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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MEADOWS).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 13, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK MEADOWS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair would now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Dear God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Our Nation is again tragically impacted by a mass shooting. May our leaders, and we all, be mindful of the sacredness of lives lost in violence, and not so define the event as to further traumatize those who suffer intimately from it.

We ask Your special blessing upon the Members of this people's House. In these days, give them wisdom that they might execute their responsibilities to the benefit of all Americans.

Bless them, O God, and be with them and with us all this day and every day to come. May all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

GUANTANAMO DETAINEES WHO HAVE BEEN RELEASED KILL AMERICANS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the front page of The Washington Post last week, June 9, reported attacks on U.S. by men set free, about 12 from Guantanamo Bay.

The article revealed:

''The Obama administration believes that about 12 detainees released from the prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, have launched attacks against U.S. or allied forces in Afghanistan, killing about a half-dozen Americans . . . In March, a senior Pentagon official made a startling admission to lawmakers when he acknowledged that former Guantanamo inmates were responsible for the deaths of Americans overseas.

''But The Washington Post has learned additional details . . . while most of the incidents were directed at military personnel, the dead also included one American civilian: a female aid worker.''

It is clear the President's dangerous release of Guantanamo detainees puts American families at risk of murder. An extraordinary deterrent to Islamic terrorists is the ability to incarcerate them for the duration of the war they have declared against American families.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Our sympathy to this week's victims of terrorism in Baghdad, Tel Aviv, and Orlando.

ORLANDO TRAGEDY

(Mr. TAKANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, no words can express the pain and sadness I feel for all those affected by the horrific attack on a gay nightclub in Orlando.

On too many occasions, the LGBT community and our country have been forced to overcome moments of profound loss, but on each of these occasions, we have emerged stronger and

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more resilient. Once again, we will choose love over hate and compassion over intolerance. These are the themes of the LGBT Pride Month, and they cannot be lost in this overwhelming tragedy.

This attack forces us to confront two unpleasant facts about our country: fact one, hateful rhetoric toward the LGBT people and other minority groups is still far too common; fact two, it is far too easy for dangerous people to access assault weapons.

I hope we have the courage to confront these facts and build a safer and stronger America. This is what the victims and their families deserve.

SLAUGHTERED INNOCENTS

(Mr. HIMES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, sometime today or tomorrow, this House will hold a moment of silence for 50 massacred Floridians who had their bodies torn apart by a madman with a military-grade weapon.

Silence—that is how the leadership of the most powerful country in the world will respond to this week's massacre of its citizens.

If this Congress had a single moral fiber, we would force ourselves to get to know the slaughtered innocents. We would get to know Cory James Connell, 21 years old and a student at Valencia College, a child with dreams cut short by a madman with a military rifle and—make no mistake—cut short by this Congress' fetish to repeatedly meet bloody tragedy with silence.

Silence—that is what we offer in America that supports many of the things we could do to slow the bloodbath.

Silence.

Not me. Not anymore. I will no longer stand here absorbing the faux concern, contrived gravity, and tepid smugness of a House complicit in the weekly bloodshed.

Sooner or later, the country will hold us accountable for inaction. But as you bow your head and think of what you say to your God, when you are asked what you did to slow the slaughter of innocence, there will be silence.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 10, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on June 10, 2016 at 2:44 p.m.:

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 2137.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 2212.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 812.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 1762.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 10, 2016.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on June 10, 2016, at 3:23 p.m., and said to contain a message from the President whereby he submits a copy of a notice filed earlier with the Federal Register continuing the emergency with respect to Belarus. First declared in Executive Order 13405, of June 16, 2006.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House.

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE ACTIONS AND POLICIES OF CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF BELARUS AND OTHER PERSONS TO UNDERMINE BELARUS'S DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES OR INSTITUTIONS—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114–141)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Belarus and other persons to undermine Belarus's democratic processes or institutions that was declared in Executive Order 13405 of June 16, 2006, is to continue in effect beyond June 16, 2016.

The actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Belarus and other persons to undermine Belarus's democratic processes or institutions, to commit human rights abuses related to political repression, and to engage in public corruption continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13405 with respect to Belarus.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, *June 10, 2016.*

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 4:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 9 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1630

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. NEWHOUSE) at 4 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

NETWORKING AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2016

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5312) to amend the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 to authorize activities for support of networking and information technology research, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

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 ''Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Modernization Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. PURPOSES.

Section 3 of the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 (15 U.S.C. 5502) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''high-performance computing''

and inserting ''networking and information technology'';

(2) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''expanding Federal support for research, development, and application of high-performance computing'' and inserting ''supporting Federal research, development, and application of networking and information technology'';

(B) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''high-performance computing'' both places it appears and inserting ''networking and information technology'';

(C) by striking subparagraphs (C) and (D);

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

''(C) stimulate research on and promote more rapid development of high-end computing systems software and applications software;'';

(E) by redesignating subparagraphs (E) through (H) as subparagraphs (D) through (G), respectively;

(F) in subparagraph (D), as so redesignated, by inserting ''high-end'' after ''the development of'';

(G) in subparagraphs (E) and (F), as so redesignated, by striking ''high-performance computing'' each place it appears and inserting ''networking and information technology''; and

(H) in subparagraph (G), as so redesignated, by striking ''high-performance'' and inserting ''high-end''; and

(3) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by striking ''high-performance computing and'' and inserting ''networking and information technology and''; and

(B) by striking ''high-performance computing network'' and inserting ''networking and information technology''.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

Section 4 of the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 (15 U.S.C. 5503) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraphs (3) and (5);

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (1), (2), (4), (6), and (7) as paragraphs (2), (3), (5), (7), and (8), respectively;

(3) by inserting before paragraph (2), as so redesignated, the following new paragraph:

''(1) 'cyber-physical systems' means physical or engineered systems whose networking and information technology functions and physical elements are deeply integrated and are actively connected to the physical world through sensors, actuators, or other means to perform monitoring and control functions;'';

(4) in paragraph (3), as so redesignated, by striking ''high-performance computing'' and inserting ''networking and information technology'';

(5) by inserting after paragraph (3), as so redesignated, the following new paragraph:

''(4) 'high-end computing' means the most advanced and capable computing systems, including their hardware, storage, networking and software, encompassing both massive computational capability and large-scale data analytics;'';

(6) by inserting after paragraph (5), as so redesignated, the following new paragraph:

''(6) 'networking and information technology' means high-end computing, communications, and information technologies, high-capacity and high-speed networks, special purpose and experimental systems, high-end computing systems software and applications software, and the management of large data sets;''; and

(7) in paragraph (7), as so redesignated, by striking ''National High-Performance Computing Program'' and inserting ''Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Program''.

SEC. 4. TITLE I HEADING.

The heading of title I of such Act (15 U.S.C. 5511 et seq.) is amended by striking ''**HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTING**'' and inserting ''**NETWORKING AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**''.

SEC. 5. NETWORKING AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

Section 101 of the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 (15 U.S.C. 5511) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by striking ''**NATIONAL HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTING PROGRAM**'' and inserting ''**NETWORKING AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**'';

(2) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by striking ''NATIONAL HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTING PROGRAM'' and inserting ''NETWORKING AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT'';

(B) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''National High-Performance Computing Program'' and inserting ''Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Program'';

(ii) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''high-performance computing, including networking'' and inserting ''networking and information technology'';

(iii) in subparagraphs (B) and (G), by striking ''high-performance'' each place it appears and inserting ''high-end'';

(iv) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''high-performance computing and networking'' and inserting ''high-end computing, distributed, and networking'';

(v) by amending subparagraph (D) to read as follows:

''(D) provide for efforts to increase software security and reliability;'';

(vi) in subparagraph (H)—

(I) by inserting ''support and guidance'' after ''provide''; and

(II) by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(vii) in subparagraph (I)—

(I) by striking ''improving the security'' and inserting ''improving the security, reliability, and resilience''; and

(II) by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(viii) by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

''(J) provide for increased understanding of the scientific principles of cyber-physical systems and improve the methods available for the design, development, and operation of cyber-physical systems that are characterized by high reliability, safety, and security;

''(K) provide for research and development on human-computer interactions, visualization, and big data;

''(L) provide for research and development on the enhancement of cybersecurity; and

''(M) provide for a research framework to leverage cyber-physical systems, high capacity and high speed communication networks, and large-scale data analytics to integrate city-scale information technology and physical infrastructures.'';

(C) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

''(A) establish the goals and priorities for Federal networking and information technology research, development, education, and other activities;'';

(ii) by amending subparagraph (C) to read as follows:

''(C) provide for interagency coordination of Federal networking and information technology research, development, education, and other activities undertaken pursuant to the Program;'';

(iii) by amending subparagraph (E) to read as follows:

''(E) encourage and monitor the efforts of the agencies participating in the Program to allocate the level of resources and management attention necessary to ensure that the strategic plan under subsection (e) is developed and executed effectively and that the objectives of the Program are met; and''; and

(iv) in subparagraph (F), by striking ''high-performance'' and inserting ''high-end'';

(D) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by redesignating subparagraphs (B), (C), (D), and (E) as subparagraphs (E), (F), (G), and (J), respectively;

(ii) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraphs:

''(B) provide, as appropriate, a list of the senior steering groups and strategic plans that are planned or underway as addressed under section 104;

