

VA to ensure veterans are not negatively impacted.

While I am considering supporting this bill today, I do wish to point out that our committee has been working on this bill for months, and we had reached a House and Senate bipartisan agreement on approved language for S. 656 that would empower State approving agencies to conduct proper oversight and limit automatic approval of these programs if they are opening in States without existing CDL programs.

However, despite these negotiations, for some unknown reason, this text is the same which passed in the Senate, ignoring the hard work our staff put in to reach a final agreement.

This is unfortunate, and I hope this won't be our last work on this language. It is critically important that we include important oversight provisions in bills such as these to ensure that veterans get the best possible training and that schools who access veterans' hard-earned GI Bill benefits are held accountable for the quality of their programs.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague, Chairman BOST, for the purpose of a colloquy to ensure that we can still work to get this bill to a better state.

Mr. Chairman, I understand both our staffs have spent quite a bit of time working on bipartisan language to S. 656. Can I get your commitment that we will continue these discussions and pass an updated bill as soon as possible? I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST).

Mr. BOST. You have my word we will continue to work with your staff to do the best we can. I think this bill is in very, very good shape the way it is. As the only one that actually has a CDL, we should probably realize that the safety is here, that is all good, but I would be willing to work on it in the future to move it on out today.

Mr. TAKANO. I appreciate that. We can get to work on an updated bill as soon as possible.

Mr. BOST. Yes.

Mr. TAKANO. I appreciate that pledge.

My second question to you, Mr. Chairman. Can I count on your support for that amended bill, whenever it may be, this Congress or next?

Mr. BOST. Ask that question again. I am sorry.

Mr. TAKANO. I ask if I can count on your support for that amended bill?

Mr. BOST. Yes.

Mr. TAKANO. Whenever it may be, this Congress or next?

Mr. BOST. The updated language is in the Dole Act, if we can have the opportunity to have the Dole Act, too.

Mr. TAKANO. Thank you. I appreciate that. I thank the chairman, and I will reclaim my time.

Mr. Speaker, while this bill will head to the President's desk, I hope our committee can continue to work on this issue in the meantime.

Despite my concerns and reservations, I will support this bill now, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. EDWARDS).

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Senators Fischer and Padilla for their leadership on the Veteran Improvement Commercial Driver License Act.

I was happy to introduce the House version of this very important bill, H.R. 2830, and I look forward to the benefit this language will add on our veterans' quality of life once it becomes law.

Every day, brave men and women join our military to fight for the American Dream so that each of us can live in a country where we have the opportunity to succeed and are free to pursue a better way of life. However, all too often when our servicemembers are transitioning to civilian life, our government fails in their pursuit of achieving the American Dream.

A 2016 study by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation found that 53 percent of all veterans were unemployed for at least 4 months after leaving the military. These are our country's strongest citizens, yet we repeatedly fail to sufficiently support them as they make the biggest transition in their life, from servicemember to civilian.

S. 656 and H.R. 2830 make a much-needed change to the veteran educational assistance programs, expanding job opportunities for the brave men and women who serve our great Nation.

The VA CDL Act will increase veteran access to timely, quality commercial driver license training, reduce veteran unemployment or underemployment, and reduce the strain on our Nation's supply chain by increasing the truck driver workforce pool.

Currently, roughly 8,400 commercial driving programs are approved for use by eligible veterans under the GI Bill, but a bureaucratic 2-year rule prevents these training facilities from accepting GI benefits at secondary locations for 2 years.

This burdensome red tape has excluded many veterans from attending closer secondary branch training and dissuaded servicemembers from joining the trucking industry. Who better knows how to drive big stuff than our veterans?

Due to this rule, veterans must decide between finding a new career path, waiting 2 years to pursue their commercial driver's license, or in some cases traveling hundreds of miles away from their home for immediate training.

S. 656 and H.R. 2830 fix that issue by exempting new branches of preapproved training facilities located in the same State from the statutory 2-year wait to accept veterans' benefits.

It is high time that we take meaningful steps toward better supporting a veteran's transition into the civilian workforce. Too many arbitrary rules are impeding a veteran's ability to

achieve the very American Dream that they are fighting for others to pursue, but the VA CDL Act helps to eliminate one of those barriers.

Ultimately, this is a commonsense reform bill that will reduce unnecessary roadblocks to veteran training and workforce opportunities, and I urge all my colleagues to support it.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, I support S. 656, the Veteran Improvement Commercial Driver License Act of 2023, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, as a veteran and as a person that drove big stuff, I encourage all of my colleagues to support this bill. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FEENSTRA). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 656.

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.

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS AND EXTENSIONS ACT, 2025

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 9747) making continuing appropriations and extensions for fiscal year 2025, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 9747

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 "Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025".

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title.
- Sec. 2. Table of Contents.
- Sec. 3. References.

DIVISION A—CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2025

DIVISION B—EXTENSIONS

TITLE I—MISCELLANEOUS EXTENSIONS

TITLE II—HEALTH EXTENDERS

TITLE III—VETERANS EXTENDERS

TITLE IV—BUDGETARY EFFECTS

SEC. 3. REFERENCES.

Except as expressly provided otherwise, any reference to "this Act" contained in any division of this Act shall be treated as referring only to the provisions of that division.

DIVISION A—CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2025

The following sums are hereby appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, and out of applicable corporate or other revenues, receipts, and funds, for the several departments, agencies, corporations, and other organizational units of Government for fiscal year 2025, and for other purposes, namely:

SEC. 101. Such amounts as may be necessary, at a rate for operations as provided in the applicable appropriations Acts for fiscal year 2024 and under the authority and conditions provided in such Acts, for continuing projects or activities (including the costs of direct loans and loan guarantees) that are not otherwise specifically provided for in this Act, that were conducted in fiscal year 2024, and for which appropriations, funds, or other authority were made available in the following appropriations Acts:

(1) The Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024 (division B of Public Law 118-42).

(2) The Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024 (division C of Public Law 118-42).

(3) The Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2024 (division A of Public Law 118-47).

(4) The Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024 (division D of Public Law 118-42).

(5) The Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act, 2024 (division B of Public Law 118-47), except sections 637 and 638.

(6) The Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2024 (division C of Public Law 118-47), except section 546(e), and including sections 102 through 105 of title I of division G of Public Law 118-47.

(7) The Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024 (division E of Public Law 118-42), except section 447.

(8) The Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024 (division D of Public Law 118-47).

(9) The Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 2024 (division E of Public Law 118-47), except the matter under the heading “Joint Items—Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies of 2025”, and including section 7 in the matter preceding division A of Public Law 118-47.

(10) The Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024 (division A of Public Law 118-42), except section 259.

(11) The Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2024 (division F of Public Law 118-47), except section 7075(a).

(12) The Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024 (division F of Public Law 118-42).

SEC. 102. (a) No appropriation or funds made available or authority granted pursuant to section 101 for the Department of Defense shall be used for:

(1) the new production of items not funded for production in fiscal year 2024 or prior years;

(2) the increase in production rates above those sustained with fiscal year 2024 funds; or

(3) the initiation, resumption, or continuation of any project, activity, operation, or organization (defined as any project, subproject, activity, budget activity, program element, and subprogram within a program element, and for any investment items defined as a P-1 line item in a budget activity within an appropriation account and an R-1 line item that includes a program element and subprogram element within an appropriation account) for which appropriations, funds, or other authority were not available during fiscal year 2024.

(b) No appropriation or funds made available or authority granted pursuant to section 101 for the Department of Defense shall be used to initiate multi-year procurements

utilizing advance procurement funding for economic order quantity procurement unless specifically appropriated later.

SEC. 103. Appropriations made by section 101 shall be available to the extent and in the manner that would be provided by the pertinent appropriations Act.

SEC. 104. Except as otherwise provided in section 102, no appropriation or funds made available or authority granted pursuant to section 101 shall be used to initiate or resume any project or activity for which appropriations, funds, or other authority were not available during fiscal year 2024.

SEC. 105. Appropriations made and authority granted pursuant to this Act shall cover all obligations or expenditures incurred for any project or activity during the period for which funds or authority for such project or activity are available under this Act.

SEC. 106. Unless otherwise provided for in this Act or in the applicable appropriations Act for fiscal year 2025, appropriations and funds made available and authority granted pursuant to this Act shall be available until whichever of the following first occurs:

(1) The enactment into law of an appropriation for any project or activity provided for in this Act.

(2) The enactment into law of the applicable appropriations Act for fiscal year 2025 without any provision for such project or activity.

(3) December 20, 2024.

SEC. 107. Expenditures made pursuant to this Act shall be charged to the applicable appropriation, fund, or authorization whenever a bill in which such applicable appropriation, fund, or authorization is contained is enacted into law.

SEC. 108. Appropriations made and funds made available by or authority granted pursuant to this Act may be used without regard to the time limitations for submission and approval of apportionments set forth in section 1513 of title 31, United States Code, but nothing in this Act may be construed to waive any other provision of law governing the apportionment of funds.

SEC. 109. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, except section 106, for those programs that would otherwise have high initial rates of operation or complete distribution of appropriations at the beginning of fiscal year 2025 because of distributions of funding to States, foreign countries, grantees, or others, such high initial rates of operation or complete distribution shall not be made, and no grants shall be awarded for such programs funded by this Act that would impinge on final funding prerogatives.

