

a shortage of roughly 700,000 workers. Clearly, the Federal Government cannot afford to erect unnecessary hurdles that prohibit those with the necessary technical skills and desire from doing such work simply because they lack a traditional degree.

The companies who employ them, those that offer apprenticeships and engage in skills-based hiring, should be encouraged to compete for government contracts and not be excluded from competition.

This bill helps ensure that Federal contractors are permitted to hire qualified professionals with the necessary knowledge, the necessary skills, and the necessary drive, even if they lack a traditional 4-year degree.

The bill does this by prohibiting contract officers from stipulating education requirements for contract employees without providing a written justification for doing so. That justification must show that education is necessary in order to perform the work and meet the needs of the agency.

To be clear, this bill in no way tells Federal contractors how to actually hire their staff. Rather, it removes an unnecessary restriction on their ability to hire qualified individuals.

The Federal Government shouldn't be barring from consideration for work qualified individuals who acquire their skills through alternative training. They deserve a chance at a job. They deserve a chance to compete.

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

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

I rise in support of H.R. 7887, the ACCESS Act, which is intended to address degree inflation, the growing trend of college graduates filling jobs that don't require college degrees. This can lead to reduced earnings for college degree holders, reduced employment opportunities for nondegree holders, and an overall drag on the economy in a time of very low unemployment, like ours, and of labor shortages.

Committee Democrats are supportive of efforts to eliminate minimum education and experience requirements for jobs that don't actually require such associated skills for successful performance, expanding opportunity for the more than 62 percent of the population, age 25 and older, who do not hold a bachelor's degree.

The ACCESS Act would prohibit Federal agencies from specifying minimum educational requirements for contractor personnel in solicitations, unless the solicitation also includes a written justification explaining why such requirements are actually necessary.

I had been concerned that this might create a blanket requirement that could be unnecessarily burdensome for Federal agencies in the instances in which minimum education or experience requirements are commonly and

reasonably understood to be necessary, but changes made to the bill after our committee markup have alleviated those concerns.

There are certainly some jobs for which some minimum education or experience appears to be totally unnecessary. For example, approximately 39 percent of postings for construction managers require a college degree, as do 52 percent of web developer postings and 34 percent of distribution manager postings.

This suggests that these roles are frequently performed in the economy totally successfully without a college degree and that the requirement is more about the subjective preference or traditions of the employer than the actual demands of the job. It makes sense for agency contracting officers to have to provide a written justification for choosing to require that contractors hire only college degree holders for such jobs, as this bill would require.

However, there are also an array of jobs for which some minimum education or experience requirements are indeed necessary. For example, in 2022, the Federal Government spent almost \$30 billion on medical services contracts and another \$29 billion on engineering and technical support services contracts. We do not want our contracting officers to have to provide a written explanation every single time they put out a solicitation that requires healthcare and engineering professionals to have advanced higher education degrees, and the bill has been appropriately and gratefully refined to eliminate this unnecessary burden.

I understand that the North America's Building Trades Unions have expressed concerns about just this point, but in cases where highly trained and educated Federal contractors are required to perform technical, scientific, and professional services, nothing in the bill would prevent the hiring of such individuals.

I am happy to continue supporting this legislation as an important step to expand opportunity to more Americans and to welcome more talent in service to our country.

I thank Chairwoman MACE and Chairman COMER for working with us to improve the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support H.R. 7887, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. MACE. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill to ensure that contract employees with the right skills can work for the Federal Government regardless if they have a traditional 4-year degree.

I thank Ranking Member RASKIN and all of my colleagues on the Oversight Committee who voted this out of the

committee for their bipartisan support. This doesn't hurt jobs. This helps people get jobs, even if they don't have a 4-year degree, whether they are joined to a labor union or not.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the support of Mr. RASKIN, 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. 7887, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. NORCROSS. 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.

U.S. CONGRESSMAN SAM JOHNSON MEMORIAL VA CLINIC ACT

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4136) to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Plano, Texas, as the "U.S. Congressman Sam Johnson Memorial VA Clinic".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4136

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 "U.S. Congressman Sam Johnson Memorial VA Clinic Act".

SEC. 2. NAME OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINIC, PLANO, TEXAS.

The Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Plano, Texas, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the "U.S. Congressman Sam Johnson Memorial VA Clinic". Any reference to such clinic in any law, regulation, map, document, record, or other paper of the United States shall be considered to be a reference to the U.S. Congressman Sam Johnson Memorial VA Clinic.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. BUDZINSKI) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 4136.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4136, a bill to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-

based outpatient clinic in Plano, Texas, as the “U.S. Congressman Sam Johnson Memorial VA Clinic.”

Sam Johnson, a legend and an American hero, was born October 11, 1930, in San Antonio, Texas. At the age of 20, Sam began a 29-year decorated career in the U.S. Air Force, retiring as a full bird colonel.

He flew nearly 100 combat missions with the Thunderbird demonstration team, as a fighter pilot in both the Korean and Vietnam wars, and as a commander of a tactical fighter wing. Later, Sam Johnson went on to serve as the director of the Air Force Fighter Weapons School.

On his 25th combat mission over Vietnam, Sam's plane was shot down, and he was captured by North Vietnamese forces. Sam would then go on to spend the next 7 grueling years as a prisoner of war, more than 3 years of that time in solitary confinement. As Sam put it: The solitary confinement did not shake his fighting spirit. He was so resistant in captivity that he earned himself a windowless 3-by-9-foot concrete cell at the infamous “Hanoi Hilton,” where he was then released from in 1973.

A decade later, his right hand permanently disabled and left with a limp for the rest of his life, Sam Johnson continued his service in the Texas House of Representatives where he served a total of 7 years, but Sam wasn't done yet. He ran for Congress in 1991, where he served our great Nation once again for 27 years and left an undeniable mark on this institution.

His fight for freedom and defending individual liberties never wavered, and American families are better off today because of Sam's service.

Congressman JOHNSON served honorably as a pilot, a decorated war hero, and a statesman. It goes without saying that there is no one more fitting to name a VA clinic in Texas after than Congressman Sam Johnson.

Now, I know there are some that will raise concerns that this bill does not meet the committee's rule for naming VA facilities. That is correct, and it is only because a small minority of the Texas delegation has not signed onto a letter expressing their support. I am not one to bend or break committee rules, but in this case, we simply can't wait any longer.

Sam toiled in a prison camp for 7 years serving our country, and we should not wait another second to honor his service.

I thank the sponsor of this bill, Representative SELF, for leading this effort, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4136.

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

□ 1945

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for H.R. 4136, to rename the Department of Veterans Affairs com-

munity-based outpatient clinic in Plano, Texas, as the “U.S. Congressman Sam Johnson Memorial VA Clinic.”

Congressman Sam Johnson was a combat veteran of both the Korean war and the Vietnam war, a fighter pilot, and a nearly 28-year Representative from Texas. He flew 62 missions during the Korean war. During his 25th mission in Vietnam, his F-4 Phantom fighter bomber was shot down on April 16, 1966.

His injuries included a broken arm, a broken back, and a dislocated shoulder, none of which were properly treated during his nearly 7-year imprisonment in Hanoi's Hoa Lo, commonly referred to by many former POWs as the “Hanoi Hilton.”

For the last 18 months of his captivity, Johnson shared a cell with future Senator John McCain. Mr. Johnson weighed 120 pounds when he was released February 12, 1973. His right hand was permanently disabled, and he walked with a limp for the rest of his life.

Congressman Johnson graduated from Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, in 1951 as a member of the Air Force ROTC. Following his service in Vietnam, he received a master's degree in international affairs from George Washington University in 1974. He retired from the Air Force as a colonel in 1979.

Congressman Johnson's political career followed shortly after. He was elected to the Texas State legislature in 1984 and won his seat in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1991. He served the Texas Third District for nearly 28 years before retiring in 2019.

Congressman Johnson passed away in May of 2020, but he will be remembered for his courage and lifetime of public service. It is only fitting that the Plano, Texas, clinic be named in his honor.

A dedicated public servant in war and in peace, Congressman Johnson is certainly deserving of this Nation's gratitude.

Despite this bill not meeting all of our committee's rules for naming VA facilities, Republican leadership has chosen to bring it to the floor. I am supporting this bill, and I trust that Republican leadership will grant the same consideration to Representative CROCKETT's bill which honors our former colleague, Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson, who served as the chief psychiatric nurse of the Dallas VA Medical Center for 16 years before her time in Congress.

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SELF), who also knew Sam Johnson very well.

Mr. SELF. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on my bill to rename the Plano, Texas, VA Clinic after former Congressman, Air Force Fighter Pilot, and POW Sam Johnson.