''(C) provide a description of workshops and other activities conducted under section 104, including participants and findings;

''(D) provide a detailed description of the nature and scope of research infrastructure designated as such under the Program;'';

(iii) in subparagraph (E), as so redesignated—

(I) by redesignating clauses (vii) through (xi) as clauses (viii) through (xii), respectively; and

(II) by inserting after clause (vi) the following:

''(vii) the Department of Homeland Security;'';

(iv) in subparagraph (F), as so redesignated—

(I) by striking ''is submitted,'' and inserting ''is submitted, the levels for the previous fiscal year,''; and

(II) by striking ''each Program Component Area;'' and inserting ''each Program Component Area and research area supported in accordance with section 103;'';

(v) by amending subparagraph (G), as so redesignated, to read as follows:

''(G) describe the levels of Federal funding for each agency and department participating in the Program, and for each Program Component Area, for the fiscal year during which such report is submitted, the levels for the previous fiscal year, and the levels proposed for the fiscal year with respect to which the budget submission applies;''; and

(vi) by inserting after subparagraph (G), as so redesignated, the following:

''(H) include a description of how the objectives for each Program Component Area, and the objectives for activities that involve multiple Program Component Areas, relate to the objectives of the Program identified in the strategic plan required under subsection (e);

''(I) include—

''(i) a description of the funding required by the National Coordination Office to perform the functions specified under section 102(b) for the current fiscal year;

''(ii) a description of the estimated funding required by such Office to perform the functions specified under section 102(b) for the next fiscal year; and

''(iii) the amount of funding provided for such Office for the current fiscal year by each agency participating in the Program; and'';

(3) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A)—

(i) by striking ''high-performance computing'' both places it appears and inserting ''networking and information technology''; and

(ii) after the first sentence, by inserting the following: ''Each chair of the advisory committee shall meet the qualifications of

committee membership and may be a member of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology.'';

(B) in paragraph (1)(D), by striking ''high-performance computing, networking technology, and related software'' and inserting ''networking and information technology''; and

(C) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in the second sentence, by striking ''2'' and inserting ''3'';

(ii) by striking ''Committee on Science and Technology'' and inserting ''Committee on Science, Space, and Technology''; and

(iii) by striking ''The first report shall be due within 1 year after the date of enactment of the America COMPETES Act.'';

(4) in subsection (c)(1)(A), by striking ''high-performance computing'' and inserting ''networking and information technology''; and

(5) by adding at the end the following new subsections:

''(d) PERIODIC REVIEWS.—The agencies identified in subsection (a)(3)(B) shall—

''(1) periodically assess and update, as appropriate, the contents, scope, and funding levels of the Program Component Areas and work through the National Science and Technology Council and with the assistance of the National Coordination Office described under section 102 to restructure the Program when warranted, taking into consideration any relevant recommendations of the advisory committee established under subsection (b); and

''(2) working through the National Science and Technology Council and with the assistance of the National Coordination Office described under section 102, ensure that the Program includes large-scale, long-term, interdisciplinary research and development activities, including activities described in section 103.

''(e) STRATEGIC PLAN.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The agencies identified in subsection (a)(3)(B), working through the National Science and Technology Council and with the assistance of the National Coordination Office described under section 102, shall develop, within 12 months after the date of enactment of the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Modernization Act of 2016, and update every five years thereafter, a five-year strategic plan for the Program.

''(2) CONTENTS.—The strategic plan shall specify near-term and long-term cross-cutting objectives for the Program, the anticipated time frame for achieving the near-term objectives, the metrics to be used for assessing progress toward the objectives, and how the Program will—

''(A) address long-term challenges of national importance for which solutions require large-scale, long-term, interdisciplinary research and development;

''(B) encourage and support mechanisms for interdisciplinary research and development in networking and information technology and for Grand Challenges, including through collaborations across agencies, across Program Component Areas, with industry, with Federal laboratories (as defined in section 4 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3703)), and with international organizations;

''(C) foster the transfer of research and development results into new technologies and applications in the national interest, including through cooperation and collaborations with networking and information technology research, development, and technology transition initiatives supported by the States;

''(D) provide for cyberinfrastructure needs, as appropriate, across federally funded large-scale research facilities that produce or will produce large amounts of data that will need to be stored, curated, and made publicly available;

''(E) strengthen all levels of networking and information technology education and training programs to ensure an adequate, well-trained workforce; and

''(F) attract individuals identified in sections 33 and 34 of the Science and Engineering Equal Opportunities Act (42 U.S.C. 1885a and 1885b) to networking and information technology fields.

''(3) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The entities involved in developing the strategic plan under paragraph (1) shall take into consideration the recommendations—

''(A) of the advisory committee established under subsection (b);

''(B) of the Committee on Science and relevant subcommittees of the National Science and Technology Council; and

''(C) of the stakeholders whose input was solicited by the National Coordination Office, as required under section 102(b)(3).

''(4) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Director of the National Coordination Office shall transmit the strategic plan required under paragraph (1) to the advisory committee, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.''.

SEC. 6. NATIONAL COORDINATION OFFICE.

Section 102 of such Act (15 U.S.C. 5512) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 102. NATIONAL COORDINATION OFFICE.

''(a) OFFICE.—The Director shall maintain a National Coordination Office with a Director and full-time staff.

''(b) FUNCTIONS.—The National Coordination Office shall—

''(1) provide technical and administrative support to—

''(A) the agencies participating in planning and implementing the Program, including such support as needed in the development of the strategic plan under section 101(e); and

''(B) the advisory committee established under section 101(b), as appropriate;

''(2) serve as the primary point of contact on Federal networking and information technology activities for government organizations, academia, industry, professional societies, State computing and networking technology programs, interested citizen groups, and others to exchange technical and programmatic information;

''(3) solicit input and recommendations from a wide range of stakeholders during the development of each strategic plan required under section 101(e) and the scope of the Program Component Areas through the convening of at least one workshop with invitees from academia, industry, Federal laboratories, and other relevant organizations and institutions;

''(4) conduct and increase outreach, including to academia, industry, other relevant organizations and institutions, and the public, in order to increase awareness of the Program and the benefits of the Program and to increase potential opportunities for collaboration between agencies participating in the Program and the private sector; and

''(5) promote access to and early application of the technologies, innovations, and expertise derived from Program activities to agency missions and systems across the Federal Government and to United States industry.

''(c) SOURCE OF FUNDING.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The operation of the National Coordination Office shall be supported by funds from each agency participating in the Program, subject to the availability of appropriations for such purpose.

''(2) SPECIFICATIONS.—The portion of the total budget of such Office that is authorized to be provided by each agency for each fiscal year shall be in the same proportion as each such agency's share of the total budget for the Program for the previous fiscal year, as specified in the report required under section 101(a)(3).

''(3) WAIVER.—As appropriate, the Director may consider and approve a reduction or waiver of an agency contribution requirement under paragraph (2).''.

SEC. 7. NEXT GENERATION INTERNET.

Section 103 of such Act (15 U.S.C. 5513) is repealed.

SEC. 8. GRAND CHALLENGES IN AREAS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE.

Title I of such Act (15 U.S.C. 5511 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 103. GRAND CHALLENGES IN AREAS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Program shall encourage agencies identified in section 101(a)(3)(E) to support large-scale, long-term, interdisciplinary research and development activities in networking and information technology directed toward agency mission areas that have the potential for significant contributions to national economic competitiveness and for other significant societal benefits. Such activities, ranging from basic research to the demonstration of technical solutions, shall be designed to advance the development of fundamental discoveries. The advisory committee established under section 101(b) shall make recommendations to the Program for candidate research and development areas for support under this section.

''(b) CHARACTERISTICS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Research and development activities under this section shall—

''(A) include projects selected on the basis of applications for support through a competitive, merit-based process;

''(B) involve collaborations among researchers in institutions of higher education and industry, and may involve nonprofit research institutions and Federal laboratories, as appropriate;

''(C) leverage Federal investments through collaboration with related State and private sector initiatives; and

''(D) include a plan for fostering the transfer of research discoveries and the results of technology demonstration activities, including from institutions of higher education and Federal laboratories, to industry for commercial development.

''(2) COST-SHARING.—In selecting applications for support, the agencies may give special consideration to projects that include cost sharing from non-Federal sources.

''(3) AGENCY COLLABORATION.—If two or more agencies identified in section 101(a)(3)(E), or other appropriate agencies, are working on large-scale networking and information technology research and development activities in the same area of national importance, then such agencies shall strive to collaborate through joint solicitation and selection of applications for support and subsequent funding of projects.

''(4) INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH CENTERS.—Research and development activities under this section may be supported through interdisciplinary research centers that are organized to investigate basic research questions and carry out technology demonstration activities in areas described in subsection (a). Research may be carried out through existing interdisciplinary centers.''.

SEC. 9. WORKSHOPS AND SENIOR STEERING GROUPS.

Title I of such Act (15 U.S.C. 5511 et seq.) is amended further by adding after section 103, as added by section 8 of this Act, the following new section:

''SEC. 104. ADDRESSING EMERGING ISSUES.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—In order to address emerging issues, the Director of the National Coordination Office may conduct workshops and other activities on research areas of emerging importance, which may include the grand challenge areas identified under section 103, with participants from institutions of higher education, Federal laboratories, and industry, in order to help guide Program investments and strategic planning in those areas, including areas identified in subsection (b).