SEC. 110. This Act shall be implemented so that only the most limited funding action of that permitted in the Act shall be taken in order to provide for continuation of projects and activities.

SEC. 111. (a) For entitlements and other mandatory payments whose budget authority was provided in appropriations Acts for fiscal year 2024, and for activities under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, activities shall be continued at the rate to maintain program levels under current law, under the authority and conditions provided in the applicable appropriations Act for fiscal year 2024, to be continued through the date specified in section 106(3).

(b) Notwithstanding section 106, obligations for mandatory payments due on or about the first day of any month that begins after October 2024 but not later than 30 days after the date specified in section 106(3) may continue to be made, and funds shall be available for such payments.

SEC. 112. Amounts made available under section 101 for civilian personnel compensation and benefits in each department and agency may be apportioned up to the rate for

operations necessary to avoid furloughs within such department or agency, consistent with the applicable appropriations Act for fiscal year 2024, except that such authority provided under this section shall not be used until after the department or agency has taken all necessary actions to reduce or defer non-personnel-related administrative expenses.

SEC. 113. Funds appropriated by this Act may be obligated and expended notwithstanding section 10 of Public Law 91-672 (22 U.S.C. 2412), section 15 of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2680), section 313 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995 (22 U.S.C. 6212), and section 504(a)(1) of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3094(a)(1)).

SEC. 114. (a) Each amount incorporated by reference in this Act that was previously designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 or as being for disaster relief pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(D) of such Act is designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of such Act or as being for disaster relief pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(D) of such Act, respectively.

(b) Section 6 of Public Laws 118-42 and 118-47 shall apply to amounts designated in subsection (a) and sections 138, 140, and 151 of this Act as an emergency requirement.

(c) Each amount incorporated by reference in this Act that was previously designated in division B of Public Law 117-159, division J of Public Law 117-58, or in section 443(b) of division G of Public Law 117-328 by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to a concurrent resolution on the budget shall continue to be treated as an amount specified in section 103(b) of division A of Public Law 118-5.

(d) This section shall become effective immediately upon enactment of this Act, and shall remain in effect through the date in section 106(3).

SEC. 115. (a) Rescissions or cancellations of discretionary budget authority that continue pursuant to section 101 in Treasury Appropriations Fund Symbols (TAFS)—

(1) to which other appropriations are not provided by this Act, but for which there is a current applicable TAFS that does receive an appropriation in this Act; or

(2) which are no-year TAFS and receive other appropriations in this Act, may be continued instead by reducing the rate for operations otherwise provided by section 101 for such current applicable TAFS, as long as doing so does not impinge on the final funding prerogatives of the Congress.

(b) Rescissions or cancellations described in subsection (a) shall continue in an amount equal to the lesser of—

(1) the amount specified for rescission or cancellation in the applicable appropriations Act referenced in section 101 of this Act; or

(2) the amount of balances available, as of October 1, 2024, from the funds specified for rescission or cancellation in the applicable appropriations Act referenced in section 101 of this Act.

(c) No later than November 18, 2024, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall provide to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate a comprehensive list of the rescissions or cancellations that will continue pursuant to section 101: *Provided*, That the information in such comprehensive list shall be periodically updated to reflect any subsequent changes in the amount of balances available, as of October 1, 2024, from the funds specified for rescission or cancellation in the applicable appropriations Act referenced in section 101, and such updates shall

be transmitted to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate upon request.

SEC. 116. Amounts made available by section 101 for “Farm Service Agency—Agricultural Credit Insurance Fund Program Account” may be apportioned up to the rate for operations necessary to accommodate approved applications for direct and guaranteed farm ownership loans, as authorized by 7 U.S.C. 1922 et seq., and direct farm operating loans, as authorized by 7 U.S.C. 1941 et seq.

SEC. 117. Amounts made available by section 101 for “Rural Housing Service—Rural Community Facilities Program Account” may be apportioned up to the rate for operations necessary to maintain activities as authorized by section 306 and described in section 381E(d)(1) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act.

SEC. 118. Amounts made available by section 101 for “Domestic Food Programs—Food and Nutrition Service—Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)” may be apportioned at the rate for operations necessary to maintain participation.

SEC. 119. Amounts made available by section 101 for “Domestic Food Programs—Food and Nutrition Service—Commodity Assistance Program” may be apportioned up to the rate for operations necessary to maintain current program caseload in the Commodity Supplemental Food Program.

SEC. 120. Section 260 of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1636i) and section 942 of the Livestock Mandatory Reporting Act of 1999 (7 U.S.C. 1635 note; Public Law 106-78) shall be applied by substituting the date specified in section 106(3) of this Act for “September 30, 2024”.

SEC. 121. During the period covered by this Act, section 235(b) of the Sentencing Reform Act of 1984 (18 U.S.C. 3551 note; Public Law 98-473; 98 Stat. 2032), as such section relates to chapter 311 of title 18, United States Code, and the United States Parole Commission, shall be applied by substituting “37” for “36” each place it appears.

SEC. 122. Notwithstanding section 104, amounts made available by section 101 for “Corps of Engineers—Civil—Operation and Maintenance” may be used up to an amount not to exceed \$37,600,000, adjusted for inflation beginning August 1, 2024, to provide compensation for reserving and operating 3.6 million acre-feet of pre-planned flood storage at Hugh Keenleyside Dam to minimize the flood risk in the Columbia River Basin in the United States.

SEC. 123. During the period covered by this Act, section 3 of Public Law 106-392 shall be applied by substituting “2025” for “2024” each place it appears.

SEC. 124. Notwithstanding section 106, for the duration of fiscal year 2025, amounts made available under section 601(f)(3) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 801(f)(3)) shall be available for any necessary expenses of the Department of the Treasury Office of Inspector General with respect to section 601 of such Act, subtitle A of title V of division N of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, or section 3201 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, in addition to amounts otherwise available for such purposes.

SEC. 125. Notwithstanding section 101, for “Executive Office of the President—Office of Administration—Presidential Transition Administrative Support”, there is appropriated \$25,000,000 for an additional amount for fiscal year 2025, to remain available until September 30, 2025, to carry out the Presidential Transition Act of 1963 (3 U.S.C. 102 note) and similar expenses, in addition to amounts otherwise available for such purposes: *Provided*, That such funds may be transferred to

other accounts (including other agencies) that provide support to offices within the Executive Office of the President and the Office of the Vice President, to carry out such purposes, including to reimburse obligations incurred prior to the enactment of this Act for such purposes.

SEC. 126. In addition to amounts otherwise provided by section 101, amounts are provided for “District of Columbia—Federal Payment for Emergency Planning and Security Costs in the District of Columbia” at a rate for operations of \$47,000,000, for an additional amount for costs associated with the Presidential Inauguration to be held in January 2025: *Provided*, That such amounts may be apportioned up to the rate for operations necessary to maintain emergency planning and security activities relating to such Presidential Inauguration.

SEC. 127. (a) The matter preceding the first proviso under the heading “Federal Payment to the District of Columbia Public Defender Service” in division B of Public Law 118-47 is amended by striking “, for costs associated with relocation under a replacement lease for headquarters offices, field offices, and related facilities”.

(b)(1) Subject to paragraph (2), subsection (a) shall become effective immediately upon enactment of this Act.

(2) If this Act is enacted after September 30, 2024, subsection (a) shall be applied as if it were in effect on September 30, 2024.

(c) Notwithstanding section 101, the matter preceding the first proviso under the heading “Federal Payment to the District of Columbia Public Defender Service” in division B of Public Law 118-47, as amended by subsection (a), shall be applied as if “, of which \$3,000,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2026” were struck.

SEC. 128. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, except section 106, the District of Columbia may expend local funds made available under the heading “District of Columbia—District of Columbia Funds” for such programs and activities under the District of Columbia Appropriations Act, 2024 (title IV of division B of Public Law 118-47) at the rate set forth in the Fiscal Year 2025 Local Budget Act of 2024 (D.C. Act 25-501), as modified as of the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 129. (a) Notwithstanding section 101, for “General Services Administration—Expenses, Presidential Transition”, there is appropriated \$19,424,177, for an additional amount for fiscal year 2025, to remain available until September 30, 2025, for necessary expenses to carry out the Presidential Transition Act of 1963 (3 U.S.C. 102 note), of which \$14,443,726 is available for activities authorized by sections 3(a)(1) through 3(a)(7) and 3(a)(10) of such Act; \$2,980,451 is available for activities authorized by section 5 of such Act; and \$2,000,000 is available for activities authorized by sections 3(a)(8) and 3(a)(9) of such Act: *Provided*, That if there are two or more possible apparent successful candidates, each such candidate, with the exception of the incumbent President, is entitled to a proportional share of the appropriations made available for activities authorized by sections 3(a)(1) through 3(a)(7) and 3(a)(10) and sections 3(a)(8) and 3(a)(9) of such Act: *Provided further*, That no apparent successful candidate shall receive more than \$7,221,863 for activities authorized by sections 3(a)(1) through 3(a)(7) and 3(a)(10) of such Act and \$1,000,000 for activities authorized by sections 3(a)(8) and 3(a)(9) of such Act: *Provided further*, That such amounts may be transferred and credited to the “Acquisition Services Fund” or the “Federal Buildings Fund” to reimburse obligations incurred prior to enactment of this Act for the purposes provided herein related to the Presidential elec-

tion in 2024: *Provided further*, That in the case of two or more possible apparent successful candidates, after a sole apparent successful candidate is determined, the remaining funds allotted to any unsuccessful candidate shall be permanently rescinded: *Provided further*, That amounts available under this section shall be in addition to any other amounts available for such purposes.

