) PROCEDURES.—Subject to subparagraph (C), the Inspector General and the Ombudsman shall establish confidentiality procedures for all information maintained by the respective office to ensure that, to the greatest extent practicable, before, during, or after an investigation—

“(i) staff are not aware of the identity of a complainant; and

“(ii) other incarcerated people are not aware of the identity of a complainant.

“(C) EXCEPTION.—The Inspector General and the Ombudsman may disclose identifying information for the sole purpose of carrying out an investigation and as otherwise authorized under section 407(b).

“(6) FILING COMPLAINTS.—

“(A) FILING COMPLAINTS ON BEHALF OF AN INCARCERATED INDIVIDUAL.—

“(i) **ONLINE FORM.**—The Ombudsman shall create a secure online form to be made available on the website of the Ombudsman where the family advocates and representatives of incarcerated people can submit complaints and inquiries on issues identified in paragraph (3)(A)(i) on behalf of an individual incarcerated at a covered facility.

“(ii) **TELEPHONE HOTLINE.**—The Ombudsman shall create a telephone hotline through which family advocates and representatives of incarcerated people can call to file complaints and inquiries on issues identified in paragraph (3)(A)(i) on behalf of an individual incarcerated at a covered facility.

“(B) **FILING COMPLAINTS BY AN INCARCERATED INDIVIDUAL.**—

“(i) **INTERNAL PRIVATE SUBMISSION.**—The Bureau shall provide multiple internal ways for incarcerated individuals in covered facilities to privately submit to the Ombudsman complaints and inquiries on issues identified in paragraph (3)(A)(i).

“(ii) **SUBMISSION VIA INDEPENDENT ENTITY.**—The Bureau shall also provide not less than 1 process for incarcerated individuals in covered facilities to submit complaints and inquiries on issues identified in paragraph (3)(A)(i) to a public or private entity or office that is not part of the Bureau and that is able to receive and immediately forward complaints and inquiries to the Ombudsman, allowing the incarcerated individual to remain anonymous upon request.

“(C) **DETERMINATION.**—

“(i) **CONFIRMATION OF RECEIPT.**—Not later than 5 business days after submission of a complaint or inquiry under subparagraph (A) or (B), the Ombudsman shall confirm receipt.

“(ii) **DETERMINATION.**—Not later than 15 business days after issuing the confirmation under clause (i), the Ombudsman shall make a determination as to whether any action is warranted and notify the complainant of the determination.

“(iii) **STATEMENT REGARDING DECISION.**—If the Ombudsman has determined action is unwarranted under clause (ii), the Ombudsman shall provide a written statement explaining the decision to the complainant.

“(D) **PUBLIC EDUCATION.**—The Ombudsman shall coordinate with the Bureau to educate incarcerated people, representatives of incarcerated people, and the public about the existence and functions of the Ombudsman.

“(E) **ADMINISTRATIVE EXHAUSTION.**—Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed as a necessary administrative remedy required for exhaustion under section 7(a) of the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act (42 U.S.C. 1997e(a)).

“(7) **PROHIBITION ON RETALIATION.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Bureau and staff of the Bureau shall not discharge, retaliate against, or in any manner discriminate against any complainant or any person or entity that has instituted or caused to be instituted any proceeding, investigation, or inspection under or related to this subsection.

“(B) **INVESTIGATION.**—Any alleged discharge of, retaliation against, or discrimination against a complainant, entity, or person because of a complaint, investigation, or inspection may be considered by the Ombudsman as an appropriate subject of an investigation or other activity.

“(8) **DUE PROCESS PROTECTIONS.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Attorney General and the Inspector General shall ensure that implementation of this subsection is consistent with section 552a (commonly known as the ‘Privacy Act of 1974’) and all other applicable laws, and respects appropriate due process protections for staff.

“(B) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to modify, supersede, or otherwise affect the authority of the Inspector General to access all

records, reports, audits, reviews, documents, papers, recommendations, or other materials, as authorized by section 406(a).

“(9) **PERCENTAGE OF ANNUAL APPROPRIATION FOR THE BUREAU OF PRISONS.**—It is the sense of Congress that the amount allocated to the Inspector General and the Ombudsman to carry out the activities described in this subsection should equal an amount between 0.2 percent and 0.5 percent of the annual appropriation for the Bureau.”