''(b) FOCUS AREAS.—In selecting research areas under subsection (a), the Director of the National Coordination Office shall consider the following topics:

''(1) Data analytics to identify the current and future state of performing inference, prediction, and other forms of analysis of data, and methods for the collection, management, preservation, and use of data.

''(2) The current and future state of the science, engineering, policy, and social understanding of privacy protection.

''(3) The current and future state of fundamental research on the systems and science of the interplay of people and computing as well as the coordination and support being undertaken in areas such as social computing, human-robot interaction, privacy, and health-related aspects in human-computer systems.

''(c) FUNCTIONS.—The participants in the workshops shall, as appropriate—

''(1) develop options for models for research and development partnerships among institutions of higher education, Federal laboratories, and industry, including mechanisms for the support of research and development carried out under these partnerships;

''(2) develop options for research and development for the specific issue areas that would be addressed through such partnerships;

''(3) propose guidelines for assigning intellectual property rights and for the transfer of research results to the private sector; and

''(4) make recommendations for how Federal agencies participating in the Program can help support research and development partnerships for the specific issue areas.

''(d) PARTICIPANTS.—The Director of the National Coordination Office shall ensure that the participants in the workshops—

''(1) are individuals with knowledge and expertise in the specific issue areas; and

''(2) represent a broad mix of relevant stakeholders, including academic and industry researchers and, as appropriate, Federal agencies.

''(e) SENIOR STEERING GROUPS AND STRATEGIC PLANS.—As appropriate, the Director of the National Coordination Office shall establish senior steering groups and develop focused strategic plans to coordinate and guide activities under the research areas identified under this section, taking into consideration the findings and recommendations from any workshops carried out on those research topics.''.

SEC. 10. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION ACTIVITIES.

Section 201 of such Act (15 U.S.C. 5521) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by inserting ''high-end'' after ''National Science Foundation shall provide''; and

(ii) by striking ''high-performance computing'' and all that follows through ''networking;'' and inserting ''networking and information technology; and'';

(B) by striking paragraphs (2) through (4); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph:

''(2) the National Science Foundation shall use its existing programs, in collaboration with other agencies, as appropriate, to improve the teaching and learning of networking and information technology at all levels of education and to increase participation in networking and information technology fields, including by individuals identified in sections 33 and 34 of the Science and Engineering Equal Opportunities Act (42 U.S.C. 1885a and 1885b).''; and

(2) by striking subsection (b).

SEC. 11. NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION ACTIVITIES.

Section 202 of such Act (15 U.S.C. 5522) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (b);

(2) by striking ''(a) GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES.—''; and

(3) by striking ''high-performance computing'' and inserting ''networking and information technology''.

SEC. 12. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY ACTIVITIES.

Section 203 of such Act (15 U.S.C. 5523) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (b);

(2) by striking ''(a) GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES.—'';

(3) in paragraph (1), by striking ''high-performance computing and networking'' and inserting ''networking and information technology''; and

(4) in paragraph (2)(A), by striking ''high-performance'' and inserting ''high-end''.

SEC. 13. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE ACTIVITIES.

Section 204 of such Act (15 U.S.C. 5524) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''high-performance computing systems and networks'' and inserting ''networking and information technology systems and capabilities'';

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''interoperability of high-performance computing systems in networks and for common user interfaces to systems'' and inserting ''interoperability and usability of networking and information technology systems''; and

(C) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''high-performance computing'' and inserting ''networking and information technology'';

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the heading, by striking ''HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTING AND NETWORK'' and inserting ''NETWORKING AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY'';

(B) by striking ''Pursuant to the Computer Security Act of 1987 (Public Law 100–235; 101 Stat. 1724), the'' and inserting ''The''; and

(C) by striking ''sensitive''; and

(3) by striking subsections (c) and (d).

SEC. 14. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY ACTIVITIES.

Section 205 of such Act (15 U.S.C. 5525) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (b);

(2) by striking ''(a) GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES.—'';

(3) by striking ''basic and applied'';

(4) by striking ''computational'' and inserting ''networking and information technology''; and

(5) by inserting ''All software and code, along with any subsequent updates to the software and code, developed by the Environmental Protection Agency under the Program and used in conducting scientific research shall be made publically available. In cases where the underlying software or code is proprietary or contains confidential business information, the Agency shall disclose only the name and vendor of the software and code used for all proprietary or confidential business information portions of the software or code. The Environmental Protection Agency shall ensure that the research conducted under the Program does not duplicate the scope or aims of similar research and initiatives at other Federal agencies. No Environmental Protection Agency funds shall be used towards research that duplicates the scope or aims of similar research and initiatives at other Federal agencies.'' after ''dynamics models.''.

SEC. 15. ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

Section 206 of such Act (15 U.S.C. 5526) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (b);

(2) by striking ''(a) GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES.—''; and

(3) by striking ''to conduct basic'' and all that follows through ''software capabilities'' and inserting ''to support programs and activities to improve the teaching and learning of networking and information technology fields and contribute to the development of a skilled networking and information technology workforce''.

SEC. 16. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS.

Section 207(b) of such Act (15 U.S.C. 5527(b)) is amended by striking ''high-performance computing'' and inserting ''networking and information technology''.

SEC. 17. REPEAL.

Section 208 of such Act (15 U.S.C. 5528) is repealed.

SEC. 18. ADDITIONAL REPEAL.

Section 4 of the Department of Energy High-End Computing Revitalization Act of 2004 (15 U.S.C. 5543) is repealed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 5312, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5312, the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Modernization Act of 2016.

First off, I would like to thank Chairman LAMAR SMITH for his hard work in bringing this bill through the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee, and my colleague, Ranking Member EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, for her leadership in introducing this bipartisan legislation with me.

The Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Program, also known as the NITRD Program, is the primary Federal research and development investment portfolio in unclassified networking, computing, software, cybersecurity, and related information technologies.

In my district, the NITRD Program supports Federal investment in research at universities like Western Illinois University in Macomb, Illinois, and the Blue Waters supercomputer at the University of Illinois in Urbana, Illinois. NITRD also supports public-private partnerships between high-performance supercomputing and private

corporations like, Caterpillar Corporation, based in Peoria, Illinois.

Information technology is all around us in our day-to-day lives—on our smartphones, in our cars, and in our homes. It improves our way of life, even in ways that are not always visible or apparent. As technology rapidly advances, the need for research and development continues to evolve. The NITRD Program works to prevent duplicative and overlapping efforts in this space, thereby enabling more efficient use of government resources and taxpayer dollars, while also supporting new and innovative research and development efforts at our Nation's universities and through public-private partnerships.

This bill implements several important policies to help lead the way for future technological innovations and modernize the NITRD Program. Specifically, the bill improves the program in the following ways:

First, it establishes a strategic planning and review process for the NITRD investment portfolio, with clear metrics and objectives.

Second, it works to improve interagency as well as government and private sector coordination and communication.

Third, it focuses the NITRD investment portfolio on areas of national interest and increasing importance like data analytics, privacy protection, and human-computer systems.

These changes to current law will reduce bureaucracy and ensure that hardworking Americans' taxpayer dollars are being used efficiently and effectively.

Important to note, this legislation authorizes no new spending.

Smart investments in information technology research and development are crucial for our Nation. Work in related areas bolsters economic competitiveness and creates new industries and businesses; it helps ensure future national security, including cybersecurity; and creates the good-paying jobs we need for today and tomorrow.

As such, I urge my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation to modernize NITRD and streamline Federal research and development investment.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 5312, the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Modernization Act of 2016.

The bill before us modernizes the original High-Performance Computing Act of 1991. In the 25 years that have passed since that bill established the framework for Federal investment in computing research, networking and information technologies, NIT, has transformed how we communicate with each other, how we get around, how we bank, and how we shop.

NIT has helped provide teachers and students in diverse communities across our Nation access to resources and learning opportunities that were previously out of reach.

NIT has transformed every industry sector, increasing efficiency and productivity, while creating higher skilled, better paying jobs. NIT made possible the decoding of the human genome and has led to myriad improvements in medical diagnostics and treatments.

Over these past 25 years, networking and information technologies have created opportunities across all aspects of our lives that were previously unimaginable. With those opportunities, NIT has also created new challenges for individual and collective safety and security and for our privacy.

Our critical infrastructure, our banks, our commercial enterprises, and our own personal wallets and identities are vulnerable to criminals and state actors alike. Our privacy is being compromised daily, whether we are public figures or private citizens.

We cannot go back to a world before NIT, nor should we. However, while investing in advancements in NIT and its many applications, we must also invest in protecting our security and privacy.

The Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Program, or NITRD, which grew out of the original 1991 High-Performance Computing Act, does just that. The interagency NITRD Program supports a full range of research and development that provides the foundation of scientific understanding and accelerates the development of advanced information technologies, while strengthening cybersecurity and privacy. The program also advances NIT to accelerate discovery in many other areas of science and engineering, from astronomy to biomedical research.