(b) Notwithstanding section 101, no funds are provided by this Act for “General Services Administration—Pre-Election Presidential Transition”.

SEC. 130. In addition to amounts otherwise provided by section 101, for “National Archives and Records Administration—Operating Expenses”, there is appropriated \$23,000,000, for an additional amount for fiscal year 2025, to remain available until September 30, 2025, to carry out transition responsibilities of the Archivist of the United States under sections 2201 through 2209 of title 44, United States Code (commonly known as the “Presidential Records Act of 1978”), in addition to amounts otherwise available for such purposes.

SEC. 131. Notwithstanding section 101, the matter preceding the first proviso under the heading “Office of Personnel Management—Salaries and Expenses” in division B of Public Law 118-47 shall be applied by substituting “\$190,784,000” for “\$219,076,000” and the second proviso under such heading in such division of such Act shall be applied by substituting “\$245,267,000” for “\$192,975,000”.

SEC. 132. Notwithstanding section 104, amounts made available by section 101 to the Department of Homeland Security for “Coast Guard—Procurement, Construction, and Improvements” may be used for closeout costs relating to the C-27J missionization program.

SEC. 133. During the period covered by this Act, section 11223(b)(2) of division K of Public Law 117-263 shall be applied by substituting “shall not apply” for “shall apply”.

SEC. 134. Amounts made available by section 101 to the Department of Homeland Security under the heading “Federal Emergency Management Agency—Disaster Relief Fund” may be apportioned up to the rate for operations necessary to carry out response and recovery activities under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.).

SEC. 135. Amounts made available by section 101 to the Department of Homeland Security for “United States Secret Service—Operations and Support” may be apportioned up to the rate for operations necessary to carry out protective operations, including activities related to National Special Security Events and the 2024 Presidential Campaign.

SEC. 136. In addition to amounts otherwise provided by section 101, there is appropriated to the Department of Homeland Security for “United States Secret Service—Operations and Support”, \$231,000,000, for an additional amount for fiscal year 2025, to remain available until September 30, 2025, for operations necessary to carry out protective operations including the 2024 Presidential Campaign and National Special Security Events: *Provided*, That not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the United States Secret Service shall provide to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate an expenditure plan that identifies, by program, project, and activity, the funding obligated for the purposes specified in this section with amounts for “Operations and Support” in this Act and shall provide to the Committees monthly reports on the execution of such expenditure plan: *Provided further*, That such amounts may not be obligated until the Secretary of the Department of Homeland

Security transmits to the House of Representatives Task Force on the Attempted Assassination of Donald J. Trump and the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs the Mission Assurance Report: *Provided further*, That within 15 days of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security shall provide to the House of Representatives Task Force on the Attempted Assassination of Donald J. Trump all materials responsive to such Task Force's letters transmitted on August 12, 2024, and August 28, 2024: *Provided further*, That the Director of the Secret Service shall respond in a timely manner to oversight inquiries (including requests for documents, information, and testimony from any Secret Service personnel) on protective operations funded in this Act or in Public Law 118-47 from the House of Representatives Task Force on the Attempted Assassination of Donald J. Trump; the Committees on Appropriations, Homeland Security, Oversight and Accountability, and Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and the Committees on Appropriations, Judiciary, and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, or any subcommittees thereof: *Provided further*, That responses shall be considered timely if provided on or before the deadline specified by the requesting committee or subcommittee.

SEC. 137. (a) Sections 1309(a) and 1319 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4016(a) and 4026) shall be applied by substituting the date specified in section 106(3) of this Act for "September 30, 2023".

(b)(1) Subject to paragraph (2), this section shall become effective immediately upon enactment of this Act.

(2) If this Act is enacted after September 30, 2024, this section shall be applied as if it were in effect on September 30, 2024.

SEC. 138. (a) During the period covered by this Act, section 104 of the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire Assistance Act (division G of Public Law 117-180) shall be applied by substituting the date specified in section 106(3) of this Act for "2 years after the date on which regulations are first promulgated under subsection (f)", and "May 31, 2024".

(b) Amounts repurposed pursuant to this section that were previously designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 or a concurrent resolution on the budget are designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

SEC. 139. In addition to amounts otherwise provided by section 101, amounts are provided for "Department of the Interior—National Park Service—Operation of the National Park System" at a rate for operations of \$5,000,000, for an additional amount for security and visitor safety activities related to the Presidential Inaugural Ceremonies.

SEC. 140. (a) Funds previously made available in the Further Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Requirements Act, 2018 (subdivision 1 of division B of Public Law 115-123) for the "National Park Service—Historic Preservation Fund" that were available for obligation through fiscal year 2019 are to remain available through fiscal year 2026 for the liquidation of valid obligations incurred in fiscal years 2018 and 2019: *Provided*, That amounts repurposed pursuant to this section that were previously designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 are designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

(b)(1) Subject to paragraph (2), this section shall become effective immediately upon enactment of this Act.

(2) If this Act is enacted after September 30, 2024, this section shall be applied as if it were in effect on September 30, 2024.

SEC. 141. Amounts made available by section 101 for "Department of Agriculture—Forest Service—Wildland Fire Management" may be apportioned up to the rate for operations necessary for wildfire suppression activities.

SEC. 142. (a) In addition to amounts otherwise provided by section 101, amounts are provided for "Department of Health and Human Services—Indian Health Service—Indian Health Services" at a rate for operations of \$24,262,000, for an additional amount for costs of staffing and operating facilities that were opened, renovated, or expanded in fiscal years 2024 and 2025, and such amounts may be apportioned up to the rate for operations necessary to staff and operate such facilities.

(b) In addition to amounts otherwise provided by section 101, amounts are provided for "Department of Health and Human Services—Indian Health Service—Indian Health Facilities" at a rate for operations of \$2,060,000, for an additional amount for costs of staffing and operating facilities that were opened, renovated, or expanded in fiscal years 2024 and 2025, and such amounts may be apportioned up to the rate for operations necessary to staff and operate such facilities.

SEC. 143. During the period covered by this Act, section 113 of division G of Public Law 113-76, as amended by Public Law 116-6, shall be applied by substituting "2025" for "2024".

SEC. 144. In addition to amounts otherwise provided by section 101, amounts are provided for "Department of Labor—Bureau of Labor Statistics—Salaries and Expenses" at a rate for operations of \$6,000,000, for an additional amount for the Current Population Survey.

SEC. 145. Activities authorized by part A of title IV (other than under section 403(c) or 418) and section 1108(b) of the Social Security Act shall continue through the date specified in section 106(3), in the manner authorized for fiscal year 2024, and out of any money in the Treasury of the United States not otherwise appropriated, there are hereby appropriated such sums as may be necessary for such purpose.

SEC. 146. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, there is appropriated—

(1) for payment to the heirs at law of Sheila Jackson Lee, late a Representative from the State of Texas, \$174,000;

(2) for payment to Elsie M. Pascrell, widow of William Pascrell, Jr., late a Representative from the State of New Jersey, \$174,000; and

(3) for payment to Beatrice Y. Payne, widow of Donald M. Payne, Jr., late a Representative from the State of New Jersey, \$174,000.

SEC. 147. Notwithstanding sections 102 and 104, amounts made available by section 101 to the Department of Defense for "Military Construction, Navy" may be used by the Secretary of the Navy to carry out military construction not otherwise authorized by law for a Trident Refit Facility project at Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay.

SEC. 148. Notwithstanding section 101, section 126 of division A of Public Law 118-42 shall be applied by substituting "fiscal year 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020" for "fiscal year 2017, 2018, and 2019".

SEC. 149. (a) The remaining unobligated balances as of September 30, 2024, from amounts made available until September 30, 2024, for "Departmental Administration—Construction, Major Projects" in title II of division F of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (Public Law 116-94) are hereby rescinded, and in addition to amounts otherwise provided by section 101, an amount

of additional new budget authority equivalent to the amount rescinded pursuant to this section is hereby appropriated on September 30, 2024, for an additional amount for fiscal year 2024, to remain available until September 30, 2029, and shall be available for the same purposes and under the same authorities provided under such heading in Public Law 116-94, in addition to other funds as may be available for such purposes.

(b)(1) Subject to paragraph (2), this section shall become effective immediately upon enactment of this Act.

(2) If this Act is enacted after September 30, 2024, this section shall be applied as if it were in effect on September 30, 2024.

SEC. 150. Amounts made available by section 101 for "Department of Transportation—Office of the Secretary—Payments to Air Carriers" may be apportioned up to the rate for operations necessary to maintain Essential Air Service program operations.

SEC. 151. During the period covered by this Act, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development may use the unobligated balances of amounts made available in prior fiscal years in the second paragraph under the heading "Department of Housing and Urban Development—Public and Indian Housing—Tenant-Based Rental Assistance" to support additional allocations under subparagraph (D) of paragraph (1) and subparagraph (B) of paragraph (4) of such heading to prevent the termination of rental assistance for families as a result of insufficient funding in the calendar year 2024 funding cycle: *Provided*, That amounts repurposed pursuant to this section that were previously designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to a concurrent resolution on the budget or the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 are designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

SEC. 152. During the period covered by this Act, section 517 of title 10, United States Code, shall not apply with respect to the Coast Guard.