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This Act, and the amendments made by this Act, shall take effect on the date that is 90 days after the date on which appropriations are made available to the Inspector General of the Department of Justice and the Department of Justice for the specific purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

(c) **AUGMENTATION.**—On and after the effective date of this Act, the Bureau of Prisons shall implement the directive in the second sentence on the topic “Augmentation” in the matter under the heading “SALARIES AND EXPENSES” under the heading “FEDERAL PRISON SYSTEM” in the joint explanatory statement accompanying Public Law 117-328.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from South Carolina (Ms. MACE) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from South Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. MACE. Madam 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 gentlewoman from South Carolina?

There was no objection.

Ms. MACE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3019.

The Federal Bureau of Prisons operates 122 facilities nationwide. Conducting meaningful oversight with an organization of this size can be challenging. The Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General handles criminal complaints on behalf of incarcerated people and bureau staff.

However, this office is overwhelmed with noncriminal incarcerated people, their friends and family, and the Bureau of Prison staff. Examples of common complaints include poor prison conditions and civil rights violations.

While these complaints often do not rise to the level of criminal misconduct, they are still very important and warrant investigation to determine if reforms are actually necessary.

The Federal Prison Oversight Act addresses this issue by ensuring that incarcerated people, their families, and bureau staff have a reliable mechanism to file their complaints.

First, the bill requires the Office of the Inspector General to conduct inspections of Bureau of Prisons facilities and provide recommendations to address each facilities’ shortcomings.

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The Office of the Inspector General will assign each facility a risk score. Higher risk facilities will receive more frequent inspections.

Additionally, the bill creates an independent ombudsman within the Department of Justice to investigate issues that impact the health and safety of incarcerated individuals and staff. The ombudsman can initiate an investigation after receiving a complaint from an incarcerated person, their family, Bureau of Prisons staff, or others. If the investigation of these complaints finds significant harm, the ombudsman must report their findings to the Attorney General and Congress.

This bill will ensure that both the inspector general and the ombudsman will have access to all the Bureau-operated facilities and are authorized to conduct unannounced inspection visits. The bill encourages the Bureau to fund these investigations with between 0.2 and 0.5 percent of their annual appropriations.

The bill is endorsed by the Council of Prison Locals, representing nearly 30,000 correctional officers, along with public safety and civil rights organizations.

I thank Senators JON OSSOFF, MIKE BRAUN, and RICHARD DURBIN for their work drafting this bill. I thank Representatives LUCY MCBATH and KELLY ARMSTRONG for introducing this bill in the House.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in favor of the Federal Prison Oversight Act, which would strengthen oversight of our prisons and improve conditions for the people who work and live inside them.

I thank the bill’s House leaders, my friends and colleagues Representatives LUCY MCBATH and KELLY ARMSTRONG, as well as Senators JON OSSOFF and MIKE BRAUN and Senate Majority Whip RICHARD DURBIN, for their strong bipartisan work on this legislation.

The bill has the support of a wide array of groups across the spectrum, including the American Civil Liberties Union, Americans for Prosperity, the Conservative Political Action Committee, Families Against Mandatory Minimums, Justice Action Network, Right on Crime, the Due Process Institute, and the Council of Prison Locals, which represents 30,000 correctional officers.

Federal prisons have long experienced systemic problems that threaten the health, safety, and civil rights of incarcerated people and also the staff who work there. For example, last year, NPR reported that more than 4,950 incarcerated people had died in facilities operated by the Federal Bureau of Prisons in the last 10 years. Many of the incarcerated either experienced delayed care or postponed care for serious medical problems.

This February, the DOJ inspector general issued a scathing report on

BOP prisons, which found that systemic policy violations and operational failures contributed significantly to the problem of inmate suicide.

Bureau of Prisons facilities are responsible for more than 158,000 incarcerated people and more than 34,000 correctional officers and staff. As documented by GAO in our hearings, BOP has consistently struggled with the problem of staffing shortages. According to the Council of Prison Locals, BOP has lost 20 percent of its employees since 2016 and only employs around 13,000 correctional staff officers today, despite receiving appropriations to fund more than 20,000.

