

local, Tribal, and territorial law enforcement have access to tools, resources, and help from the Department of Homeland Security.

We all know that the United States holds some of the world's greatest events, from professional football games to Formula One races, rodeos, State fairs, NASCAR, and so on. Every one of these events, big or small, requires security planning and management by State, local, Tribal, and territorial officials. Good planning and management are what it takes to prevent threats at mass gatherings and public events and, in the event of any danger, respond quickly and effectively.

H.R. 6229 is an opportunity for Congress to provide our communities with planning and management resources by authorizing the Special Event Assessment Rating program, known as the SEAR program, within DHS.

The SEAR program has had great success in every one of the States we represent, helping us ensure safe and enjoyable experiences at home events, big and small.

What SEAR does is measure the risk of a terrorist attack or other hazards, as appropriate, on a special event. Events are submitted to DHS by a State, local, Tribal, or territorial partner for an assessment.

Under the bill, DHS may provide security coordination and protection support for events with the most serious ratings.

Earlier this year in a hearing during National Police Week, former Atlanta Chief of Police Rodney Bryant told the House Committee on Homeland Security that the SEAR program and DHS resources helped him ensure a safe experience for Americans attending the Super Bowl and college football playoff championship.

Looking forward, our communities are going to need even more help from DHS through the SEAR program. In addition to longstanding large-scale public events like NFL games or New Year's celebrations in Times Square, the United States has a robust and growing presence on the Formula One racing circuit, and in just 2 years, we will be host to the World Cup.

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DHS recently informed Congress that the World Cup matches across the country in Atlanta, Boston, Dallas, Houston, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Miami, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Seattle, New York, and New Jersey are SEAR rated and will need Federal help to secure their global soccer matches.

Mr. Speaker, it is time we authorize this critical program and ensure that these social, sporting, and other events can be enjoyed freely, safely, and without fear.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. TITUS), the author of the bill.

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6229, the DHS Special Events Program and Support Act.

Nevada's First District, that I am proud to represent, hosts hundreds of high-profile events each year that require considerable security measures to keep safe the southern Nevadans and the thousands of visitors who attend these events.

While State and local law enforcement take the primary responsibility in providing support for local events, many occasions, from the Super Bowl to Formula One races, require additional Federal support to ensure that security measures are hardened to prevent and protect against bad actors intending to do harm.

Through October of this year, about 35 million visitors have come to Las Vegas. This includes 5 million who came for conventions, 330,000 who attended the Super Bowl, and 300,000 who were there recently for Formula One.

Major events like this don't just occur in my district. They occur all around the country. Our country hosts some of the world's greatest events, as you have heard. In communities across the United States, special events routinely draw visitors from around the country and around the world, necessitating large-scale security coordination and assistance from the Federal Government.

Our next decade will be crucial for the United States as we host several large-scale events that will draw millions of visitors. These will require enhanced security coordination. They include the World Cup, the Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games, Men's and Women's Rugby World Cup, and the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games, that in addition will give our country the opportunity to show off to the rest of the world that we are the unparalleled sports, entertainment, and hospitality capital.

My bill, H.R. 6229, the DHS Special Events Program and Support Act, will enable the Federal Government to support these local jurisdictions in safely hosting these events.

The SEAR program within DHS helps to provide this supplemental Federal support on an ad hoc basis, but it has never been authorized into law. This legislation does just that and in turn fortifies the existing program to better equip law enforcement authorities to prevent, mitigate, and respond to threats to events that happen in all our districts.

Importantly, it codifies the standardized SEAR process into law, ensures DHS maintains its risk-based methodology for event review, and allows expedited consideration or reconsideration of events that receive an initial SEAR designation.

I thank Representative RICHARD HUDSON of North Carolina for partnering with me on this legislation to codify the SEAR program, as well as Representatives ROBERT MENENDEZ of New Jersey, ANTHONY D'ESPOSITO of New York, and JARED MOSKOWITZ of Florida for cosponsoring the bill. I thank the chairman and ranking member for

bringing it to the floor, and I urge all Members to vote in support of this bipartisan measure.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for closing.

Mr. Speaker, authorizing SEAR's great work will ensure that DHS may continue providing risk assessments and support to certain preplanned special events across the United States.