This division may be cited as the "Continuing Appropriations Act, 2025".

DIVISION B—EXTENSIONS

TITLE I—MISCELLANEOUS EXTENSIONS

SEC. 101. PROTECTION OF CERTAIN FACILITIES AND ASSETS FROM UNMANNED AIRCRAFT.

Section 210G(i) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 124n(i)) is amended by striking "October 1, 2024" and inserting "December 20, 2024".

SEC. 102. JOINT TASK FORCES.

Section 708(b)(13) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 348(b)(13)) shall be applied by substituting "December 20, 2024" for "September 30, 2024".

SEC. 103. NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY PROTECTION SYSTEM AUTHORIZATION.

Section 227(a) of the Federal Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015 (6 U.S.C. 1525(a)) is amended by striking "September 30, 2024" and inserting "December 20, 2024".

SEC. 104. CHESAPEAKE AND OHIO CANAL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK COMMISSION.

Section 6(g) of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Development Act (16 U.S.C. 410y-4(g)) is amended by striking "40" and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting "on December 20, 2024".

SEC. 105. EBT BENEFIT FRAUD PREVENTION.

Section 501 of division HH of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (7 U.S.C. 2016a), is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (4)(A)(iii), by striking "to the maximum extent practicable,"; and

(B) in paragraph (5)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “October” and inserting “December”;

(ii) in subparagraph (A), by striking “to the maximum extent practicable,”;

(iii) in subparagraph (C), by striking “and” at the end;

(iv) by redesignating subparagraph (D) as subparagraph (E);

(v) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following:

“(D) a comparison of State plans related to reimbursement, prevention, and other relevant procedures approved in accordance with subsection (b)(1)(A); and”;

(vi) in subparagraph (E) (as so redesignated), by inserting “and proactively” after “consistently”;

(2) in subsection (b)(2)(C), by striking “September 30, 2024” and inserting “December 20, 2024”;

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(e) COMPTROLLER GENERAL.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that examines risks related to supplemental nutrition assistance program electronic benefit transfer payment system security, including the risk of stolen benefits through card skimming, card cloning, and other similar methods.

“(2) CONTENTS.—The report under paragraph (1) shall include an assessment of—

“(A) the extent to which the Department of Agriculture manages payment system security, including risks related to stolen benefits, compared to leading industry practices;

“(B) the manner in which States, retailers, and other relevant entities manage risks related to stolen benefits;

“(C) the oversight of and guidance provided by the Secretary to States regarding stolen benefits; and

“(D) recommendations and policy options for—

“(i) improving how the Department of Agriculture and other relevant entities manage payment system security risks, including those related to stolen benefits; and

“(ii) how the Department of Agriculture may best share those improvements with States, retailers, and other relevant entities.”.

SEC. 106. EXTENSION OF FOREST SERVICE PARTICIPATION IN ACES PROGRAM.

Section 8302(b) of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 3851a(b)) shall be applied by substituting “1 day after December 20, 2024” for “October 1, 2023”.

SEC. 107. EXTENSION OF GOOD NEIGHBOR AUTHORITY.

Section 8206(b)(2)(C)(ii) of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a(b)(2)(C)(ii)) shall be applied by substituting “1 day after December 20, 2024” for “October 1, 2024”.

SEC. 108. TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF FOOD FOR PEACE ACT.

The authorities provided by each provision of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1691 et seq.), as in effect on September 30, 2024, shall remain in effect through December 20, 2024.

SEC. 109. OVERSEAS PAY COMPARABILITY AND LIMITATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The authority provided under section 1113 of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2009 (Public Law 111-32; 123 Stat. 1904) shall remain in effect through December 20, 2024.

(b) LIMITATION.—The authority described in subsection (a) may not be used to pay an

eligible member of the Foreign Service (as defined in section 1113(b) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2009 (Public Law 111-32; 123 Stat. 1904)) a locality-based comparability payment (stated as a percentage) that exceeds two-thirds of the amount of the locality-based comparability payment (stated as a percentage) that would be payable to such member under section 5304 of title 5, United States Code, if such member’s official duty station were in the District of Columbia.

SEC. 110. PROVISIONS RELATED TO THE COMPACT OF FREE ASSOCIATION WITH THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU.

(a) FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU.—During the period beginning on October 1, 2024, and ending on the date on which a new Federal programs and services agreement with the Government of the Republic of Palau enters into force, any activities described in sections 132 and 221(a) of the Compact of Free Association between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Palau set forth in section 201 of Public Law 99-658 (48 U.S.C. 1931 note) shall, with the mutual consent of the Government of the Republic of Palau, continue in the manner authorized and required for fiscal year 2024 under the amended agreements described in subsections (b) and (f) of section 462 of that Compact.

(b) AMENDMENTS RELATED TO THE 2024 FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU.—

(1) Section 204(e) of the Compact of Free Association Amendments Act of 2024 (48 U.S.C. 1983(e)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (4), by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (4) as subparagraphs (A) through (D), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(C) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) (as so redesignated), by striking “An agreement” and inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—An agreement”;

and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU.—Subparagraphs (A) and (D)(iii) of section 101(c)(2) of Public Law 99-658 (48 U.S.C. 1931(c)(2)) and subsection (d)(2)(A) shall not apply to an agreement that would amend, change, or terminate the agreement described in section 462(f) of the U.S.-Palau Compact.”.

(2) Section 210(a)(2) of the Compact of Free Association Amendments Act of 2024 (48 U.S.C. 1989(a)(2)) is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (D), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) by redesignating subparagraph (E) as subparagraph (F); and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (D) the following:

“(E) with respect to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, any applicable Federal programs and services agreement between the United States and the Republic of Palau; and”.

SEC. 111. UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CIVIL SERVICE ANNUITANT WAIVER.

Section 625(j)(1)(B) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2385(j)(1)(B)) shall be applied by striking “October 1, 2010” and inserting “December 20, 2024”.

SEC. 112. UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT INSPECTOR GENERAL ANNUITANT WAIVER.

The authorities provided under section 1015(b) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-212; 124 Stat. 2332)—

(1) shall remain in effect through December 20, 2024; and

(2) may be used to facilitate the assignment of persons for oversight of programs in countries with a humanitarian disaster or complex emergency declaration.

SEC. 113. EXTENSION OF HONG KONG HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY ACT OF 2019.

Section 7(h) of the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act of 2019 (Public Law 116-76; 22 U.S.C. 5701 note) is amended by striking “the date that is 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act” and inserting “December 20, 2024”.

SEC. 114. EXTENSION OF TRANSFERS OF AIR TRAFFIC SYSTEMS ACQUIRED WITH AIP FUNDING.

Section 728(b) of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 (Public Law 118-63) is amended by striking “October 1, 2024” and inserting “December 20, 2024”.

TITLE II—HEALTH EXTENDERS

Subtitle A—Public Health

SEC. 201. EXTENSION OF PROGRAMS RELATING TO AUTISM.

(a) DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SURVEILLANCE AND RESEARCH PROGRAM.—Section 399AA(e) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280i(e)) is amended by striking “September 30, 2024” and inserting “December 20, 2024”.

(b) AUTISM EDUCATION, EARLY DETECTION, AND INTERVENTION.—Section 399BB(g) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280i-1(g)) is amended by striking “September 30, 2024” and inserting “December 20, 2024”.

(c) INTERAGENCY AUTISM COORDINATING COMMITTEE.—Section 399CC(f) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 280i-2(f)) is amended by striking “September 30, 2024” and inserting “December 20, 2024”.

SEC. 202. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY TO ISSUE PRIORITY REVIEW VOUCHERS TO ENCOURAGE TREATMENTS FOR RARE PEDIATRIC DISEASES.

Section 529(b)(5) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 360ff(b)(5)) is amended by striking “September 30, 2024” each place it appears and inserting “December 20, 2024”.

SEC. 203. NO SURPRISES ACT IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING.

Section 118(a) of title I of division BB of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Public Law 116-260) is amended by striking “through 2024” and inserting “through September 30, 2025”.

Subtitle B—Medicaid

SEC. 211. MEDICAID FUNDING FOR THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS.

Section 1108(g) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1308) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “and (5)” and inserting “, (5), and (14)”;

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(14) ADDITIONAL INCREASE FOR THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall increase the total amount otherwise determined under this subsection for the Northern Mariana Islands for the period beginning on October 1, 2022, and ending on September 30, 2024, by \$27,100,000.

“(B) SPECIAL RULES.—The increase described in subparagraph (A)—

“(i) shall apply to the total amount certified by the Secretary under title XIX for payment to the Northern Mariana Islands for services attributable to fiscal year 2023 or 2024, notwithstanding that payments for any such services are made by the Northern Mariana Islands in fiscal year 2025; and

“(ii) shall be in addition to the amount calculated under paragraph (2) for the Northern

Mariana Islands for fiscal years 2023 and 2024 and shall not be taken into account in calculating an amount under paragraph (2) for the Northern Mariana Islands for fiscal year 2025 or a subsequent fiscal year.”.