The legislation we are considering today, the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Modernization Act, continues to strengthen the management, coordination, and oversight of the NITRD Program. It helps ensure that Federal investments in NIT R&D remain at the cutting edge and continuously evolve to include important emerging areas of NIT. In addition, it encourages large-scale interdisciplinary and cross-agency collaborations in ''grand challenge'' areas of R&D. Finally, the bill encourages strong collaboration and coordination with industry and other stakeholders.

Over time, there have been some amendments to the 1991 Act. H.R. 5312, represents the committee's fourth attempt in as many Congresses to enact a comprehensive modernization of the 25-year-old law.

For the first time since our first effort in 2009, the Senate has proposed draft language of its own. I am hopeful that we can get a NITRD modernization bill to the President's desk before year's end. Given the profound implications for our economic and national security, NIT is not an area of science and technology for which the U.S. can afford to cede leadership.

I want to thank Representative LAHOOD, Chairman SMITH, and committee staff for an open, collaborative, and good process which has led to a very good bill. I am pleased to be a cosponsor of the bill, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), the chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) for taking the initiative on this innovation bill. And I am also pleased that the ranking member, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON), is a cosponsor of H.R. 5312, the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Modernization Act of 2016.

Mr. Speaker, in this digital age, advancing and protecting our Nation's computing and networking systems is more important than ever. This legislation ensures that Federal science agencies focus on networking and information technology priorities that are in the national interest, and it provides the coordinating R&D efforts necessary to improve cyber and data security nationwide. Better network security promotes U.S. competitiveness, enhances national security, and creates high-tech jobs.

The NITRD Modernization bill is an update to the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991. The authorized program represents the Federal Government's main R&D portfolio for unclassified advanced networking, computing, software, cybersecurity, and related information technologies.

Currently, 21 Federal agencies are contributing members of NITRD, with many additional agencies participating in the program. This bill serves as the mechanism for interagency coordination of R&D to produce a tighter focus without wasteful duplication of research efforts among Federal agencies or the private sector. This will help save taxpayers' dollars. It also rebalances agency R&D portfolios to focus less on short-term, incremental approaches and much more on large-scale, long-term interdisciplinary research to transform and enable new computing capabilities.

Federal agencies are expected to invest more than $4.4 billion in fiscal year 2017 on NITRD Program activities. These investments go toward basic research at the frontiers of high-end computing, networking, and information technology. More than $1.1 billion of this is invested by the National Science Foundation and $720 million by the Department of Energy.

This taxpayer-funded basic research is intended to keep the United States

the global leader in high-end computing and networking, which is crucial to our future economic and national security. The bill does this by updating and reforming the underlying High-Performance Computing statute to reflect the current mature state of our vibrant computing industry. It also codifies the NITRD National Coordination Office, housed within the National Science Foundation, to oversee the participating agencies.

The NITRD Program has eight strategic priorities for its enabling research: cybersecurity, autonomous robotic systems, high-end computing and applications, exascale computing, human-computer interaction, large-scale networking, workforce development, and software design.

Technologies that develop from these research priorities are used by the commercial sector and the government to protect and enhance emergency communications, the power grid, air traffic control systems, our national energy resources, scientific discovery, human exploration, new product development, and national defense systems.

Advanced networking and information technology supports and boosts American discovery and innovation, improves our international competitiveness, expands the U.S. economy, and, of course, creates millions of jobs.

Mr. Speaker, American job creators also recognize the importance of networking and information technology research and development.

□ 1645

Many industry partners and stakeholders have written letters in support of this bill. They include the Computing Research Association, the Computing Technology Industry Association, the Information Technology Industry Council, and the Texas A&M University System.

As shown by hearings that the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology has held this Congress, including the most recent on the FDIC, cyber breaches are becoming all too commonplace. This legislation encourages agencies to increase understanding of ways to detect, prevent, and recover from actions that compromise or threaten computer-based systems.

I again thank our Science, Space, and Technology Committee colleague, Representative LAHOOD, for his efforts on this issue, and I also commend Majority Leader McCarthy for his vision in establishing a focused innovation initiative in the House of which this legislation is a part.

Mr. Speaker, again, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5312.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I urge a positive vote on the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK).

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding his time.

Mr. Speaker, I chair the Oversight Subcommittee on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, and my subcommittee has held numerous hearings on the ever-evolving threat of cyber intrusions.

I also owned and operated an information technology company for more than 20 years, so I know firsthand the importance of safeguarding sensitive information and private customer data. Regrettably, as we have seen through many unfortunate examples, the American people have good reason to question whether their private information is being properly secured.

That is why I am pleased to support H.R. 5312, the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Modernization Act of 2016. This legislation ensures that Federal science agencies focus on networking and information technology priorities that are in the national interest, and also provides the coordinated research and development efforts necessary to improve cyber and data security nationwide.

The bill also encourages agencies to increase understanding of ways to detect, prevent, and recover from actions that threaten computer systems. This legislation will help stimulate innovation in the technology sector and will enable our Nation to better understand and secure its systems for the future.

I thank my Science, Space, and Technology Committee colleague (Mr. LAHOOD) for his work on this issue, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS), my colleague and friend from Illinois.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague, Mr. LAHOOD, Chairman SMITH, and Ranking Member EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON.

This is a piece of legislation that may not get a lot of publicity, but it is essential to our research capabilities and supercomputing capabilities for our future right here in this country. The United States of America needs to continue to lead in this arena.

Who would have thought that while they were writing the High Performance Computing Act of 1991, it would have to be amended because of innovation that we have seen at many of our universities throughout this great country.

I am obviously in support of H.R. 5312 because it is going to streamline Federal investment in high-end computing, benefiting local entities in Illinois that use advanced technologies, such as the University of Illinois in my district, Caterpillar, and Western Illinois University that is served so well by Congressman LAHOOD.

This legislation ensures that the University of Illinois, the home to nationally recognized scientists and the Blue Waters Supercomputer, can continue to be the leader that they are in the fields of networking and computing.

The National Center for Supercomputing Applications at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is funded by many Federal agencies and has an impressive history of providing integrated cyber infrastructure to scientists, engineers, and scholars across the country.

Addressing complex problems in today's science and society requires expertise and engagement from multiple disciplines. NCSA is committed to continuing to serve as a central hub for transdisciplinary teams to unite in making technological advancements. These important research programs are critical for coordinating Federal research and fostering revolutionary breakthroughs in computing, networking, software, and cybersecurity.

By streamlining the NITRD Program, we can ensure U.S. competitiveness in advanced technologies while improving collaboration between Federal agencies, national laboratories, private industry, and academia.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is an effective use of taxpayer dollars.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the letters of support mentioned by Chairman SMITH, including the letter from the University of Illinois.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support for H.R. 5312.

I yield back the balance of my time.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS,
Champaign, IL, June 13, 2016.

Hon. DARIN LAHOOD,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE LAHOOD: The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Urbana) is pleased to endorse H.R. 5312, the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development (NITRD) Modernization Act of 2016.

The NITRD program plays a critical role in coordinating federal investments in Information Technology (IT) research and development to better enable and equip research communities in addressing complex grand challenges in science, engineering, and society.

Coordination and integration is increasingly important in the IT ecosystem. This is particularly true for high performance computing (HPC) and Big Data. At Urbana, the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA) serves as a world-class hub of transdisciplinary research and digital scholarship in which collaborators from across the globe unite to solve real-world problems. NCSA leads the two single largest National Science Foundation (NSF) investments in high-end computing and data analysis—the NSF Blue Waters supercomputer, the most powerful supercomputer in the academic world, and the NSF Extreme Science and Engineering Discovery Environment (XSEDE) project, which provides collaborative and shared computing services to the HPC community. These two computing projects support thousands of researchers from across the nation whose research is funded separately by numerous federal agencies. By providing unique science capabilities, these facilities are catalyzing significant discoveries.

In this highly competitive world, we applaud your efforts to lead this legislation to maintain U.S. leadership in research and innovation.

Sincerely,

BARBARA J. WILSON,
Interim Chancellor.

OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR,
THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM,
College Station, TX, June 8, 2016.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman, House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you for your leadership in advancing the bipartisan Networking and Information Technology Research and Development (NITRD) Modernization Act of 2016. As our nation and its citizens become increasingly connected through information technology, the need to reauthorize this critical program is evident.

We especially applaud the Committee for updating the program to focus on large-scale, long-term transformative interdisciplinary research. We face growing challenges that are complex and interrelated—from cybersecurity threats to human interfaces with information technology—that require new approaches to research and development. To this end, we are also pleased to see an increased focus in this legislation on Grand Challenges and cyber security needs.

As a leader in cybersecurity and information technology research and education, Texas A&M University is proud to partner with industry and Federal agencies to provide solutions to some of our nation's most vexing issues. The National Security Agency (NSA) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) designated Texas A&M University as a National Center of Academic Excellence, both in education and in research. This well-regarded designation places Texas A&M among a select group of only 30 universities that have earned both distinctions. Further the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) provides a wide variety of online cybersecurity training for community leaders and businesses from cyberlaw and white collar crime to ethics to risk management and network vulnerability assessment. Given the rapidly expanding workforce needs in this area, Texas A&M prides itself on preparing students and professionals to keep our nation competitive.

We are grateful for your leadership of the Science Committee and the work that you have put into this legislation. We look forward to continuing our work with you in the coming months and years.

Sincerely,

JOHN SHARP,
Chancellor.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
INDUSTRY COUNCIL,
Washington, DC, June 10, 2016.

