

approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States earlier this year, reflects how cases have been managed following courthouse closures for over 60-plus years since these boundaries were last amended.

The Judicial Conference said it best: H.R. 7177 supports the efficient administration of justice.

I thank the Members of the Alabama delegation who have joined me to support the efficient administration of justice in north Alabama. I urge all of our colleagues to join me in supporting this proposal.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 7177, which would amend title 28 of the United States Code to consolidate certain divisions in the Northern District of Alabama. By reducing the divisions of the Northern District of Alabama from seven to five and reorganizing some Alabama counties within those divisions, this bill reallocates the judicial docket across the district, ensuring that the 2.8 million residents of the Northern District of Alabama have access to a speedy judicial system.

When a courthouse closes, we may not hear about it here in our Nation's Capital, but the people who live and work in those judicial districts are intimately aware of the deleterious effect of courthouse closures on their community: Office workers lose their jobs. Other nearby courthouses become overcrowded, and thousands of people are left wondering if our judicial system will still work for them when they need it most.

That is exactly what is happening in the Northern District of Alabama. After courthouses closed, the district itself requested these changes, which were elevated to Congress by the Judicial Conference of the United States earlier this year. These changes prescribed in this legislation are not meaningless, technical edits. Moving some Alabama counties to different judicial divisions would make a world of difference to the people who live and work in those communities.

About 59 percent of the population of Alabama lives in the Northern District, which includes 31 of the State's 67 counties, and 2 of the State's most populous cities, Birmingham and Huntsville. Since so many Americans rely on the Northern District of Alabama to access our courthouse doors, the judicial system there must be able to spread a large volume of cases across its different divisions.

This is not a question of apportionment. Our country cannot have a flourishing justice system when residents are unduly burdened in their attempts to access it.

Madam Speaker, I thank the Representatives from Alabama, especially the sponsor, Congressman STRONG, for introducing this legislation, and I encourage all of my colleagues to support the bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for the purposes of closing.

Madam Speaker, by reallocating the judicial docket across the district, this bill ensures that 2.8 million residents of the Northern District of Alabama have access to a speedy judicial system. In a Nation such as ours, where the population is constantly evolving, our judicial system must be responsive to the needs of residents no matter where they live.

Constituents in different divisions of the Northern District of Alabama deserve a courthouse that is geographically convenient so that they do not have to drive hours away from home to access the American judicial system.

Responding to the needs of these residents is a small step in the right direction toward making our judicial system work for everyone, not just those who are fortunate enough to live close to a Federal courthouse in a metropolis.

Madam Speaker, I urge all Members to support the bill and send it to the Senate, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for the purposes of closing.

Madam Speaker, we are the United States of America, and it is, in fact, the people of the State of Alabama who have asked for this, the people's Representatives of Alabama who have unanimously supported it, and the Judicial Conference which studied it and found it to be appropriate.

Today, I am honored to be part of the other 49 States ratifying the need of one in their best interest as they brought it to us, which is, in fact, what the United States was formed for, is to support the common good and the individual States in any way that we can.

Madam Speaker, I urge Members to support this bill, vote it out, and send it to the Senate. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7177, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AMENDING TITLE 28, UNITED STATES CODE, TO AUTHORIZE HOLDING COURT FOR THE CENTRAL DIVISION OF UTAH IN MOAB AND MONTICELLO

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill

(H.R. 8666) to amend title 28, United States Code, to authorize holding court for the Central Division of Utah in Moab and Monticello.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8666

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. JUDICIAL DISTRICT.

Section 125 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by striking "and St. George" and inserting "St. George, Moab, and Monticello."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 8666.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, our Federal courts are critical to ensuring that Americans have access to justice. The Central Division of the District of Utah is currently authorized to hold court only in Salt Lake City, Provo, and St. George. For residents of southeastern Utah, however, traveling to those courthouses is burdensome and requires hours of driving, and it affects their ability to access the Federal court system.

H.R. 8666 addresses these issues at essentially no cost to the U.S. Government. The bill authorizes the Central Division of the District of Utah to hold court in Moab and Monticello in southeastern Utah, in addition to those other locations allowed by law.

In addition, this will be free of cost because the District of Utah already has agreements in place with State and county courthouses in those cities. Those facilities are being provided at no cost to the Federal Government because they are in the best interests of the people of Utah.

These changes, which have been requested by the District of Utah, are endorsed by the Judicial Conference of the United States and the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit. In fact, it is also endorsed by the U.S. Attorney's Office and the Federal Public Defender's Office for the District of Utah.

Madam Speaker, I strongly urge the passage of this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 8666, which would amend title 28 of the United States Code to

authorize holding court in the Central Division of Utah in Moab and Monticello.

Adding two additional places to hold court in the Central Division of Utah would help ameliorate the consequential barriers to jury service and court attendance faced by the Federal courts in southeastern Utah. Moab and Monticello are geographically remote, making it difficult for Americans in those communities to readily exercise their Seventh Amendment rights.