Subtitle C—Medicare

SEC. 221. REVISING PHASE-IN OF MEDICARE CLINICAL LABORATORY TEST PAYMENT CHANGES.

(a) REVISED PHASE-IN OF REDUCTIONS FROM PRIVATE PAYOR RATE IMPLEMENTATION.—Section 1834A(b)(3) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m–1(b)(3)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “2027” and inserting “2028”; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in clause (ii), by striking “2024” and inserting “2025”; and

(B) in clause (iii), by striking “2025 through 2027” and inserting “2026 through 2028”.

(b) REVISED REPORTING PERIOD FOR REPORTING OF PRIVATE SECTOR PAYMENT RATES FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF MEDICARE PAYMENT RATES.—Section 1834A(a)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m–1(a)(1)(B)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by striking “2024” and inserting “2025”; and

(2) in clause (ii), by striking “2025” each place it appears and inserting “2026”.

SEC. 222. MEDICARE IMPROVEMENT FUND.

Section 1898(b)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395iii(b)(1)) is amended by striking “2022, \$0” and inserting “2026, \$3,197,000,000”.

TITLE III—VETERANS EXTENDERS

Subtitle A—Health Care

SEC. 301. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY FOR COLLECTION OF COPAYMENTS FOR HOSPITAL CARE AND NURSING HOME CARE.

Section 1710(f)(2)(B) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “September 30, 2024” and inserting “September 30, 2025”.

SEC. 302. EXTENSION OF REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE NURSING HOME CARE TO CERTAIN VETERANS WITH SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES.

Section 1710A(d) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “September 30, 2024” and inserting “September 30, 2025”.

SEC. 303. EXTENSION OF EXPANSION OF RURAL ACCESS NETWORK FOR GROWTH ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Section 2(d) of the Sgt. Ketchum Rural Veterans Mental Health Act of 2021 (Public Law 117–21; 38 U.S.C. 1712A note) is amended by striking “2024” and inserting “2025”.

SEC. 304. EXTENSION OF PILOT PROGRAM TO PROVIDE VETERANS ACCESS TO COMPLEMENTARY AND INTEGRATIVE HEALTH PROGRAMS THROUGH ANIMAL THERAPY, AGRITHERAPY, SPORTS AND RECREATION THERAPY, ART THERAPY, AND POSTTRAUMATIC GROWTH PROGRAMS.

Section 203(d)(1) of the Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act of 2019 (Public Law 116–171; 38 U.S.C. 1712A note) is amended by striking “for a three-year period beginning on the commencement of the pilot program” and inserting “until September 30, 2025”.

SEC. 305. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY FOR JOINT DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE-DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL FACILITY DEMONSTRATION FUND.

Section 1704(e) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (Public Law 111–84; 123 Stat. 2573), as most recently amended by section 104 of division E of the Continuing Appropriations and Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023 (Public

Law 117–180; 136 Stat. 2137), is amended by striking “September 30, 2024” and inserting “September 30, 2025”.

Subtitle B—Memorial Affairs

SEC. 311. EXTENSION OF ENTITLEMENT TO MEMORIAL HEADSTONES AND MARKERS FOR COMMEMORATION OF VETERANS AND CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS.

Section 2306(b)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “October 1, 2024” both places it appears and inserting “September 30, 2025”.

SEC. 312. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY TO BURY REMAINS OF CERTAIN SPOUSES AND CHILDREN IN NATIONAL CEMETERIES.

Section 2402(a)(5) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “October 1, 2024” and inserting “September 30, 2025”.

SEC. 313. AUTHORITY FOR USE OF FLAT GRAVE MARKERS AT SANTA FE NATIONAL CEMETERY, NEW MEXICO.

Section 2404(c)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (D), by striking “; and” and inserting a period at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(F) in the case of Santa Fe National Cemetery, New Mexico, the Secretary may provide for flat grave markers in any section of such cemetery in which flat markers were in use on December 22, 2023.”.

Subtitle C—Homelessness

SEC. 321. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE FOR SPECIALLY ADAPTED HOUSING FOR DISABLED VETERANS RESIDING TEMPORARILY IN HOUSING OWNED BY A FAMILY MEMBER.

Section 2102A(e) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “December 31, 2024” and inserting “September 30, 2025”.

SEC. 322. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY FOR SPECIALLY ADAPTED HOUSING ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY GRANT PROGRAM.

Section 2108(g) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “September 30, 2024” and inserting “September 30, 2025”.

SEC. 323. EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR HOMELESS WOMEN VETERANS AND HOMELESS VETERANS WITH CHILDREN RE-INTEGRATION GRANT PROGRAM.

Section 2021A(f)(1) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “2024” and inserting “2025”.

SEC. 324. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY FOR TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION FOR SERIOUSLY MENTALLY ILL AND HOMELESS VETERANS.

(a) GENERAL TREATMENT.—Section 2031(b) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “September 30, 2024” and inserting “September 30, 2025”.

(b) ADDITIONAL SERVICES AT CERTAIN LOCATIONS.—Section 2033(d) of such title is amended by striking “September 30, 2024” and inserting “September 30, 2025”.

SEC. 325. EXTENSION OF FUNDING FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FOR VERY LOW-INCOME VETERAN FAMILIES IN PERMANENT HOUSING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2044(e)(H) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “2024” and inserting “2025”.

(b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 2044(e) of such title is amended by redesignating subparagraphs (A) through (H) as paragraphs (1) through (8), respectively.

SEC. 326. EXTENSION OF FUNDING FOR GRANT PROGRAM FOR HOMELESS VETERANS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS.

Section 2061(d)(1) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “2024” and inserting “2025”.

Subtitle D—Other Authorities

SEC. 331. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY TO TRANS-PORT INDIVIDUALS TO AND FROM DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FACILITIES.

Section 111A(a)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “September 30, 2024” and inserting “September 30, 2025”.

SEC. 332. EXTENSION OF TESTIMONIAL SUBPOENA AUTHORITY OF INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Section 312(d)(7)(A) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “May 31, 2025” and inserting “September 30, 2025”.

SEC. 333. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY TO MAINTAIN REGIONAL OFFICE IN THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES.

Section 315(b) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “September 30, 2024” and inserting “September 30, 2025”.

SEC. 334. EXTENSION AND MODIFICATION OF AUTHORITY FOR MONTHLY ASSISTANCE ALLOWANCE FOR DISABLED VETERANS TRAINING IN PARALYMPIC AND OLYMPIC SPORTS PROGRAM.

Section 322 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “the United States Olympic Committee” each place it appears and inserting “the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee”; and

(2) in subsection (a), by striking “Veterans Benefits Administration” and inserting “Veterans Health Administration”; and

(3) in subsection (d), by amending paragraph (4) to read as follows:

“(4) There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subsection the following:

“(A) For each of fiscal years 2010 through 2023, \$2,000,000.

“(B) For each of fiscal years 2024 through 2027, \$2,500,000.”.

SEC. 335. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY FOR REPORT ON EQUITABLE RELIEF PROVIDED DUE TO ADMINISTRATIVE ERROR.

Section 503(c) of title 38, United States Code, is amended, in the second sentence, by striking “December 31, 2024” and inserting “December 31, 2025”.

SEC. 336. MODIFICATION OF CERTAIN HOUSING LOAN FEES.

The loan fee table in section 3729(b)(2) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “November 15, 2031” each place it appears and inserting “November 29, 2031”.

SEC. 337. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY FOR TRANSFER OF REAL PROPERTY.

Section 8118(a)(5) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “September 30, 2024” and inserting “September 30, 2025”.

SEC. 338. EXTENSION OF REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT.

Section 7103 of the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 (Public Law 116–315) is amended by striking “for fiscal year 2022 and each of the next three subsequent fiscal years” and inserting “for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2029”.

TITLE IV—BUDGETARY EFFECTS

SEC. 401. BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

(a) STATUTORY PAYGO SCORECARDS.—The budgetary effects of this division shall not be entered on either PAYGO scorecard maintained pursuant to section 4(d) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010.

(b) SENATE PAYGO SCORECARDS.—The budgetary effects of this division shall not be entered on any PAYGO scorecard maintained for purposes of section 4106 of H. Con. Res. 71 (115th Congress).

(c) CLASSIFICATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.—Notwithstanding Rule 3 of the Budget Scorekeeping Guidelines set forth in the

joint explanatory statement of the committee of conference accompanying Conference Report 105-217 and section 250(c)(8) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, the budgetary effects of this division shall not be estimated—

(1) for purposes of section 251 of such Act; (2) for purposes of an allocation to the Committee on Appropriations pursuant to section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974; and

(3) for purposes of paragraph (4)(C) of section 3 of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 as being included in an appropriation Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) and the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) each will control 20 minutes.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I claim the time in true opposition to the legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman from Connecticut opposed to this?

Ms. DELAURO. No, I am not opposed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas will control the time in opposition.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to yield one-half of my time to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), the distinguished ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, and ask that the gentlewoman be allowed to control that time.

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

There was no objection.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 9747.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 9747, the Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act of 2025.

In a matter of days, funding for the fiscal year 2024 will run out, and it is Congress' responsibility to ensure that the government remains open and serving the American people. We are here to avert harmful disruptions to our national security and vital programs our constituents rely on.