Re H.R. 5312, the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Modernization Act of 2016

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Democratic Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN AND LEADER PELOSI: On behalf of the 60 members of the Information Technology Industry Council (ITI), I write to express our support for H.R. 5312, the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development (NITRD) Modernization Act of 2016.

The NITRD Program ensures the proper coordination of unclassified networking and information technology (NIT) research and development (R&D) across multiple federal agencies. More specifically, the Program aims to avoid investment redundancies, as well as increase interoperability in supercomputing, high-speed networking, cybersecurity, software engineering, and information management. However, since its inception in 1991, there have been unprecedented technological advances that are not currently addressed in the Program's overall structure. H.R. 5312 comprehensively modernizes the Program by updating essential terminology throughout the underlying law; addressing new areas of NIT research; and encouraging large-scale, long-term, interagency research in critical areas such as data analytics, social computing, human-robot interaction, privacy, and health technology.

The Program plays a key role in supporting continuous federal research in various aspects related to computing, including cybersecurity. Promoting greater federal R&D in cybersecurity is essential for securing our country's digital infrastructure. Consequently, we urge you to support the NITRD Modernization Act when it comes to the floor for a vote.

Sincerely,

DEAN C. GARFIELD,
President and CEO.

COMPUTING RESEARCH ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, May 23 2016.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman, House Science, Space, and Technology Committee, Washington, DC.

Hon. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON,
Ranking Member, House Science, Space, and Technology Committee, Washington. DC.

CHAIRMAN SMITH, RANKING MEMBER JOHNSON: As an organization representing over 240 industry and academic institutions involved in computing research and six affiliated professional societies, the Computing Research Association is pleased to support your efforts to bolster Federal information technology research through the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Modernization Act of 2016.

As you are aware, advances in information technology are transforming all aspects of our lives. Virtually every human endeavor today has been touched by information technology, including commerce, education. employment, health care, energy, manufacturing, governance, national security, communications, the environment, entertainment, science and engineering. The profound reach of IT is enabled in large part by the innovations that spawn from the IT research ecosystem—that incredibly productive, yet complex interplay of industry, universities and the Federal government. Indeed, nearly every sub-sector of the IT economy today bears the stamp of Federal support. The program responsible for overseeing this crucial investment is the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development (NITRD) program.

We believe this Act makes the NITRD program stronger by improving the planning and coordination of the National Coordination Office for NITRD, requiring that the NCO and the NITRD agencies create a five-year strategic plan for the program, and requiring the periodic review and assessment of the program contents and funding. All have been recommendations of the President's Council of Advisors for Science and Technology in their recent reviews of the program.

We thank you for your work on this legislation and for your long-standing support of the Federal investment in IT research. We look forward to working with you and your colleagues as you endeavor to move the legislation forward this session.

Sincerely,

SUSAN B. DAVIDSON,
Chair, Board of Directors.

COMPTIA,
Washington, DC, June 13, 2016.

CHRIS SHANK,
Policy and Coalitions Director,
House Science, Space, and Technology Committee, Washington, DC.

CHRIS: Thank you for providing CompTIA the opportunity to lend our support to the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development (NITRD) Modernization Act of 2016 (H.R. 5312).

As stated on the NITRD website, ''the multiagency NITRD Program seeks to provide the research and development (R&D) foundations for assuring continued U.S. technological leadership and meeting the needs of the Federal Government for advanced information technologies.'' CompTIA strongly supports the Act as it assures that NITRD continues to receive the funding necessary to help drive innovation through the scientific community. CompTIA also supports the development of a national coordination office to ensure improved communication within the NITRD ecosystem. Finally, CompTIA supports the focus on Grand Challenges that correlates with the NITRD portfolio.

Best Regards,

DAVID LOGSDON,
Senior Director,
Public Advocacy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5312, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. LAHOOD. 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.

FOIA IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2016

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 337) to improve the Freedom of Information Act.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 337

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 ''FOIA Improvement Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. AMENDMENTS TO FOIA.

Section 552 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''for public inspection and copying'' and inserting ''for public inspection in an electronic format'';

(ii) by striking subparagraph (D) and inserting the following:

''(D) copies of all records, regardless of form or format—

''(i) that have been released to any person under paragraph (3); and

''(ii)(I) that because of the nature of their subject matter, the agency determines have become or are likely to become the subject

of subsequent requests for substantially the same records; or

''(II) that have been requested 3 or more times; and''; and

(iii) in the undesignated matter following subparagraph (E), by striking ''public inspection and copying current'' and inserting ''public inspection in an electronic format current'';

(B) in paragraph (4)(A), by striking clause (viii) and inserting the following:

''(viii)(I) Except as provided in subclause (II), an agency shall not assess any search fees (or in the case of a requester described under clause (ii)(II) of this subparagraph, duplication fees) under this subparagraph if the agency has failed to comply with any time limit under paragraph (6).

''(II)(aa) If an agency has determined that unusual circumstances apply (as the term is defined in paragraph (6)(B)) and the agency provided a timely written notice to the requester in accordance with paragraph (6)(B), a failure described in subclause (I) is excused for an additional 10 days. If the agency fails to comply with the extended time limit, the agency may not assess any search fees (or in the case of a requester described under clause (ii)(II) of this subparagraph, duplication fees).

''(bb) If an agency has determined that unusual circumstances apply and more than 5,000 pages are necessary to respond to the request, an agency may charge search fees (or in the case of a requester described under clause (ii)(II) of this subparagraph, duplication fees) if the agency has provided a timely written notice to the requester in accordance with paragraph (6)(B) and the agency has discussed with the requester via written mail, electronic mail, or telephone (or made not less than 3 good-faith attempts to do so) how the requester could effectively limit the scope of the request in accordance with paragraph (6)(B)(ii).

''(cc) If a court has determined that exceptional circumstances exist (as that term is defined in paragraph (6)(C)), a failure described in subclause (I) shall be excused for the length of time provided by the court order.'';

(C) in paragraph (6)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)(i), by striking ''making such request'' and all that follows through ''determination; and'' and inserting the following: ''making such request of—

''(I) such determination and the reasons therefor;

''(II) the right of such person to seek assistance from the FOIA Public Liaison of the agency; and

''(III) in the case of an adverse determination—

''(aa) the right of such person to appeal to the head of the agency, within a period determined by the head of the agency that is not less than 90 days after the date of such adverse determination; and

''(bb) the right of such person to seek dispute resolution services from the FOIA Public Liaison of the agency or the Office of Government Information Services; and''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B)(ii), by striking ''the agency.'' and inserting ''the agency, and notify the requester of the right of the requester to seek dispute resolution services from the Office of Government Information Services.''; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

''(8)(A) An agency shall—

''(i) withhold information under this section only if—

''(I) the agency reasonably foresees that disclosure would harm an interest protected by an exemption described in subsection (b); or

''(II) disclosure is prohibited by law; and

''(ii)(I) consider whether partial disclosure of information is possible whenever the agency determines that a full disclosure of a requested record is not possible; and

''(II) take reasonable steps necessary to segregate and release nonexempt information; and

''(B) Nothing in this paragraph requires disclosure of information that is otherwise prohibited from disclosure by law, or otherwise exempted from disclosure under subsection (b)(3).'';

(2) in subsection (b), by amending paragraph (5) to read as follows:

''(5) inter-agency or intra-agency memorandums or letters that would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the agency, provided that the deliberative process privilege shall not apply to records created 25 years or more before the date on which the records were requested;''; and

(3) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting ''and to the Director of the Office of Government Information Services'' after ''United States'';

(ii) in subparagraph (N), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(iii) in subparagraph (O), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(iv) by adding at the end the following:

''(P) the number of times the agency denied a request for records under subsection (c); and

''(Q) the number of records that were made available for public inspection in an electronic format under subsection (a)(2).'';

(B) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

''(3) Each agency shall make each such report available for public inspection in an electronic format. In addition, each agency shall make the raw statistical data used in each report available in a timely manner for public inspection in an electronic format, which shall be made available—

''(A) without charge, license, or registration requirement;

''(B) in an aggregated, searchable format; and

''(C) in a format that may be downloaded in bulk.'';

(C) in paragraph (4)—

(i) by striking ''Government Reform and Oversight'' and inserting ''Oversight and Government Reform'';

(ii) by inserting ''Homeland Security and'' before ''Governmental Affairs''; and

(iii) by striking ''April'' and inserting ''March''; and

(D) by striking paragraph (6) and inserting the following:

''(6)(A) The Attorney General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives, the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate, and the President a report on or before March 1 of each calendar year, which shall include for the prior calendar year—

''(i) a listing of the number of cases arising under this section;

''(ii) a listing of—

''(I) each subsection, and any exemption, if applicable, involved in each case arising under this section;

''(II) the disposition of each case arising under this section; and

''(III) the cost, fees, and penalties assessed under subparagraphs (E), (F), and (G) of subsection (a)(4); and

''(iii) a description of the efforts undertaken by the Department of Justice to encourage agency compliance with this section.