As of 2023, staffing levels for healthcare workers at BOP facilities were only 69 percent, and nearly 20 percent of the facilities do not have a healthcare program onsite to provide even routine and preventative healthcare. Staffing shortages have contributed to often disturbing and, at times, fatal delays in rendering healthcare services for the incarcerated.

GAO has also reported on BOP challenges in upholding its responsibilities to help inmates prepare for a successful release and reintegration, including implementation of important requirements of the First Step Act of 2018 to lower the risk of recidivism.

Additionally, BOP has systemically struggled to make prudent use of resources due to a failure to effectively monitor and evaluate its programs. Taken together, these challenges led GAO to add the management of the prison system to its 2023 high-risk list, indicating the severity and magnitude of these problems.

H.R. 3019 would take important steps to address these concerns by requiring the Department of Justice Office of Inspector General to periodically inspect, evaluate, and report on policies, procedures, and activities at BOP prisons, with higher risk facilities required to undergo even more frequent inspection.

Such inspections may include reviews of inmate confinement conditions; working conditions and staffing capabilities; policies and procedures related to housing, confinement, and other restrictive housing; healthcare programs and services; and complaints of violence and abuse made against incarcerated people and staff.

The bill would also establish an ombudsman within DOJ that would be charged with receiving such complaints that go to problems threatening the health, safety, welfare, and rights of incarcerated people and staff.

Institutionalized misconduct, mismanagement, abuse, and negligence have no place in the Federal Government, especially in operations dealing with vulnerable people who are most in need of a pathway back to personal health and responsibility and to society.

To make our communities safer, uphold our values, and reduce recidivism, it is imperative that we bring increased

transparency, accountability, and humanity to our prisons. The Federal Prison Oversight Act is an important step forward on these goals, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill today.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MACE. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Georgia (Mrs. MCBATH), the author of the legislation and a real leader on criminal justice reform.

Mrs. MCBATH. Madam Speaker, it is an honor to be the lead sponsor of H.R. 3019, the Federal Prison Oversight Act. I am proud to rise in support of this bipartisan legislation today.

My son, Jordan Davis, was killed when he was 17 years old by a man who is now serving a life sentence in prison. Through my family's pain, I have found the strength, believe it or not, to actually forgive my son's killer.

I introduced this bill after I heard from families and advocates about alarming corruption, misconduct, and a lack of oversight in this country's prison systems that has led to tragedy and loss for far too many families across this Nation.

As legislators here in Congress, we have the power to lead policies that help to restore trust and transparency within these systems. I introduced the Federal Prison Oversight Act out of the belief that everyone deserves to be treated humanely and with respect. My bill will establish a Federal framework for comprehensive risk-based inspections of Federal prisons to identify areas of improvement.

High-risk work is not something to be taken lightly. For the brave men and women working within our prison system, this is their daily routine. They protect and care for others while risking their lives because they believe in the power of rehabilitation.

As their elected officials, we have the duty to make sure the roofs over their heads will not cave in on them. We have a duty to make sure that their systems are updated and that there are medical services and mental health resources necessary to protect themselves, incarcerated individuals, and everyone who may live near these facilities.

Our prison system should be one that rehabilitates Americans whenever possible, providing for long and healthy lives. The steps outlined in our bill will help to improve recidivism rates and make sure that our prisons are held accountable while implementing evidence-based programs.

I have had the opportunity to speak with the new Federal Director for the Bureau of Prisons. She has been in my office. I have had good, healthy conversations with her.

Passing this bill, I truly believe, is a first step in the right direction to protecting the rights of the administrators, the staff, and those who are actually serving their time.

I thank Representative ARMSTRONG here in the House, as well as Senator OSSOFF in the Senate. I thank Chair COMER and Ranking Member RASKIN for moving this bill through committee, and I thank all the committee members who saw the importance and the value of this bill and the value of trying to rehabilitate individuals who can be rehabilitated and reintroduced again into society to be successful human beings.

Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to vote for this bill.

Ms. MACE. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, I thank Mrs. MCBATH for her magnificent leadership on this and her commitment to creating decent conditions in our prisons. I thank her for the beautiful example of her commitment based on her love of Jordan and her whole family and community.