Before I discuss the underlying bill, I would like to note the progress this body has made so far on the appropriations process. After a late start due to the delay of the fiscal year 2024 process and a late Presidential budget request, the Appropriations Committee succeeded in passing all 12 of our fiscal 2025 bills out of committee, all of which were within the bounds of the Fiscal Responsibility Act, which is enshrined in law. The House then passed five of

those bills across the floor, representing nearly 71 percent of overall discretionary spending.

Despite House Republicans' strong momentum, time is drawing short, and our colleagues in the Senate—who have yet to pass all of their bills out of committee or to pass a single fiscal year 2025 bill across the floor—have not kept pace with the House. It is clear we are unable to complete the full appropriations process by September 30. That means that a continuing resolution is needed.

The bill before us is narrow in scope and continues government operations through December 20. It includes extensions for critical programs that must remain in place, such as WIC, TANF, and the National Flood Insurance Program. It also includes additional resources for the Secret Service to ensure candidates and government leaders are protected while also guaranteeing the full cooperation of the Secret Service with congressional investigations.

Mr. Speaker, governance by continuing resolution is not ideal. Like most, my preference would be to pass full-year individual appropriations bills through regular order, but we are out of time. We cannot afford a shutdown, which would be greatly damaging to our national security, to critical government programs, and to the American people, not to mention the enormous cost of government shutdowns.

I commend the Speaker for his efforts to find a path forward. He was dealt a very difficult hand and has delivered once again for the good of the country. This path ensures Americans aren't needlessly punished with a costly shutdown and allows the people, and, importantly, the next President, to have a say in the appropriations process.

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons, I urge all of my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 9747 today. I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Let me first say a thank you to the gentleman from Oklahoma for allowing me the 10 minutes of time. I am much appreciative.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this continuing resolution, which will avert a costly and pointless government shutdown and provide Congress with the time required to enact bipartisan, full-year funding bills for 2025.

We require a continuing resolution to keep the government open because House Republicans chose to squander the Second Session of the 118th Congress by writing extreme and harmful funding bills based on Donald Trump's Project 2025 manifesto, seven of which the House did not even consider because the majority knew the bills did not have the votes to pass on the floor of the House.

It is never ideal to govern with a continuing resolution, but this is a respon-

sible and sober measure that avoids many of the problems that would have been created with a 6-month funding bill.

After the continuing resolution is enacted, the Appropriations Committees should begin bipartisan negotiations to finish full-year bills by December 20. This will be a difficult task.

We must address significant shortfalls in veterans' healthcare, disaster relief, and other priorities. These problems demand bipartisan solutions, and so we must drop poison pill riders and massive cuts to the services that American families depend on so that this Congress can finish its work.

No matter who wins in November, we owe it to the next Congress and the next President to not saddle them with yesterday's problems. We know where we must end up, and it is my hope that this bill will provide the bipartisan momentum needed to arrive there.

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

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. The last time we moved all 12 appropriations bills through the House, I believe, was in FY 2010. The last time that we did not have to use a continuing resolution to be able to fund government, I believe, was 1997. I think four times in my lifetime have we been able to pass all 12 appropriations bills through both bodies and get them signed by the President of the United States.

This institution is failing. It is failing to do the one core thing it is supposed to try to figure out what to do, and that isn't the spending bills. It is actually defending the United States of America, securing the border of the United States, doing what the Constitution actually prescribes, what the preamble lays out, securing the blessings of liberty. We are not doing that.

We end up in a vicious circle every single year, the same vicious circle. The American people are watching, and they are wondering why on Earth cannot the 435 people sent here to represent them figure out how to do what every other family and business and nonprofit in the United States has to do?

The short answer is because we can and do print money. We irresponsibly continue to spend money that we do not have, that we have not collected, and we continue to retreat to the corners of our safe political spaces and hide behind them in order to try to sell something to the American people.

My colleagues on this side of the aisle tend to hide behind national defense and say, well, we must do this, and therefore we must spend more money that we don't have in order to accomplish the goal of defending the United States which, by the way, I would question whether we are actually defending the United States when our borders are not secure.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle have never met a program they don't want to advance to make

another promise that we can't fully honor to the American people in the form of some additional welfare payment or additional bunch of free stuff, but yet we never pay for any of this, not a dime.

□ 1430

We are taking in \$4.5 to \$5 trillion, and we are spending \$6.5 to \$7 trillion. What are we doing? I mean, it is absurd. The American people look at us and ask what on Earth is wrong in Washington. We end up back at the same spot every single year.

This year, the Speaker put forward a proposal that would have the continuing resolution extend into 2025 and then would have guaranteed that we know that only American citizens vote in American elections, in Federal elections.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle like to dismiss that as an issue that is not a problem, nonexistent, despite the data rolling in from States with their limited tools to go determine citizenship.

We had the secretary of state of Florida testify in front of the Constitution and Limited Government Subcommittee that they don't have the tools they need. They had to sue the Federal Government to get the limited tools they are using. Other States, Texas, identified people who were on the rolls that were noncitizens. We know it is a real issue.

Give us this simple measure that just reinforces existing law to ensure that issue, and we have violent opposition from our colleagues on the other side of the aisle. Then, inexplicably, a handful of people on this side of the aisle wanted to oppose that measure out of some sort of deference to opposition to a CR and then set the circumstances for where we are right now, today, where we find ourselves with the Speaker putting a short-term CR into December, which was the natural outcome, the predictable outcome of the opposition of the plan put forward by the Speaker 2 weeks ago.

It is more of the same games that get bemoaned by the very people complaining about the games. You can't complain that the games are going on and then play games. That is the truth.

I appreciate the Appropriations Committee chairman for working and trying to work across the Conference, across the entire body, to figure out how to get something done.

We passed 5 appropriations bills—better than none, not 12. Last year, we passed 7 appropriations bills—better than none, not all 12. The Senate, led by our Democratic colleagues over there, passed zero, not one. Not one appropriations bill has the Senate sent out of that Chamber to this Chamber.

Who is it who is serious about wanting to do our job? I will say, despite my publicly stated concerns about some decisions on this side of the aisle, the truth of the matter is that had our Democratic colleagues been in charge

of this Chamber, what we would have seen is a massive increase in spending. The nondefense spending would have gone up, whereas we have kept it flat. The defense spending that did go up we paid for out of the IRS expansion. We pulled that back so you didn't have IRS agents in your living rooms if you are a middle-class taxpayer.

We took COVID money and paid for that defense increase and were able to stop what the Democrats would have done, which would have passed legislation in the name of border security that would codify that dangerous release of individuals onto the streets of the United States that have led directly to the death of Americans, Americans like Jocelyn Nungaray, whose beautiful 27-year-old mom testified in the Judiciary Committee because her daughter went missing after she put her to bed on Sunday night and then, on Monday, she finds out that she was gagged, bound, and raped in Houston, Texas, and murdered.

Alexis Nungaray is a hero and had the courage to come testify about that, about what happened to her daughter. Are we doing anything about that? No. Our Democrat colleagues refuse.

Instead, they want to hide behind a bill in the Senate, which they couldn't even get out of the Democrat-controlled Senate, that never had any chance of passage. They want to say somehow that that was a grand bipartisan bill because—what?—a couple of Republican Senators had a couple of conversations with them about it.

The bill had no chance of moving, and that bill would have codified Kamala Harris', the border czar's, mass-release policies into the United States.

Laken Riley is dead. Jocelyn Nungaray is dead. Kayla Hamilton is dead. Rachel Morin is dead. I could go down the laundry list of Americans who have died at the hands of people released into the United States by this administration.

I could go down a laundry list of examples of noncitizens voting and our colleagues on the other side of the aisle not caring about it, wanting to continue to fund an executive branch that is refusing to follow the law, blatantly disregarding asylum laws, blatantly disregarding parole laws to endanger the American people.

That is why some of my colleagues here, by the way, didn't want to support a CR. They don't want to fund an executive branch that is at war with the people. If you are a Texan and now increasingly across the country, like Laken Riley in Georgia or Kayla and Rachel in Maryland, you can't help but believe that this administration is, in fact, at war with your well-being.

You have gangs now operating in Dallas and gangs operating in Colorado. You have expansive criminal activity and fentanyl pouring into our streets. We are not doing anything about it as the Article I branch that is sent here to check the Article II executive branch.

Here we are again, kicking the can down the road, to quote my friend—and he is my friend—the gentleman from Kentucky, THOMAS MASSIE, with whom I disagree on our tactical strategy with respect to the CR plus SAVE Act.

The CR plus SAVE Act was designed for a reason. We should secure American elections. We should guarantee that only American citizens vote in American elections. We should not be kicking the can down the road to December 20, a mere 5 days before Christmas.

That is what this town always does because this town is built around K Street. It is built around people believing they need to spend more money, and when we do that, then we just take another chunk out of the hide that is the fabric of this country, racking up more debt.

Mr. Speaker, 2 years ago, in 2022, a \$1.7 trillion omnibus bill was passed when? December 23. That is not an accident. It is by design. It is on purpose. That is what people in this town want. They want the pressure so that everybody will clap, get on their planes, and go home to open their gifts and be around the Christmas tree with their kids while they destroy the very country that they are here to represent.