''(B) The Attorney General of the United States shall make—

''(i) each report submitted under subparagraph (A) available for public inspection in an electronic format; and

''(ii) the raw statistical data used in each report submitted under subparagraph (A) available for public inspection in an electronic format, which shall be made available—

''(I) without charge, license, or registration requirement;

''(II) in an aggregated, searchable format; and

''(III) in a format that may be downloaded in bulk.'';

(4) in subsection (g), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''publicly available upon request'' and inserting ''available for public inspection in an electronic format'';

(5) in subsection (h)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by adding at the end the following: ''The head of the Office shall be the Director of the Office of Government Information Services.'';

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

''(C) identify procedures and methods for improving compliance under this section.'';

(C) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

''(3) The Office of Government Information Services shall offer mediation services to resolve disputes between persons making requests under this section and administrative agencies as a nonexclusive alternative to litigation and may issue advisory opinions at the discretion of the Office or upon request of any party to a dispute.''; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

''(4)(A) Not less frequently than annually, the Director of the Office of Government Information Services shall submit to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives, the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate, and the President—

''(i) a report on the findings of the information reviewed and identified under paragraph (2);

''(ii) a summary of the activities of the Office of Government Information Services under paragraph (3), including—

''(I) any advisory opinions issued; and

''(II) the number of times each agency engaged in dispute resolution with the assistance of the Office of Government Information Services or the FOIA Public Liaison; and

''(iii) legislative and regulatory recommendations, if any, to improve the administration of this section.

''(B) The Director of the Office of Government Information Services shall make each report submitted under subparagraph (A) available for public inspection in an electronic format.

''(C) The Director of the Office of Government Information Services shall not be required to obtain the prior approval, comment, or review of any officer or agency of the United States, including the Department of Justice, the Archivist of the United States, or the Office of Management and Budget before submitting to Congress, or any committee or subcommittee thereof, any reports, recommendations, testimony, or comments, if such submissions include a statement indicating that the views expressed therein are those of the Director and do not necessarily represent the views of the President.

''(5) The Director of the Office of Government Information Services may directly submit additional information to Congress and the President as the Director determines to be appropriate.

''(6) Not less frequently than annually, the Office of Government Information Services shall conduct a meeting that is open to the public on the review and reports by the Office and shall allow interested persons to appear and present oral or written statements at the meeting.'';

(6) by striking subsections (j) and (k), and inserting the following:

''(j)(1) Each agency shall designate a Chief FOIA Officer who shall be a senior official of such agency (at the Assistant Secretary or equivalent level).

''(2) The Chief FOIA Officer of each agency shall, subject to the authority of the head of the agency—

''(A) have agency-wide responsibility for efficient and appropriate compliance with this section;

''(B) monitor implementation of this section throughout the agency and keep the head of the agency, the chief legal officer of the agency, and the Attorney General appropriately informed of the agency's performance in implementing this section;

''(C) recommend to the head of the agency such adjustments to agency practices, policies, personnel, and funding as may be necessary to improve its implementation of this section;

''(D) review and report to the Attorney General, through the head of the agency, at such times and in such formats as the Attorney General may direct, on the agency's performance in implementing this section;

''(E) facilitate public understanding of the purposes of the statutory exemptions of this section by including concise descriptions of the exemptions in both the agency's handbook issued under subsection (g), and the agency's annual report on this section, and by providing an overview, where appropriate, of certain general categories of agency records to which those exemptions apply;

''(F) offer training to agency staff regarding their responsibilities under this section;

''(G) serve as the primary agency liaison with the Office of Government Information Services and the Office of Information Policy; and

''(H) designate 1 or more FOIA Public Liaisons.

''(3) The Chief FOIA Officer of each agency shall review, not less frequently than annually, all aspects of the administration of this section by the agency to ensure compliance with the requirements of this section, including—

''(A) agency regulations;

''(B) disclosure of records required under paragraphs (2) and (8) of subsection (a);

''(C) assessment of fees and determination of eligibility for fee waivers;

''(D) the timely processing of requests for information under this section;

''(E) the use of exemptions under subsection (b); and

''(F) dispute resolution services with the assistance of the Office of Government Information Services or the FOIA Public Liaison.

''(k)(1) There is established in the executive branch the Chief FOIA Officers Council (referred to in this subsection as the 'Council').

''(2) The Council shall be comprised of the following members:

''(A) The Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget.

''(B) The Director of the Office of Information Policy at the Department of Justice.

''(C) The Director of the Office of Government Information Services.

''(D) The Chief FOIA Officer of each agency.

''(E) Any other officer or employee of the United States as designated by the Co-Chairs.

''(3) The Director of the Office of Information Policy at the Department of Justice and the Director of the Office of Government Information Services shall be the Co-Chairs of the Council.

''(4) The Administrator of General Services shall provide administrative and other support for the Council.

''(5)(A) The duties of the Council shall include the following:

''(i) Develop recommendations for increasing compliance and efficiency under this section.

''(ii) Disseminate information about agency experiences, ideas, best practices, and innovative approaches related to this section.

''(iii) Identify, develop, and coordinate initiatives to increase transparency and compliance with this section.

''(iv) Promote the development and use of common performance measures for agency compliance with this section.

''(B) In performing the duties described in subparagraph (A), the Council shall consult on a regular basis with members of the public who make requests under this section.

''(6)(A) The Council shall meet regularly and such meetings shall be open to the public unless the Council determines to close the meeting for reasons of national security or to discuss information exempt under subsection (b).

''(B) Not less frequently than annually, the Council shall hold a meeting that shall be open to the public and permit interested persons to appear and present oral and written statements to the Council.

''(C) Not later than 10 business days before a meeting of the Council, notice of such meeting shall be published in the Federal Register.

''(D) Except as provided in subsection (b), the records, reports, transcripts, minutes, appendices, working papers, drafts, studies, agenda, or other documents that were made available to or prepared for or by the Council shall be made publicly available.

''(E) Detailed minutes of each meeting of the Council shall be kept and shall contain a record of the persons present, a complete and accurate description of matters discussed and conclusions reached, and copies of all reports received, issued, or approved by the Council. The minutes shall be redacted as necessary and made publicly available.''; and

(7) by adding at the end the following:

''(m)(1) The Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Attorney General, shall ensure the operation of a consolidated online request portal that allows a member of the public to submit a request for records under subsection (a) to any agency from a single website. The portal may include any additional tools the Director of the Office of Management and Budget finds will improve the implementation of this section.

''(2) This subsection shall not be construed to alter the power of any other agency to create or maintain an independent online portal for the submission of a request for records under this section. The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall establish standards for interoperability between the portal required under paragraph (1) and other request processing software used by agencies subject to this section.''.

SEC. 3. REVIEW AND ISSUANCE OF REGULATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the head of each agency (as defined in section 551 of title 5, United States Code) shall review the regulations of such agency and shall issue regulations on procedures for the disclosure of records under section 552 of title 5, United States Code, in accordance with the amendments made by section 2.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The regulations of each agency shall include procedures for engaging in dispute resolution through the FOIA Public Liaison and the Office of Government Information Services.

SEC. 4. PROACTIVE DISCLOSURE THROUGH RECORDS MANAGEMENT.

Section 3102 of title 44, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (3) and (4); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

''(2) procedures for identifying records of general interest or use to the public that are appropriate for public disclosure, and for posting such records in a publicly accessible electronic format;''.

SEC. 5. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act or the amendments made by this Act. The requirements of this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized or appropriated.

SEC. 6. APPLICABILITY.

This Act, and the amendments made by this Act, shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act and shall apply to any request for records under section 552 of title 5, United States Code, made after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MEADOWS. 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 the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 337, the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016. We stand here today 3 weeks shy of the FOIA's 50th anniversary to strengthen the law that established the public's right to know.

Enacted in 1966, FOIA was the product of more than a decade of work on government secrecy by a predecessor committee to the current Oversight and Government Reform Committee. At the time, FOIA was only the third public information law in the world. It was by far the most far-reaching. FOIA established a right to information, which is commonly known as the public's right to know.

S. 337 reaffirms the public's right to know and puts in place several reforms to stop agencies from slowly eroding the effectiveness of using FOIA to exercise that right.

This bill is a bipartisan effort to improve the public's access to information and transparency in the Federal Government.

I would like to thank Senators CORNYN, GRASSLEY, and LEAHY for their

hard work that they put into writing and passing this bill. I would also like to thank Representative DARRELL ISSA and Ranking Member ELIJAH CUMMINGS for their work on the House bill, H.R. 653, which passed in January.

Through all of our combined efforts, I believe that this is the best bill we can send to the President's desk. I have no doubt that the reforms contained in this bill will significantly improve the American public's ability to exercise their right to access information.

The most important reform is the presumption of openness. Now, while some—but far from all—Federal agencies have made an effort to comply with the letter of the law, very few have complied with the spirit of the law. The presumption of openness puts that spirit into the letter of the law. Before claiming an exemption, agencies must first determine whether they could reasonably foresee an actual harm.

FOIA includes exemptions because publicly releasing information can sometimes cause more harm than good. But from the beginning, agencies have taken advantage of these exemptions to withhold any information that might technically fit. Under the presumption of openness, agencies may no longer withhold information that is embarrassing or could possibly paint the agency in a negative light simply because an exemption may technically apply. This will go a long way toward getting rid of the withhold-it-because-you-want-to exemption.