Congressman Sam Johnson served in the U.S. Air Force for 29 years where he was the director of the Air Force Fighter Weapons School and flew the F-100 Super Sabre with the Air Force Thunderbirds precision flying demonstration team. He flew the slot.

He was a combat veteran of both the Korean and Vietnam wars as a fighter pilot, flying 87 combat missions.

On April 16, 1966, while flying his 25th combat mission over Vietnam, he was shot down and suffered a broken right arm, broken back, and dislocated shoulder. He was a prisoner of war for nearly 7 years, including 42 months in solitary confinement.

He was part of a group of 11 U.S. military prisoners known as the Alcatraz Gang, a group of prisoners separated from other captives because they would not break.

His heroic actions led him to be awarded two Silver Stars, three Legions of Merit, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star Medal, and two Purple Hearts.

In 1985, he was called on again to serve, only this time in the Texas State House of Representatives, where he served until being elected to this body in 1991.

He went on to serve in Congress until his retirement in 2019. During his time in Congress, Sam was a force. His House tenure included many accomplishments, including holding a position on the powerful House Ways and Means Committee.

I am proud to serve as Representative for Texas' Third District, the same district that Sam served so honorably.

As I reflect on Sam's life, I am reminded of a story that demonstrates his signature tenacity, toughness, and character.

Gib Lewis, Texas Speaker of the House of Representatives at the time, tried threatening Sam regarding a piece of legislation. Sam put his old, crooked hands, those that had been broken many times in torture, on Gib's desk and said: What are you going to do, Gib? Break my hands?

There was absolutely nothing that Gib Lewis could say.

I truly can think of no individual who is more deserving of having a VA clinic named in his honor.

Ms. BUDZINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. CROCKETT).

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman SELF for bringing this bill.

It is interesting to just hear the overlap between Congressman SELF's bill and the bill that I have been trying to get out of committee. Congressman SELF is doing this on behalf of Congressman Johnson, and I am doing it on behalf of Congresswoman Johnson.

Interestingly enough, they both were from the Dallas area or spent time in the Dallas area, as my predecessor is not from Dallas herself. However, she started her career at the Dallas VA, the Dallas VA that she ended up representing in Congress for 30 years.

After becoming the first woman and the first Black woman to be a head nurse at the Dallas VA, she then became the first nurse to ever swear into Congress.

As it was already laid out about Congressman JOHNSON, she went into the Texas State House, as well. She went into the Texas State House in 1972 as one of the two first Black women to ever swear into the Texas House, and then she went on to the Texas Senate where she was one of two only Black women to still ever serve in our Texas Senate.

Most importantly, I currently represent the Dallas VA, and we lost a hero in Dallas. We lost a hero in this country just like here recently, her sorority sister, when we lost Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE.

I am just asking, considering the standards that are set out by this committee, that we allow my bill to move forward as well because the first standard is that such individual is deceased, which she meets. The person is either a veteran or a Member of Congress. She was a Member of Congress. The individual performed outstanding service for veterans. She did that in her 16 years in service directly but also in the work that she did afterwards.

In addition to that, each member of the congressional delegation has demonstrated their support in the form of a letter. This was not met by Congressman SELF's bill, and it is not met by mine. However, I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, that I stood with Congressman SELF on his bill, and I am happy to say that he stood with me on mine, as well.

The final requirement is letters of support from VSOs. We both have met those requirements. The only requests that I have—because I do, again, stand in support of this—is that we bring my bill to the floor as well to honor the late great Eddie Bernice Johnson who passed in December of 2023.

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

I would like to take a moment to respond to Ms. CROCKETT's comments about breaking precedent today with this naming bill.

Sam Johnson was a prisoner of war for 7 years. He was held in solitary confinement for more than 3 of those years in the infamous Hanoi Hilton.

After enduring hell on Earth, as he actually put it during his time in uniform, he kept serving our Nation, first as a commander of a tactical fighter unit, then as a State legislator, then as a Member of Congress. Sam was everything that Americans should aspire to be. He was a hero.

I understand and respect the precedent that we have had regarding naming bills, but in this case the reason for breaking that precedent is we are not going to sit here and play silly D.C. politics and take longer than he was a prisoner of war to pass a bill for naming this after Chairman and Colonel Sam Johnson.