That is what will happen unless we fight it. Now, we are going to have to spend a lot of time—and I will—fighting against whatever massive omnibus bill is tried to jam down our throats on December 20 before Christmas so that everybody can enjoy their jet fumes and role out of D.C. Last time, we threw in \$45 billion for Ukraine for good measure in that massive omnibus spending bill right before Christmas.

We shouldn't be in this place. We shouldn't be in this position. I think the Speaker was correct. I think the Committee on Appropriations chair was correct in working with the Speaker, and our body was correct in putting forward a bill that would have extended spending into next year.

Allow the next President and allow the next Congress to deal with this issue while we try to preserve and protect American elections. That is what we should have done.

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

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

Ms. DELAUNO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO), the distinguished ranking member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in reluctant support of H.R. 9747, which does the bare minimum to avoid a government shutdown, keeping the bus moving only until we ultimately face another Republican-induced funding crisis just before Christmas.

I say "reluctant support" because, for some unknown reason, this bill lacks a crucial \$12 billion that we direly need for the Veterans Health Administration. No one in the majority has

come even remotely close to explaining why, not Speaker Johnson, Majority Leader Scalise, not even my counterpart on the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Chairman BOST. Not a single person can articulate why we aren't helping veterans right now in this vehicle.

We know VHA requires this funding to be able to care for veterans, and we know Congress will provide this money eventually, so I am baffled as to why we are waiting. We can and should be doing it now, yet the bus remains stuck in the station.

What do we gain by holding veteran healthcare hostage to the majority's political whims? The answer is nothing. Yet, we still wait, our wheels spinning round and round, and veterans and their families are left in the lurch.

Mr. Speaker, how much longer must we continue to idle while the majority party deludes themselves into thinking they can govern? This has been the least productive Congress in modern history. The majority can't even convince its own Members to support its own bills.

The Speaker's no buses, anti-omnibus screed was as predictable as it was unrealistic in a divided government. Democrats have been repeatedly called upon to be the adults in the room and keep this body functioning.

Let's drop the pretense and work together on legislation we know has broad support. I can think of nothing that has broader consensus than funding veteran healthcare.

Mr. Speaker, I implore my colleagues to get on board the bus and stop throwing veterans under the bus. Let's provide funding to the Veterans Health Administration as soon as possible.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I would note that the reason that there is a question about veterans funding is because, despite the observation and protest of many at least on this side of the aisle that the PACT Act, which was passed, I believe, 2 years ago, was not going to be able to deal with the claims against it and would create funding problems in addition to this massive mandatory bloc of funding. This was all laid bare, and now here we are and we have to pay the piper.

You have to say, okay, we passed the PACT Act with this kind of open-ended amount of funding all in the name of doing something righteous that we all want to do, to care for veterans who were harmed with burn pits, but we did it the worst way possible because we are Congress, and that is what we do. We identify a problem, and we come up with literally the worst possible solution you can come up with. Then the American people kind of look at you and go, well, here we are again.

You have to go write a check like we did last week for \$3 billion, and then guess what happens? The CBO, in all of

its infinite wisdom, will come forward and actually, with a straight face, say something about the baseline and how that \$3 billion that we needed to appropriate really doesn't cost anything, doesn't score. That is what your CBO will do because that is what it just did.

Guess what? The \$12 billion that we are talking about in the additional veterans money that we know we are going to go ahead and fund, as the gentleman was just referring to, CBO will say the same thing. They will say it again. They will say that mandatory spending at baseline is already built in, that this doesn't cost anything. Then why do we have to appropriate it? Why do we come down here and write the check?

This is why you are \$35.6 trillion in debt, Mr. Speaker, because nobody here is serious. They are literally not serious. If we were serious, then we would say that we messed up when we passed the PACT Act, and it is now costing more than they said it was going to cost.

If this were my home, I would say that I thought that if I spent this amount of money, it was going to all be fine. I bought the house, the mortgage, interest rates. Now, it costs more. Do I just walk away from that? Do I just go print some money to go pay for my bills at my house?

That is what we do. We just say let's go to the magic tree, print more money for the \$3 billion that we messed up, and then we will go back and do it again and say: Well, \$12 billion next year. Don't worry. It won't score.

Nobody in America knows what the hell that means. What it means is you are racking up more debt because of our incompetence. That is what that means, and it is done in the name of veterans because you are not allowed to oppose a bill if the word "veteran" is in the title. You are not allowed to oppose a bill if the words "teacher" or "firefighter" or "police officer" are in the title.

Do you know how many bills last week we passed on suspension, racking up more billions because it had something in there about autism or something in there for a study or more funding for something else because you don't dare oppose it because you put something like that in the title? Then all of the people are left holding the bag.

At what point are we going to actually be serious? My friend, the chairman of the Committee on the Budget, JODEY ARRINGTON, posed this question of the Committee on the Budget a little bit earlier: Are we ever going to come together and have an actual conversation, or are we just going to say every tax cut, no matter what it is, magically pays for itself?

Let me give a little hint to Republicans: They don't all pay for themselves. They don't. It is simple math. Some tax cuts do because they create economic growth. Some tax cuts don't.

Can we be serious about that on this side of the aisle?

□ 1445

Can my colleagues on the other side of the aisle admit that there is any limit at all to another feel-good program that they want to pass to be able to go buy votes because they put a nice little title in the bill? I doubt it. That is why we are \$35.6 trillion in debt.

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

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

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the time, and I do say with respect to the Appropriations Committee—and by the way, a shout-out to their staff processing a lot of amendments this year, the hard work of the Appropriations Committee. When you process 1,000-odd amendments or whatever it has been, it is an extraordinary amount of work. I am deeply appreciative of the Appropriations Committee.

Those amendments are important. They are an important part of the process. I am proud of the fact that we process amendments.

I am proud of the bills that we produced, the five bills that we passed.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle are not wrong. There are some divisions on this side of the aisle. You know what, I am proud of those divisions, too, because at least we are having a debate. At least we are having a full-throated debate about how we can try to get out of this mess while our colleagues on the other side of the aisle bury their heads in the sand.

We are trying to figure out how you can possibly continue to spend money like this without consequences. That is why those 14, 16 Republicans opposed the CR, plus SAVE. I understand why. I am sympathetic to some of their arguments, but I don't believe that you can come down here, do that, and then complain about the result of where we now find ourselves, which is now we have before us the continuing resolution into December, which many of us wanted to avoid. It was the logical outcome of the tactics chosen by a handful of my colleagues.

I am proud of the Republican Conference. When we have been united over the last 20 months, we have done some extraordinary things. We have reopened the process with amendments in the appropriations process. We have passed appropriations bills, which we hadn't been doing for a while. We did pass a budget out of the Budget Committee. I wish we had brought it to the floor. We did pass H.R. 2, one of the strongest border security measures we have ever passed. It was vehemently opposed by our colleagues on the other side of the aisle while they hide behind legislation that had no chance of passing out of the Senate.

We passed strong National Defense Authorization Acts. We were able to

get real reforms, real changes in terms of policies through the National Defense Authorization Act, pulling back on DEI, pulling back on the excessive climate policies of this administration because we went through that amendment process both for appropriations and the NDAA.

I am proud of those things.

I am proud of passing a strong ICC sanction bill to go after the International Criminal Court that is trying to go after and make a war criminal out of our friend Prime Minister Netanyahu who came and addressed this Chamber. The Vice President of the United States wouldn't even come here to the Chamber and stand behind the Prime Minister.

I am proud of doing that.

I am proud of standing alongside Israel. I am proud of my colleagues coming together to do those things and fight for the American people and ensure that nondefense spending stayed flat, defense spending went up, but it was paid for.

I am proud of culling back on the IRS.

We have done a lot of good things when we were united and when we have done it.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle are committed to spending money we don't have. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle are committed to wide-open borders, endangering the American people. They are committed to wide-open borders and allowing noncitizens to vote, and they wouldn't even allow us to move the legislation on the appropriations bills to try to make sure we solved that problem.

CHUCK SCHUMER has a bill right now, the SAVE Act, that he won't bring to the floor of the Senate. That is a choice.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle are for open borders, spending money we don't have, watering down our national defense with woke priorities, DEI, and critical race theory. That is all true.

I am proud of the debate being had on this side of the aisle, sometimes with strong disagreement, but we are, in fact, each one-four hundred and thirty-fifth of one-half of one-third of this Federal Government, so we have to figure out how to come here and figure out how to work together to get this done.

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

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

I just want to ask my colleagues to please support this continuing resolution. We have an obligation in this Chamber to rule, to govern, to say to the American people that we are here on your behalf, you sent us here, and you put your faith and your trust in us.

The legislative process is not one where one gets everything that they want. It is about compromise. It is about coming together to recognize

that we do have this obligation and this responsibility. It would be nice to say that I didn't get what I wanted, so I am going to take the ball and go home. That is not the responsible thing to do.

This continuing resolution, as I said in my remarks, is a somber document. It achieves some goals. There are some areas that have not been covered that need to be covered, like disaster relief, like the \$12 billion shortfall for veterans. We have a process to undertake as we move forward, and that is hammering out the 12 appropriations bills which fund the U.S. Government. That is our responsibility.

If we do not do this today, the government shuts down. We don't suffer. We continue to get our paychecks. Maybe if there was a threat of a furlough for Members of Congress, the outcome might be different.