S. 337 establishes reforms that will bring attention, leadership, and commitment to improvement to all Federal agencies.

The Department of Homeland Security is a great example of how attention, leadership, and a commitment to improvement can be more valuable, at times, than additional dollars. From 2009 to 2015, requests sent to DHS nearly tripled. DHS requests accounted for about 40 percent of all the requests governmentwide. As the requests increased, so did the backlog. And in 2014, that backlog at DHS exceeded more than 100,000 requests. However, the agency made a commitment to improve its efficiency and reduce its backlog.

In 2015, that backlog was down by two-thirds, to about 35,000. Costs overall went up, but that is expected when requests nearly triple in just 6 years. What is not expected is that the cost per request was cut by 58 percent. In 2009, DHS averaged $255 per request processed, and in 2015, the costs had dropped to $148 per request processed.

S. 337 establishes reforms that will ensure all agencies have the attention and the leadership necessary to improve the FOIA process. The bill establishes a Chief FOIA Officers Council, which is directed to develop initiatives to increase transparency and compliance with FOIA and make recommendations for increased efficiencies and share best practices.

The bill establishes greater independence of the Office of Government Information Services, which will allow OGIS to give unbiased, unfiltered testimony and recommendations.

S. 337 creates an incentive for agencies to comply with the law by preventing agencies from collecting fees for any request for up to 5,000 pages if that request is not completed within the statutory time limits.

Out-of-date regulations have been repeatedly used as an excuse to withhold information, delay requests, or otherwise to obstruct the process. S. 337 gets rid of this excuse by requiring agencies to update their regulations so that they are operating under the current law.

S. 337 also simplifies the process of submitting requests by establishing an online central portal that will allow a member of the public to submit a request to an agency at a single Web site rather than forcing the public to navigate each agency's different process and Web site.

These reforms and others packaged in the FOIA Improvement Act will go a long way to improving transparency and bringing agency leadership attention to improving the public's ability to exercise their right to know.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this giant step forward to improve FOIA and the public's access to information.

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

□ 1700

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016, also known as the public's right to know or Transparency in Government Act.

It is fitting that we pass this bill to strengthen the Freedom of Information Act just a few weeks before the 50th anniversary of this important law. The National Archives and Records Administration currently has on display the original Freedom of Information Act in celebration of the anniversary on July 4. It is inspiring to think that 50 years have passed and that document is still the most important tool that the public has to access information about their government.

When FOIA was passed in 1966, it was only the third freedom of information law in the entire world, and it was by far the most powerful. Now countries all over the world have transparency laws that are modeled on our Nation's FOIA law. We are here today in the ongoing quest to improve FOIA and to keep it current with changes in technology.

I want to thank Congressmen ISSA and CUMMINGS for introducing the House version of the bill and Senators LEAHY and CORNYN for taking the lead in the Senate.

This bill is the result of many voices providing feedback and helpful critiques. That is the way a good law is made. Advocacy groups such as OpenTheGovernment.org and the Sunshine in Government Initiative have been critical to the success of this legislation.

The FOIA Improvement Act is a bicameral, bipartisan bill. With its passage today, it will now go on to the President for his signature.

The bill would codify the presumption of openness standard that President Obama put in place on his first day in office. Under this standard, agencies will be required to err on the side of transparency when responding to requests.

The bill would also put a 25-year sunset on exemption 5 of FOIA, the deliberative process exemption. It would modernize FOIA by requiring the Office of Management and Budget to create a central FOIA Web site for requesters to submit their request, making it more efficient and accessible to the public.

This bill would strengthen the independence and the role of the Office of Government Information Services. OGIS has served a critical role since it was formed in response to the last FOIA reform Congress adopted in 2007.

I would like to take a moment to thank the hardworking Federal employees who serve as FOIA officers. They are dedicated professionals who care about making FOIA work.

It is critical that Congress provide the funds necessary for agencies to have strong FOIA programs with experienced and trained FOIA professionals. It is not reasonable for us to ask agencies to do more if we do not give them the resources to do it.

The FOIA Improvement Act would require each agency to designate a chief FOIA officer. The chief FOIA officer would have responsibility for ensuring that FOIA is implemented efficiently and appropriately in the agency. I hope this addition to FOIA will help elevate the importance of FOIA in agencies that have not always given it the attention it deserves.

Thank you to the many FOIA professionals who have provided feedback on the bill over the past 3 years. Thank you also to the FOIA requesters who provided feedback, requesters such as Nate Jones from the National Security Archive and David McCraw from The New York Times. They all provided useful suggestions for reform.

I understand that some proposals did not make it into the final bill, but they did shape the debate and will help us as we look forward to future reforms.

A Los Angeles Times editorial said: ''worthy of not only Obama's signature, but also his vocal support.''

A New York Times editorial said: ''This is a rare chance to log a significant bipartisan accomplishment in the public interest.''

Enactment of this legislation will be an important step forward for transparency.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentlewoman from

New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) for her support on this bill.

I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA), who has spent a considerable amount of time not only on the House version, but really helping shape the debate on making sure that the public interests of America is protected.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, this has been a long time coming, and there is a lot of thanks to go around. Certainly for Senator CORNYN and Senator LEAHY, this is going to be a proud week with the passage of this bill in the House and, ultimately, it going to the President.

I don't believe this would have been possible without the partnership that ELIJAH CUMMINGS and I formed some years ago. The House has led in not just one, but in two Congresses, sending to the Senate very tough language dramatically improving what we see as the flaws in FOIA that have developed.

Congresswoman MALONEY, very rightfully so, said there are a lot of things that the interest groups and Congressman CUMMINGS and myself and, perhaps, everyone else who will vote on it here today would like to have seen. I don't want to belabor the point, but when this bill becomes law and is signed by the President, there will be enough left for a new bill to start again.

Having said that, we celebrate today the fact that we have made some milestones. Codifying in law the presumption of openness and, once and for all, ending the deliberative process' unlimited length and reducing it to 25 years long, long after a President has left office, is a good start.

I want to note that, in the original House bill—one area that I was particularly pleased that Mr. CUMMINGS and I were able to come to an agreement on—if an agency unreasonably delays, there should be a result. If someone has to sue, whether it is The New York Times or an interest group, and, ultimately, the government is unreasonable and is withholding, reasonable fees should be recovered. That isn't in the bill. I hope that it will be in future legislation.

The fact is that this bill includes some very important points, not the least of which will be making more public and accessible the repeated request for various parts of FOIA, and, of course, reducing the delays and the time lag.

Having said that, through the establishment of a board and the recognition that only through diligence and closing the quality circle that occurs can we come back to this body and say more needs to be done and name it.

But today is a day for celebration. I want to thank Mr. CUMMINGS one more time, Chairman CHAFFETZ, the Members of the House and the Senate, urge the passage of the bill, and recognize that this is, in fact, a 50-year-old law. It has stood the test of time. It has proven to be an asset for the American people and for their right to know. We will build on this.

Lastly, and Congresswoman MALONEY named it, there were countless outside transparency groups that spanned from the farthest left of our country's politics to the farthest right of our politics, all of whom wanted more open access to their government. Today, we are achieving it. We still will have a government that knows far more about us than we know about our government; but today, we are opening the possibility that, in a timely fashion, more often more people who have a vested interest in knowing something that the government has done or is doing will have the ability to get that information.

I thank Congressman MEADOWS for making this bill possible today. His leadership has been critical, and his friendship has been critical all along the way.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS), who has led many of the discussions in this body on criminal justice reform and reform in so many ways, including this bill that he helped author with former Chairman ISSA.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I want to thank Mr. MEADOWS and Mr. CHAFFETZ and, certainly, Speaker RYAN for getting this bill to the floor.

I associate myself completely with the words of the former chairman of our Oversight and Government Reform Committee, Mr. ISSA. I don't think there has been anyone who has worked harder on getting this bill to the floor than Mr. ISSA. Without a doubt, his fingerprints are all over it. I really do, from the depths of my heart, thank him for all that he has done to make this happen.

The FOIA Improvement Act is a product of a 3-year journey—that is a long time—that began when Representative ISSA and I first introduced the basis for the bill in 2013. Mr. ISSA worked with me on the House version of this bill, and Senators LEAHY and CORNYN took the lead in the Senate.

Again, I want to thank the chairman of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, JASON CHAFFETZ, for his work on FOIA reform and for his support bringing the bill to the floor. He has proposed some additional initiatives that did not make it into this version of the bill but that deserve continued attention.

Even in our negotiations, I give it to Chairman CHAFFETZ. You know, a lot of times when you are trying to work things out and get things done between the House and the Senate, there has to be some compromise. There are a lot of good things that he wanted in the bill that I strongly supported, but we were not able to get them in.

For example, one of his provisions would have required every agency to accept FOIA requests by email. This is a simple improvement that every agency should adopt, and I look forward to working with Chairman CHAFFETZ in the years ahead on such commonsense reforms.

I would like to recognize a few of the staff for both Representatives ISSA and CHAFFETZ who deserve recognition, strong recognition, for the work they put into this legislation over the last few years: Tegan Gelfand, Ali Ahmad, and Katy Rother. I want to thank them for all of the work that they have done in making this happen.

In addition, advocacy groups, as Mr. ISSA mentioned, such as OpenTheGovernment.org and Sunshine in Government Initiative, as well as experts such as Anne Weismann at Campaign for Accountability, have been critical to the success of this legislation.