I thank Representatives TITUS of Nevada and HUDSON of North Carolina for introducing this bill, which will strengthen Homeland Security and protect our greatest community events from terrorism or other security threats.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 6229, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I again urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6229, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GREEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6229.

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.

VETERANS EXPEDITED TSA SCREENING SAFE TRAVEL ACT

Mr. GREEN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7365) to provide PreCheck to certain severely injured or disabled veterans, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7365

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 "Veterans Expedited TSA Screening Safe Travel Act" or the "VETS Safe Travel Act".

SEC. 2. AVAILABILITY OF PRECHECK PROGRAM TO CERTAIN SEVERELY INJURED OR DISABLED VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 44927 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(g) AVAILABILITY OF PRECHECK PROGRAM TO CERTAIN SEVERELY INJURED OR DISABLED VETERANS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A veteran described in paragraph (2) is eligible for security screening under the PreCheck Program under section 44919 at no cost to the veteran if the veteran is able to meet the background check and other security requirements for participation in the Program.

“(2) VETERANS DESCRIBED.—A veteran described in this paragraph is a veteran who—

“(A) is enrolled in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs established and operated under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code;

“(B) has been determined by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to have a service-connected disability under section 1110 or 1131 of such title, as the case may be, and such disability has been determined by such Secretary to have resulted in—

- “(i) loss, or loss use of, an extremity;
- “(ii) paralysis or partial paralysis; or
- “(iii) permanent blindness; and

“(C) as a result of a loss, paralysis or partial paralysis, or blindness described in subparagraph (B), requires the use of a wheelchair, prosthetic limb, or other assistive device to aid with mobility.

“(3) LIMITATION.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall carry out this subsection subject to the availability of appropriations and may not increase fees for enrollment in the PreCheck Program for such purpose.”

(b) COORDINATION ON IMPLEMENTATION.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall jointly—

(1) implement a process under which a veteran described in paragraph (2) of subsection (g) of section 44927 of title 49, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), can receive the benefits under such subsection by not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) provide to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate a briefing on the status of implementing the process required by paragraph (1) by not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) OUTREACH FOR DISABLED VETERANS ON AVAILABILITY OF TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION PROGRAMS.—

(1) COORDINATION.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall implement a process under which such Secretary provides to disabled veterans effective outreach regarding Transportation Security Administration programs designed to improve the screening process for passengers with disabilities.

(2) FURTHER ENHANCEMENTS TO EASE AIR TRAVEL FOR WOUNDED WARRIORS AND OTHER DISABLED VETERANS.—Notwithstanding subsection I of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (commonly referred to as the “Paperwork Reduction Act”), or any other provision of law, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in coordination with the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration, shall—

(A) engage appropriate veterans service organizations and other relevant organizations, as appropriate, to assess the awareness of veterans of relevant Transportation Security Administration programs; and

(B) examine the need and feasibility of other measures to improve travel security procedures for disabled veterans.

(3) BRIEFING REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall jointly provide to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate a briefing on the status of the implementation of paragraphs (1) and (2).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GREEN) and the gentle-

woman from New York (Ms. CLARKE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GREEN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 7365.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. GREEN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 7365, the VETS Safe Travel Act. The bill would make the Transportation Security Administration's PreCheck program available to certain disabled veterans. It is an important piece of legislation, and I thank the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR) for his attention to this matter.

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

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, during this era of partisanship and discord, there is one issue on which I hope we can all agree: that veterans who are disabled while serving our country should be provided the utmost care and respect.

Unfortunately, our current airport security screening systems cause unnecessary delays and intrusions for many disabled veterans.

The VETS Safe Travel Act, H.R. 7365, would help address these challenges by allowing veterans with service-connected disabilities and severe injuries to enroll in the Transportation Security Administration's PreCheck expedited screening program at no cost to the veteran.

Doing so will allow disabled veterans to move through airport screening quickly and with minimal hassle.

Importantly, such veterans will still be required to undergo the background checks required for all passengers enrolling in the PreCheck program, thus maintaining the integrity and security of the program.

In addition, during committee consideration of this bill, Democrats offered an amendment that would ensure the bill does not unintentionally require TSA to increase PreCheck enrollment fees for all other passengers to pay for the enrollments of disabled veterans.