There are men and women out there who serve this country whose economic stability is in jeopardy, and we hold that in our hands.

We say "yes" today, not because it is everything that we wanted, but "yes" to continue a process that gets us to fund the goods and the services of the American people. That is what they expect us to do. They expect us to govern. That is what this bill is about today.

Again, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes."

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

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

I would like to begin just with a quick personal reflection and tell both my colleagues what an honor it is to share this floor with them today, and I mean that quite sincerely. These are two of the most principled people that we have in Congress.

They don't always agree with one another. We don't always agree with one another, but I have had the privilege of serving with my good friend, Ms. DELAURO, the distinguished ranking member on the Appropriations Committee for many years. There is nobody that I like to debate with, bargain with, and eventually come to an agreement with more than my friend.

I have had the great privilege of serving with Mr. ROY on the Rules Committee in this Congress, and I have enjoyed every minute of it, quite frankly, because like my friend on the other side of the aisle, he approaches things with a great deal of passion and a great deal of care and always enriches the debate.

It is true that my friend, Mr. ROY, and I have worked on a lot of stuff together. We are on the same side more times than not. I was very proud to work with him last week when we tried to submit a little bit longer CR and tried to get the SAVE Act done. I liked the short one, but I could accept the compromise that the Speaker offered to get the SAVE Act. We didn't quite get that done. Frankly, I have often

worked with my friend, and I think he is right on the spending issues.

I am proud of this Congress because we have pulled that back. There is no American Rescue Plan coming out of this Congress thanks to the Republicans. There is no Inflation Reduction Act coming out of this Congress because we are in the majority in the House. Frankly, even this year we did have the Fiscal Responsibility Act overall governing our spending, but as my friend from Texas knows, there were "side deals." Those are not the law of the land. We literally were operating by things that honestly many of our Members didn't know about.

My Democratic friends like to still talk about that, why aren't we honoring that deal. Maybe we should have kept the guy that made the deal, Speaker McCarthy, but the reality was it was not in law. We appropriated to what was in the law. We lived that way, and I am proud that we did that.

I am proud of the progress we made on the Appropriations Committee: the fact that we got all the bills out of the committee when the Senate has not, the fact that we got five of them constituting the great majority of spending across the floor when the Senate has yet to do a single bill. This committee, and frankly, this institution, is not the reason why we face the challenge we face today.

Let's be honest, too, about the challenge we do face. It is a binary choice. We are either going to shut the government down without achieving anything by shutting it down or we are going to keep it open and keep working on our problems, and frankly, give the American people an opportunity in the election through their votes and their voice to decide who is coming back here and who the President-elect is going to be, and I suspect that will clarify a lot of the decisions in front of us.

I agree with my friend from Connecticut. I am not for shutting down the government. It is a disservice to the American people. We inconvenience them. We endanger them.

Our responsibility, if we can't come to an agreement, is to still keep the country safe, still keep it operating, and frankly, continue to work on and allow the American people to intervene and tell us what they want us to do.

Mr. Speaker, it is pretty clear to me the right thing to do is to join together in a bipartisan sense, and later we hope in a bicameral sense, and pass this bill. Let us keep the government open and functioning, let the American people make a decision a few weeks from today, and in return—and I agree with my friend from Connecticut, I would like to finish our business before the end of the year. I don't know if that is possible, but I agree very much the next President and the next Congress should not be forced to do the work of this administration and this Congress. They should be able to start—they are going to have plenty of problems. They

are going to come here in a dangerous world. The President-elect is going to create a budget, get their people in place, and rewrite the tax code. Let's not throw a potential government shutdown in front of them as well. That is more than enough to deal with.

Mr. Speaker, I sincerely urge the passage of this legislation, H.R. 9747, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MEUSER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 9747.

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. DELAURO. 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.

CONFIRMATION OF CONGRESSIONAL OBSERVER ACCESS ACT OF 2023

Mr. STEIL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 6513) to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to confirm the requirement that States allow access to designated congressional election observers to observe the election administration procedures in congressional elections.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the Senate amendment is as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE

This Act may be cited as the "Confirmation of Congressional Observer Access Act of 2024" or the "COCOA Act of 2024".

SEC. 2. ACCESS FOR CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION OBSERVERS.

(a) ACCESS REQUIRED.—Title III of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C. 21081 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by redesignating section 304 and 305 as sections 305 and 306; and

(2) by inserting after section 303 the following new section:

"SEC. 304. ACCESS FOR CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION OBSERVERS.

"(a) FINDING OF CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY.—Congress finds that, regardless of legislative action, it has the authority to send congressional election observers to observe polling locations, any location where processing, scanning, tabulating, canvassing, recounting, auditing, or certifying voting results is occurring, or any other part of the process associated with elections for Federal office under the authorities granted under article 1, section 5, clause 1 and article 1, section 4, clause 1 of the Constitution of the United States. Procedures described herein do not establish any new authorities or procedures with respect to Congress' constitutional authority to observe congressional elections but are provided simply to permit a convenient statutory reference for existing congressional authority and activity.

"(b) REQUIRING STATES TO PROVIDE ACCESS FOR OBSERVERS.—

"(1) REQUIREMENT.—A State shall provide each individual who is acting as a designated congressional election observer for an election for Federal office with full access to clearly observe all elements of election administration procedures, including, but not limited to, access to any area in which a ballot is cast, processed, scanned, tabulated, canvassed, recounted, audited, or certified, including during pre- and post-election procedures.

"(2) RESTRICTIONS ON ACTIVITIES OF OBSERVERS.—No designated congressional election observer may handle a ballot or election equipment (whether voting or nonvoting or whether tabulating or nontabulating), advocate for any position or candidate, take any action to reduce ballot secrecy or voter privacy, take any action to interfere with the ability of a voter to cast a ballot or an election administrator to carry the administrator's duties, or otherwise interfere with the election administration process.

"(3) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall prohibit a designated congressional election observer from asking questions of an election administrator, election official, or election worker, or any other State or local official.

"(c) CONDUCT OF OBSERVERS.—

"(1) REMOVAL.—

"(A) AUTHORIZATION REMOVAL BY ELECTION OFFICIAL.—If a State or local election official has a reasonable basis to believe that a designated congressional election observer has engaged in or imminently will engage in intimidation or deceptive practices prohibited by Federal law, or in the disruption of voting, processing, scanning, tabulating, canvassing, or recounting of ballots, or the certification of results, a State or local election official may remove that observer from the area involved.

"(B) NOTICE TO COMMITTEE.—If a designated congressional election observer is removed from an area under subparagraph (A), the election official shall, within 24 hours of the observer's removal—

"(i) inform the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on House Administration of the House of Representatives; or the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate, as applicable; and

"(ii) provide written notice detailing the reason or reasons the designated congressional election observer was removed.

"(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—For purposes of this subsection, the mere presence of a designated congressional election observer during an observation of election administration procedures, without any additional indicia supporting a reasonable basis for removal, is not a sufficient reason for removal under paragraph (1)(A).

"(3) RIGHT TO REPLACE OBSERVER.—If a designated congressional election observer is properly removed under subparagraph (1)(A), the chair or ranking minority member of the Committee on House Administration of the House of Representatives or the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate, as appropriate, may send another designated congressional election observer as a replacement for the remaining duration of the observation of election administration procedures.

"(d) DESIGNATED CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION OBSERVER DESCRIBED.—In this section, a 'designated congressional election observer' is a House or Senate employee who is designated in writing by the chair or ranking minority member of the Committee on House Administration of the House of Representatives or the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate, or a successor committee, to gather information with respect to an election, including in the event that the election is contested in the House of Representatives or the Senate and for other purposes permitted by article 1, section 5, clause 1 and article 1, section 4, clause 1 of the Constitution of the United States.

"(e) STATE DEFINED.—In this section 'State' means each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands."

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT RELATING TO ENFORCEMENT.—Section 401 of such Act (52 U.S.C. 21111) is amended by striking "and 303" and inserting "303, and 304".

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents of such Act is amended—

(1) by redesignating the items relating to sections 304 and 305 as relating to sections 305 and 306; and

(2) by inserting after the item relating to section 303 the following:

"Sec. 304. Confirming access for congressional election observers."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. STEIL) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. MORELLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. STEIL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 6513.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1500

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Senate amendment to H.R. 6513, the Confirmation of Congressional Observer Access Act, or COCOA Act.

Ensuring the fairness and accuracy of our elections is of utmost importance for me as chairman of the Committee on House Administration, which has broad oversight for our Nation's Federal elections.

The Election Observer Program is one of the key ways the committee has worked to strengthen our election administration practices.

Since 1993 there have been 110 contested election cases considered in the House. This averages to two contests per Congress.

Congressional observers collect on-the-ground factual information for Congress and my committee for these potential election contests.

During the 2020 election cycle, House election observers were deployed to Iowa's Second District to oversee the administration of the election of our now-colleague,

Representative MARIANNETTE MILLER-MEEKS. She went on to win the contested race by only six votes, and trained House election observers were instrumental in gathering the information the committee needed to seat the rightful winner.

The Constitution grants Congress the authority to "be the judge of the elections, returns, and qualifications of its own Members." It is under this constitutional authority that the House