I know Ms. CROCKETT would have liked to have had her naming bill that is pending for Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson on the floor today, and I would be happy to work with the gentlewoman and both leadership teams to see if there is something we can do to move that forward.

However, today we are here to honor Sam Johnson. I will put this plainly. If you can find someone as deserving as Sam Johnson, then I will be glad to bypass precedent for them, as well.

I encourage everyone to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE).

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee for yielding and for bringing this bill. Especially I thank Mr. SELF for his leadership in working for so long on this important bill.

Mr. Speaker, it is not often that we will walk amongst people who are larger than life. During my years in Congress, I have been honored to serve with two people whom I would put in that category: Sam Johnson and John Lewis. Both of them have amazing stories that are well chronicled.

I got to know Sam over the years that I served with him. It was a treat to be able to just sit down and hear stories and talk to him about the things I had heard about him because Sam was truly larger than life, Mr. Speaker. We heard stories of his early days as an Air Force pilot.

This was back in the days before the Apollo missions when our Air Force pilots were trying to push the boundaries to figure out just how far we could go, how fast we could go, and how high we could go. They were doing things that had never been done before.

I had heard a story that Sam challenged Buzz Aldrin. Buzz, of course, famously was the commander of the Apollo mission, the first mission to land on the Moon. He was the second man to walk on the Moon after Neil Armstrong. I heard that story, and one time after Sam had left Congress, I had the opportunity to meet Buzz Aldrin.

I said: I want to ask you about this story. I heard that Sam Johnson challenged you to a fighter pilot race.

He just lights up. Buzz Aldrin was just incredibly accomplished and was a national hero in his own right. He lights up at the words: Sam Johnson.

He said: That is not the whole story. Yes, Sam Johnson challenged me to a fighter pilot race. We would practice every day, and I would usually beat Sam.

He said that the night before the race, Sam had souped up his plane, and, sure enough, the next day we had this race, and Sam just flies by and wins the race.

Sam was just an incredible person. He had an unbelievable sense of humor. I got to see that.

Later on in life when we both had our physical challenges, we challenged each other to a scooter race. It was not

quite the same thing, but I never saw him laugh as much as at that because, again, Sam was just an amazing person who for all the things he went through still maintained a great sense of humor while he exhibited so much leadership.

Nonetheless, we know the story that Sam lived through 7 years in the Hanoi Hilton. He wrote a book about it. As I started to get to know Sam, I said: I am not going to really truly understand Sam unless I read the book. The book is called "Captive Warriors." So one week when I was going out of town, I got the book, and it was one of those books you get not for easy reading because it was a difficult read. I teared up a lot because he goes into great detail of the things that happened to him during those 7 years.

As Mr. SELF talked about, he was one of the elite men who was being held captive, and so they held him in a special place, a separate place. They put Sam in shackles for a number of those years he was held. They broke almost every bone in Sam's body, but they never broke Sam's spirit. That is the one thing I think that probably frustrated the Viet Cong so much is that for all the things they did to him physically and mentally they were never going to break Sam because he loved this country. He loved his commitment to service, and he maintained that throughout those 7 years.

□ 2000

We know the medals he won: two Silver Stars, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star with Valor, and two Purple Hearts.

Sam wrote a line in his book, "Captive Warriors," that I will read: "If hell is here on Earth, it is located on an oddly shaped city block in downtown Hanoi, Vietnam."

This was a man that I had the true, distinct honor of serving with because of who he was. When you met Sam, you were not let down. You truly understood you were in the presence of greatness.

May we all strive to have the kind of character and integrity that Sam Johnson had when he lived his life. Let's honor him today by passing Mr. SELF's legislation to name the VA hospital in Plano, Texas, after my dear friend, an American hero, Sam Johnson.

Ms. BUDZINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 4136, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the pleasure of actually doing some naming of many facilities for the VA in this position and also sponsoring some. I don't know, of all the great people in there, that there is a person who is more deserving in the naming of a facility than the Honorable Colonel and Congressman Sam Johnson.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this

resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4136.

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.

BILLION DOLLAR BOONDOGGLE ACT OF 2023

Ms. MACE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1258) to require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to submit to Congress an annual report on projects that are over budget and behind schedule, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1258

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 “Billion Dollar Boondoggle Act of 2023”.