By passing this bill, Congress will improve everyday life for disabled veterans as they travel.

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

Mr. GREEN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR).

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman GREEN for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, my great State of Arizona is home to over 450,000 veterans, and nearly 30 percent of those veterans live with a disability.

My legislation, H.R. 7365, the Veterans Expedited TSA Screening, or VETS, Safe Travel Act, will provide optimized security screenings to veterans with catastrophic, service-connected disabilities free of charge, connect veterans to the VA for expanded access to the benefits they deserve, and restore veterans' dignity and independence while traveling.

Traveling through standard airport checkpoints with severe injuries can present significant challenges for disabled veterans. They often must wait in long, winding lines, remove their shoes, and maintain balance to stand in a security scanner.

For many disabled veterans, these can be difficult tasks and can present a fall hazard or require special assistance.

By providing TSA PreCheck free of charge, my legislation will create a more honorable travel experience for veterans with prosthetics, vision impairment, paralysis, or relying on wheelchairs or other mobility aids.

The VETS Safe Travel Act will also help create an improved airport experience for everyone by decreasing congestion at the standard security checkpoints.

To obtain the benefit, the VA will certify that a veteran has a service-connected disability and is therefore eligible to apply for the program at no cost. TSA is also required to partner with veteran service organizations to make veterans aware of this benefit. TSA must also submit a report to Congress about the program to ensure it is working efficiently.

Importantly, my bill specifically prohibits any budget gimmick used to offset costs by increasing the fees for other TSA PreCheck enrollees.

This year, the Honor Flight Network welcomed 302 veterans from my home State of Arizona alone to our Nation's Capital. These veterans deserve the star treatment from departure to arrival and back.

H.R. 7365 will ease the burden of any air travel on disabled veterans, their families, and caregivers and pave the way for additional disability reforms in veteran air travel.

I thank the chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security as well as the chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs for prioritizing the quality of life for our disabled veterans.

I ask my colleagues to pass this bipartisan legislation that helps disabled veterans who have sacrificed so much for our country.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for closing.

Mr. Speaker, we owe our disabled veterans not only our gratitude for their service but our commitment to their continued care. This is a sensible

bill that would help ensure disabled veterans are provided the benefits and dignity they deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support this measure, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

I am appreciative of both Mr. GOSAR, as a veteran myself, and Mr. THANEDAR, the Democrat cosponsor of this bill, for their hard work on it and their whipping of it and whipping me and the committee to get it done.

I again urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7365, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GREEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7365, 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.

STRATEGIC HOMELAND INTELLIGENCE AND ENFORCEMENT LEGISLATION TO DEFEND AGAINST THE CCP ACT

Mr. GREEN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 9668) to establish in the Department of Homeland Security a working group relating to countering terrorist, cybersecurity, border and port security, and transportation security threats posed to the United States by the Chinese Communist Party, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 9668

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 “Strategic Homeland Intelligence and Enforcement Legislation to Defend against the CCP Act” or the “SHIELD Against CCP Act”.

SEC. 2. WORKING GROUP TO COUNTER CERTAIN THREATS POSED TO THE UNITED STATES BY THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall establish in the Department of Homeland Security a working group (in this section referred to as the “Working Group”), which shall carry out the duties specified in subsection (b) relating to countering terrorist, cybersecurity, border and port security, and transportation security threats posed to the United States by the Chinese Communist Party.

(2) DIRECTOR.—

(A) APPOINTMENT.—The head of the Working Group shall be a Director (in this section referred to as the “Director”), who shall be appointed by the Secretary of Homeland Security.

(B) REPORTING.—The Director shall report to the Secretary of Homeland Security re-

garding all administrative, operational, and security matters of the Working Group.

(3) STAFFING.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall ensure the Working Group is provided with the following:

(A) A sufficient number of employees to perform required duties.

(B) Not fewer than one employee dedicated to ensuring compliance with privacy laws and regulations.

(4) DETAILEES.—The Working Group may accept and employ detailees with expertise in countering terrorist, cybersecurity, border and port security, and transportation security threats posed by the Chinese Communist Party to the United States, or in related fields, from any element of the intelligence community or any other Federal agency the Director determines appropriate, with or without reimbursement, consistent with applicable laws and regulations regarding such employees.