We are here today because it makes no sense that litigants should incur dramatically increased travel time and administrative costs to seek justice just because someone lives far from the nearest big city.

Every day, the ratio of Federal judges to Americans decreases as our population continues to increase. That means that every day our constituents are a little less protected by the United States court system than they were the day before.

Legislation like this bill will help alleviate the burdens of our court system, and it is widely popular on both sides of the aisle. That is no small feat.

Congress first organized Utah as one judicial district in 1894 with one authorized judgeship. The State's steady growth prompted Congress to add four additional judgeships over the last 100-plus years and to increase the number of places to hold court in Utah. We are at another such inflection point today.

This bill before us has been requested by the local Federal district, as well as the Judicial Conference, to meet this moment. Small steps, such as passing this bill today, are positive moves in the right direction to help the people of Utah gain equal access to justice.

I thank Congresswoman MALOY and Congressman CURTIS for sponsoring this legislation to improve the lives of the residents of Utah, and I encourage all of my colleagues to support the bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Utah (Ms. MALOY).

Ms. MALOY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 8666, to amend title 28, United States Code, to authorize the holding of court for the Central Division of Utah in Moab and Monticello, Utah.

I start by thanking my colleagues for their comments and support.

Madam Speaker, allowing the Federal court to meet in Monticello and Moab allows all types of civil and criminal court proceedings in southeastern Utah, particularly jury trials.

Jury summonses for Utahns in this part of the State require a five-hour drive one way from places like Blanding to Salt Lake City, and that is a little over 300 miles.

Some criminal cases have to be heard more than four hours from where the crime occurred, and then witnesses, law enforcement, and victims bear the burden of that travel, as do the U.S.

marshals when they transport defendants in criminal cases for jury trials.

This area would also serve the Navajo Nation in the Four Corners part of Utah, where Federal courts have special jurisdiction. Important civil cases require the same kind of travel arrangements.

Madam Speaker, last week in southwestern Utah, I personally was able to witness the investiture of the first Federal judge dedicated specifically to southwestern Utah. I have seen how much that means to those communities in my district, where they can have their day in court and where they have a court in their community. They feel like they have a connection to the judicial system, and that is a really important part of maintaining faith in our institutions and faith in our judicial system. I love to see us working toward getting southeastern Utah the same opportunity.

Our courts are an indispensable part of our Constitution for peacefully resolving our disputes and for administering justice. I am proud to say that this bill helps ensure that rural Utahns have ready access to justice, the judicial branch of their government, and the court system.

Madam Speaker, I thank my fellow Utahns for their support and urge my House colleagues to pass H.R. 8666.

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Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Speaker, Americans deserve accessible courts close to their homes. There is no reason litigants should incur dramatically increased travel time and administrative costs to seek justice just because someone lives far from the nearest large city.

Adding two additional places to hold court in the Central Division of Utah would make the system just a little bit fairer for the people who live there.

Madam Speaker, for that reason, I urge all Members to support the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, in closing, this is yet another bill that says a great deal about the way Members of Congress know their districts. Members of Congress travel their districts. They understand the needs of it, so when a Congresswoman like Ms. MALOY comes to us, she comes knowing what she needs and has already done the homework, both in traveling and in working with the Judicial Conference.

This is yet another example where the right answer comes from the people closest to the people, the individual Representatives. The committee is proud and happy to support this commonsense change.

Madam Speaker, I urge support of the underlying bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8666.

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.

PROTECTING AMERICANS FROM RUSSIAN LITIGATION ACT OF 2024

Mr. HUNT. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 9563) to amend title 28, United States Code, to limit the availability of civil actions affected by United States sanctions, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 9563

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 "Protecting Americans from Russian Litigation Act of 2024".

SEC. 2. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States—

(1) to ensure that United States persons are not disadvantaged for actions or omissions undertaken to comply with United States sanctions and export controls; and

(2) to ensure that foreign persons, or those acting on their behalf, cannot obtain compensation for any action directly or indirectly related to United States persons attempting in good faith to comply with their obligations under United States sanctions.

SEC. 3. LIMITATION ON CIVIL ACTIONS AFFECTED BY UNITED STATES SANCTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 111 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"§ 1660. Limitation on civil actions affected by United States sanctions

"(a) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding any provision of law, a person may not bring a civil action in Federal court to obtain relief for a claim where—

"(1) the underlying conduct or circumstances giving rise to the claim resulted from the imposition of United States sanctions impeding the performance of a contract (whether directly or indirectly, or in whole or in part); and

"(2) the United States sanctions described in paragraph (1) went into effect after the date on which the contract was executed.

"(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to limit—

"(1) the authority of the President, or any delegate of the President (including the Office of Foreign Asset Control of the Department of the Treasury), to restrict or authorize legal services, to enter into a settlement agreement, or to enforce any lien, judgment, arbitral award, decree, or other order through execution, garnishment, or other judicial process; or

"(2) any right, remedy, or cause of action available to a victim of international terrorism, torture, extrajudicial killing, aircraft sabotage, or hostage taking, who is, or