Madam Speaker, I urge all colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this very fine legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. MACE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, I thank Congresswoman MCBATH and Congressman ARMSTRONG for this bill.

I thank my colleague, Congressman RASKIN, for bringing up how we should be reducing the rate of recidivism in this country with different policies and that we can work together.

He mentioned the First Step Act, also. I was glad that he mentioned it. It was a bill that inspired me a couple of years ago. When I was a State lawmaker, Donald Trump signed the First Step Act into law in December 2018.

This was a bipartisan bill. It was done in such a significant way, but when I learned about President Trump signing the First Step Act into law in December 2018, I was sifting through the bill, and this is where I got my start in criminal justice reform. There was a provision in there that would ban the shackling of women during birth. This was actually a thing that was going on in our prison system.

I saw this because I am a woman and very passionate, like my colleague across the aisle, about women's issues. I looked at the State of South Carolina and learned that we didn't have this codified into law, that women in our State penitentiary system, our State system, could still be, and in some cases were, shackled while they were actually giving birth.

That inspired me to do a bill that was signed into law by my Governor, Henry McMaster, in May 2020. It banned the shackling of women in our system in South Carolina and allowed these infants, these babies, to have skin-to-skin contact with their mothers after they were born. It allowed women to have their children visit them once a week in prison. It allowed them to have feminine hygiene products accessible to them.

I really applaud my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for working together because we know that when we

give people opportunities after prison—jobs, therapy, intense therapy, job training, and careers afterward—they don't want to go back to prison. They don't want to go back to jail.

This body, this Chamber, has a long history of working together to reduce the rate of recidivism. I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill to increase transparency in the Federal prison system and provide much-needed recourse for incarcerated persons experiencing abuse. Nobody wants that to happen.

Madam Speaker, I encourage colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this very necessary legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from South Carolina (Ms. MACE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3019, 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.

Ms. MACE. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

□ 1615

WORKING DOG COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 807) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the invaluable service that working dogs provide to society, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 807

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 “Working Dog Commemorative Coin Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) Dogs going back thousands of years have been tied to humans whether for protection, companionship, or assisting in daily activities.

(2) The United States had an unofficial canine military presence assisting soldiers in the Civil War and World War I, but military K-9s did not become officially recognized until March 13, 1942. During the height of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq it is estimated that the United States military employed near 2,500 K-9s.

(3) Military K-9s have seen service in every major United States combat since World War I and have been praised by military leadership as an indispensable asset for military, police, government, and private security teams around the world.

(4) In 2000, Congress passed “Robby’s Law” which allowed for the adoption of military K-9s by law enforcement agencies, former handlers, and other care groups.

(5) Since 2000, military K-9s have left service and gone onto work explosive detection for police forces, and work as service dogs for veterans and families.

(6) Beyond their military working capacity, working dogs provide enhanced mobility assist and renewed independence for the injured and disabled. Service dogs are able to support veterans struggling after war, hear for those who are deaf, see for those who are blind, and even sense changes in a person’s body before a seizure. Working dogs play a vital role in improving the lives of many.

(7) The service dog programs of America’s VetDogs were created to provide enhanced mobility and renewed independence to United States veterans, active-duty service members, and first responders with disabilities.

(8) America’s VetDogs provides—

(A) guide dogs for individuals who are blind or have low vision;

(B) hearing dogs for those who have lost their hearing later in life by alerting to alarms, door bells, sirens, and more;

(C) service dogs for those with other physical disabilities that are specially trained to provide balance, retrieve dropped items, open and close doors, turn on and off lights, carry a backpack, and more;

(D) facility dogs which are specially trained to spend time working with wounded veterans recovering at military hospitals and veterans medical centers;

(E) dogs that work with physical and occupational therapists as they treat soldiers and become an essential part of the healing process; and

(F) PTSD service dogs that are trained to help mitigate the symptoms of PTSD by providing the emotional and physical support a veteran may need.

SEC. 3. COIN SPECIFICATIONS.

(a) DENOMINATIONS.—The Secretary of the Treasury (hereafter in this Act referred to as the “Secretary”) shall mint and issue the following coins in commemoration of the invaluable service that working dogs provide to society.