(b) DUTIES.—The Working Group shall carry out the following:

(1) Examine, assess, and report upon efforts by the Department of Homeland Security to counter terrorist, cybersecurity, border and port security, and transportation security threats posed to the United States by the Chinese Communist Party, including efforts to counter the Chinese Communist Party’s—

(A) nontraditional tactics and exploitation of the United States immigration system through—

- (i) identity theft;
- (ii) the immigrant and nonimmigrant visa processes;
- (iii) unlawful border crossings;
- (iv) human smuggling; and
- (v) human trafficking;

(B) predatory economic and trade practices, including the trafficking of counterfeit and pirated goods, the use of forced labor, labor exploitation for financial gain, customs fraud, and theft of intellectual property and technology;

(C) direct or indirect support for transnational criminal organizations trafficking in fentanyl, illicit drug precursors, or other controlled substances through—

- (i) the United States border;
- (ii) international mail shipments; or
- (iii) express consignment operations; and

(D) support for illicit financial activity by Chinese Money Laundering Organizations, including any repatriation to China or any other country of the proceeds derived from the activities described in subparagraphs (A) through (C).

(2) Account for the resources of the Department that are dedicated to programs aimed at countering terrorist, cybersecurity, border and port security, and transportation security threats posed to the United States by the Chinese Communist Party, and any supporting information as to the efficacy of each such program.

(3) Build upon existing or ongoing evaluations and avoid unnecessary duplication by reviewing the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of other appropriate working groups, committees, commissions, or entities established by the Department related to efforts to counter terrorist, cybersecurity, border and port security, and transportation security threats posed to the United States by the Chinese Communist Party.

(4) Identify gaps in policies, processes, and activities of the Department to respond to terrorist, cybersecurity, border and port security, and transportation security threats posed to the United States by the Chinese Communist Party.

(5) Facilitate cooperation and coordination among offices and components of the Department on a holistic response to countering terrorist, cybersecurity, border and port security, and transportation security threats

posed to the United States by the Chinese Communist Party.

(c) ADDITIONAL DUTY RELATING TO INFORMATION SHARING.—The Working Group shall review, in coordination with the Office of Intelligence and Analysis of the Department of Homeland Security, information relating to terrorist, cybersecurity, border and port security, and transportation security threats posed to the United States by the Chinese Communist Party that is gathered by Federal, State, local, Tribal, and territorial partners, and the National Network of Fusion Centers, and incorporate such information, as appropriate, into the Working Group’s own information relating to such threats. The Working Group, in coordination with the Office of Intelligence and Analysis, shall also ensure the dissemination to Federal, State, local, Tribal, and territorial partners, and the National Network of Fusion Centers, of information related to such threats.

(d) ANNUAL ASSESSMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this section and annually thereafter for five years, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in coordination with the Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis of the Department of Homeland Security, the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Director of National Intelligence, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that assesses terrorist, cybersecurity, border and port security, and transportation security threats posed to the United States by the Chinese Communist Party during the immediately preceding 12 months.

(2) CONTENTS.—Each assessment under paragraph (1) shall also include the following:

(A) A description of the activities and operations of the Working Group undertaken pursuant to subsection (b).

(B) Any other matters the Secretary of Homeland Security determines relevant.

(3) FORM.—Each assessment under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex. The Secretary of Homeland Security shall post on a publicly available website of the Department of Homeland Security the unclassified portion of each assessment.

(4) BRIEFING.—Not later than 30 days after the submission of each assessment under paragraph (1), the Secretary of Homeland Security shall provide to the appropriate congressional committees a briefing on such assessment and the progress and challenges of the Working Group.

(e) COMPTROLLER GENERAL REVIEW.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the implementation of this section.

(f) RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in coordination with the Director and the Under Secretary for Science and Technology of the Department of Homeland Security, shall, to the extent practicable, carry out research and development, including operational testing, of technologies and techniques for enhancing the Department’s security and situational awareness relating to countering terrorist, cybersecurity, border and port security, and transportation security threats posed to the United States by the Chinese Communist Party.

(g) IMPLEMENTATION.—All activities carried out pursuant to this section—

(1) shall be carried out in accordance with applicable constitutional, privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties protections; and

(2) may not infringe upon the lawful exercise of free speech by United States persons.