SEC. 2. ANNUAL REPORT.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term “covered agency” means—

(A) an Executive agency, as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code; and

(B) an independent regulatory agency, as defined in section 3502 of title 44, United States Code;

(2) the term “covered project” means a project funded by a covered agency—

(A) that is more than 5 years behind schedule, as measured against the original expected date for completion; or

(B) for which the amount spent on the project is not less than \$1,000,000,000 more than the original cost estimate for the project; and

(3) the term “project” means a major acquisition, a major defense acquisition program (as defined in section 4201 of title 10, United States Code), a procurement, a construction project, a remediation or clean-up effort, or any other time-limited endeavor, that is not funded through direct spending (as defined in section 250(c) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 900(c))).

(b) REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall issue guidance requiring covered agencies to include, on an annual basis in a report described in paragraph (2) of section 3516(a) of title 31, United States Code, or a consolidated report described in paragraph (1) of such section, information relating to each covered project of the covered agency, which shall include—

(1) a brief description of the covered project, including—

(A) the purpose of the covered project;

(B) each location in which the covered project is carried out;

(C) the contract or award number of the covered project, where applicable;

(D) the year in which the covered project was initiated;

(E) the Federal share of the total cost of the covered project; and

(F) each primary contractor, subcontractor, grant recipient, and subgrantee recipient of the covered project;

(2) an explanation of any change to the original scope of the covered project, including by the addition or narrowing of the initial requirements of the covered project;

(3) the original expected date for completion of the covered project;

(4) the current expected date for completion of the covered project;

(5) the original cost estimate for the covered project, as adjusted to reflect increases in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, as published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics;

(6) the current cost estimate for the covered project, as adjusted to reflect increases in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, as published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics;

(7) an explanation for a delay in completion or an increase in the original cost estimate for the covered project, including, where applicable, any impact of insufficient or delayed appropriations; and

(8) the amount of and rationale for any award, incentive fee, or other type of bonus, if any, awarded for the covered project.

(c) FORM.—If any information required under subsection (b) is classified, such information may be submitted in the form of a classified annex consistent with the protection of sources and methods.

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. 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 gentlewoman from South Carolina?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, Congress must ensure that every taxpayer dollar is spent efficiently. Every year, the Government Accountability Office reports government projects that are above cost projections or behind schedule, from Federal IT programs to projects at the National Nuclear Security Administration. However, there are likely additional government projects that fly under the radar, falling years behind schedule or costing billions of dollars over budget.

The Billion Dollar Boondoggle Act would address this by informing policymakers of government-funded projects that are behind schedule or above cost projections. Under the bill, agencies must report to Congress on projects that are more than 5 years behind schedule or have expenditures that are at least \$1 billion more than the original cost estimate for the project. Agencies must provide an explanation if there is a delay in completion or an increase in costs for the project.

Congress has a duty to oversee the Federal Government for inefficiency

and waste. This bill informs policymakers and allows Congress to address failing government projects before further taxpayer dollars are wasted or misused.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Senator JONI ERNST for her leadership on this issue, and I thank Representative MILLER-MEEKS for introducing the House companion bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, the legislation would require additional reporting on certain Federal projects that are over budget by \$1 billion or 5 years behind schedule. Federal agencies would be required to include this information in their annual performance and accountability reports made to Congress and the President.

Congress, of course, has a duty to make sure that taxpayer dollars are being well and efficiently spent in the ways that we appropriate them. Additional oversight of projects that are vastly over budget or behind schedule makes good sense, and I support this bill.

I appreciate the fact that this version of the bill takes into consideration some technical comments that were provided to us by OMB.

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

Ms. MACE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS).

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from South Carolina (Ms. MACE) for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, the Billion Dollar Boondoggle Act, bipartisan legislation that would require the public disclosure of every taxpayer-funded project that is \$1 billion or more over budget or 5 years or more behind schedule.

This disclosure would include an explanation for the delays and added costs as well as the identification of the contractors.

In Congress, we are entrusted to be stewards of taxpayer dollars. In an example of protracted government-funded projects, the Department of Veterans Affairs had fumbled replacing its decades-old electronic health records system. An assessment found that the 2018 initial cost projection of \$10 billion over 10 years soon ballooned to \$50.8 billion over 28 years.

Government-funded projects that are excessively costly and delayed must be held to account. The bill will increase transparency over these projects to ensure we aren't wasting billions of hard-earned taxpayer dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Iowa Senator JONI ERNST for championing this act in the Senate. I urge my colleagues to support and get the Billion Dollar Boondoggle Act to the President's desk.

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