(1) \$5 GOLD COINS.—Not more than 50,000 \$5 coins, which shall—

(A) weigh 8.359 grams;

(B) have a diameter of 0.850 inches; and

(C) contain 90 percent gold.

(2) \$1 SILVER COINS.—Not more than 500,000 \$1 coins, which shall—

(A) weigh 26.73 grams;

(B) have a diameter of 1.500 inches; and

(C) contain not less than 90 percent silver.

(3) HALF-DOLLAR CLAD COINS.—Not more than 750,000 half-dollar coins which shall—

(A) weigh 11.34 grams;

(B) be struck on a planchet having a diameter of 1.205 inches; and

(C) be minted to the specifications for half-dollar coins contained in section 5112(b) of title 31, United States Code.

(b) LEGAL TENDER.—The coins minted under this Act shall be legal tender, as provided in section 5103 of title 31, United States Code.

(c) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all coins minted under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

SEC. 4. DESIGNS OF COINS.

(a) DESIGN REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The designs of the coins minted under this Act shall be emblematic of the vast contributions that working dogs serve in society to include the range of services that these dogs provide in detection, military service, therapy and assistance.

(2) DESIGNS AND INSCRIPTIONS.—On each coin minted under this Act, there shall be—

(A) a designation of the value of the coin;

(B) an inscription of the year “2027”; and

(C) inscriptions of the words “Liberty”, “In God We Trust”, “United States of America”, and “E Pluribus Unum”.

(b) SELECTION.—The designs for the coins minted under this Act shall be—

(1) selected by the Secretary after consultation with—

(A) America’s VetDogs; and

(B) the Commission of Fine Arts; and

(2) reviewed by the Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee.

SEC. 5. ISSUANCE OF COINS.

(a) QUALITY OF COINS.—Coins minted under this Act shall be issued in uncirculated and proof qualities.

(b) MINT FACILITY.—Only 1 facility of the United States Mint may be used to strike any particular quality of the coins minted under this Act.

(c) PERIOD FOR ISSUANCE.—The Secretary may issue coins minted under this Act only during the 1-year period beginning on January 1, 2027.

SEC. 6. SALE OF COINS.

(a) SALE PRICE.—The coins issued under this Act shall be sold by the Secretary at a price equal to the sum of—

(1) the face value of the coins;

(2) the surcharge provided in section 7(a) with respect to such coins; and

(3) the cost of designing and issuing the coins (including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, overhead expenses, marketing, and shipping).

(b) BULK SALES.—The Secretary shall make bulk sales of the coins issued under this Act at a reasonable discount.

(c) PREPAID ORDERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall accept prepaid orders for the coins minted under this Act before the issuance of such coins.

(2) DISCOUNT.—Sale prices with respect to prepaid orders under paragraph (1) shall be at a reasonable discount.

SEC. 7. SURCHARGES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—All sales of coins issued under this Act shall include a surcharge of—

(1) \$35 per coin for the \$5 coin;

(2) \$10 per coin for the \$1 coin; and

(3) \$5 per coin for the half-dollar coin.

(b) DISTRIBUTION.—Subject to section 5134(f)(1) of title 31, United States Code, all surcharges received by the Secretary from the sale of coins issued under this Act shall be promptly paid by the Secretary to America’s VetDogs for application to general expenses associated with the fulfillment of the mission of America’s VetDogs, including for costs associated with—

(1) personnel related to training, dog care, and consumer needs;

(2) consultants to facilitate the training of America’s VetDogs Certified Service Dog Instructors; and

(3) travel, room and board for clients served by America’s VetDogs.

(c) AUDITS.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall have the right to examine such books, records, documents, and other data of each of the organizations referred to in subsection (b) as may be related to the expenditures of amounts paid under that subsection.

(d) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), no surcharge may be included with respect to the issuance under this Act of any coin during a calendar year if, as of the time of such issuance, the issuance of such coin would result in the number of commemorative coin programs issued during such year to exceed the annual 2 commemorative coin program issuance limitation under section 5112(m)(1) of title 31, United States Code (as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act). The Secretary of the Treasury may issue guidance to carry out this subsection.