Finally, I would like to take time to thank our Speaker. His office has been extremely helpful, and he also deserves credit for bringing this bill to the floor today. It simply would not have been possible without his leadership.

The FOIA Improvement Act is a truly bicameral, bipartisan bill. With its passage today, it will now go on to the President for his signature. It builds on the work of the Obama administration, which has done more to advance transparency than any administration in history.

□ 1715

The bill would codify the presumption of openness standard that President Obama put in place on his first day in office.

The bill would also put a 25-year sunset on exemption No. 5 of FOIA—the deliberative process exemption.

It would modernize FOIA by requiring the Office of Management and Budget to create a central portal to allow FOIA requests to any agency through a single Web site.

The Office of Government Information Services, which is the FOIA ombudsman that was created by Congress in 2007, would become more independent under this bill and would be allowed to submit testimony and reports directly to Congress without going through political review.

Finally, FOIA officers could share best practices through a Chief FOIA Officers Council that would be established under the bill.

These are just some of the examples of the many improvements to FOIA that are contained in this legislation. The FOIA Improvement Act is a big step forward in transparency, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and ''fix FOIA by 50.''

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

I thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) for his insightful, well-thought-out words on behalf of this bill. Indeed, Mr. ISSA and Mr. CUMMINGS have been a moving force and, really, one of the primary forces as to why we are here today; so I just want to acknowledge that.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I join my voice with Ranking Member CUMMINGS' in being associated with the words from my friend and colleague from the great State of North Carolina in support of this important legislation and to also compliment not only ELIJAH CUMMINGS for his leadership, but former Chairman ISSA for making this a priority and for helping to move it to the floor and make it happen.

This is a good, bipartisan bill. It was worked on diligently by both sides in both the House and the Senate. It is an important step forward for transparency. It is a strengthened bill. It deserves the support of everyone on both sides of the aisle, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

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

I acknowledge the, really, unbelievable work of the staff. Many times, as you well know, Mr. Speaker, we will get up and work very hard, but it is the countless hours on behalf of our staff that really allows us to move legislation forward; so I wouldn't want this day to go by without acknowledging their support and work.

Also, I acknowledge the leadership of Chairman CHAFFETZ in his being able to not only navigate this bill before and, hopefully, to the President's desk for signing, but certainly in his leadership on transparency and in making sure that the government of the people is accountable to the people.

I urge the adoption of this bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RIGELL). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 337.

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.

OVERSEE VISA INTEGRITY WITH STAKEHOLDER ADVISORIES ACT

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3636) to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to allow labor organizations and management organizations to receive the results of visa petitions about which such organizations have submitted advisory opinions, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3636

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 ''Oversee Visa Integrity with Stakeholder Advisories Act'' or the ''O–VISA Act''.

SEC. 2. ALLOWING CERTAIN ORGANIZATIONS TO RECEIVE THE RESULTS OF VISA PETITIONS.

Section 214(c)(3) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1184(c)(3)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''Attorney General'' each place it appears and inserting ''Secretary of Homeland Security''; and

(2) in the first sentence of the matter following subparagraph (B)—

(A) by striking ''and (iv)'' and inserting ''(iv)''; and

(B) by striking the period at the end and inserting the following: '', and (v) upon making the decision, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall provide a copy of the decision to each organization with which the Secretary consulted under subparagraph (A) or (B).''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. MIMI WALTERS) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. MIMI WALTERS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 3636, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank Mr. NADLER and all of the other cosponsors in their helping to advance H.R. 3636, the Oversee Visa Integrity with Stakeholder Advisories Act, otherwise referred to as the O-VISA Act, for a floor vote.

Congress established the O visa program to allow non-immigrants with extraordinary abilities to be employed in the sciences, arts, education, business, or athletics. In recognition of the unique nature of the motion picture and television industry, Congress established special evidentiary criteria for O–1 and O–2 visas for artists who are working in the industry. One requirement mandates that the USCIS consult with the appropriate labor and management organizations for each visa petition. The reason for this is very simple in that those organizations are best suited to evaluate whether a visa applicant has demonstrated extraordinary achievement—the standard for O–1 and O–2 visa petitioners in this industry.

These consulting organizations dedicate substantial resources to advise the USCIS on the merits of visa petitions. They are essential to identifying fraud as well as to protecting U.S. workers who are capable of filling those jobs. Unfortunately, these organizations are never notified as to the USCIS' final petition decisions. The consulting organizations should be notified of these decisions so that they may better assist the USCIS in determining fraud and in properly implementing the O visa standards.

There have been serious indications of fraud in O–1 and O–2 visa petitions, including the outright forgery of advisory opinions, shell production companies, and sponsoring employers who are without any connection to the motion picture and television industry. These concerns led Chairman GOODLATTE and Ranking Member CONYERS to send a letter to the USCIS in 2014, which stated:

> It seems that, at the very least, USCIS should be notifying these organizations when it approves petitions over their objections. However, we are told that such organizations are rarely, if ever, notified regarding the outcome of petitions to which they object. Ensuring transparency in the adjudication process for any visa program is essential to a secure and effective immigration policy, and, therefore, we are concerned about the reported potential fraud in O–1 and O–2 visa petitions.

It is important to note that there are no indications of abuse by the major studios, such as members of the MPAA. In fact, it is my understanding that the labor and management consulting organizations concur with the vast majority of O visa petitions that are submitted by the major studios.

The O-VISA Act, which Mr. NADLER and I have put forth, is a narrow provision that injects transparency into this visa petition process. It amends the Immigration and Nationality Act to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide a copy of the USCIS visa petition decision to the consulting organization that was required to provide the advisory opinion for that specific petition. Essentially, the organization will be copied on the agency decision. Congress wisely recognized that the opinions of these private stakeholders deserve proper consideration due to their unique expertise in the industry. Congress should further utilize that expertise by authorizing the USCIS to copy these organizations because this will assist in identifying fraud and in protecting American jobs.

I was pleased to receive the recent report from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office that H.R. 3636 will have no significant cost to the taxpayer. In fact, any associated costs will be recouped from fees that are collected by the Department of Homeland Security in the visa application process. Simply put, H.R. 3636 is a model of commonsense, bipartisan legislation that utilizes private sector expertise to improve our governance.

I will take this opportunity to note that there are other issues regarding O visas that must be addressed. In particular, there are serious concerns that the USCIS' decisionmaking process moves far too slowly. This lack of efficiency means that film and television face considerable delays and unnecessary costs. I am committed to working with the committee and the industry to address these issues in the future.

I encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 3636, the O-VISA Act.

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

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

I am pleased to support the O-VISA Act, which is a narrow, but important, bill.

I thank my Judiciary Committee colleagues—the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. MIMI WALTERS) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER)—for their bipartisan effort in introducing this legislation, which will bring needed transparency to the O visa petition process.

For individuals who seek an O visa specifically to work on a motion picture or a television production, the law requires that an individual have a demonstrated record of extraordinary achievement, which must be recognized in the field through extensive documentation.

In recognizing the need to balance the demand for a global exchange of creative professionals with the need to prevent the displacement of American workers, current law requires that O visa petitioners provide a written advisory opinion from an appropriate labor organization regarding the beneficiary's qualifications. For example, when petitioning for a foreign director, a petitioner must seek an opinion from the Directors Guild of America.

As experts in their fields, these labor organizations are in a great position to appraise a beneficiary's qualifications. This process is intended to ensure that only the most extraordinary and accomplished individuals are granted an O visa. The O-VISA Act requires that the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services provide a copy of the agency decision to the labor union that is consulted as part of the petition when one seeks work in a motion picture or on television. By doing this, the bill will help ensure that the union consultation is a meaningful part of the agency adjudication, as required under current law; and it will bring transparency for employers, workers, and the organizations that represent them, which is always a good thing.

I do believe, as the gentlewoman has indicated, we could do more in this area. For example, we should be providing for the portability of O–1 visa holders and others so they can move between jobs. Portability not only helps employers in the industry, but it also ensures that foreign workers aren't trapped in positions or are used to undercut the wages of U.S. workers. I hope that we can continue the bipartisan effort that produced this legislation to make further improvements to the O visa program.

As indicated during the consideration of the bill in the Judiciary Committee, the language contained in this bill has been coupled with provisions that also make important changes to the O visa program that were included in the Senate's comprehensive immigration reform from the last Congress, which died here on the House side. That bill provided for portability; it removed redundancies; and it better aligned these programs with others that involved honorarium or appearance fees. I know that we are not doing an entire rewrite of the immigration laws at this juncture, but I am hopeful that we will continue to work on these further improvements as this chairman has indicated he would be interested in.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't say what we all know too well, which is that we have enormous problems in our immigration system. I hope that we can work together on real, substantial fixes on behalf of not just the movie industry—as important as that industry is—but for families, refugees, and employers in a range of industries, including agriculture and the high-skilled sector. Over the years, I have worked with friends on the other side of the aisle on immigration reforms, big and small, and I continue to stand ready to do so in the future.

I thank the Speaker, the bill's authors, and the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. MIMI WALTERS).

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. I thank the gentlewoman from California.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3636, the Oversee Visa Integrity with Stakeholder Advisories Act, also known as the O-VISA Act.

I support this bipartisan legislation because it will strengthen the role of labor unions in the O visa petition process, a process by which international artists and entertainers with extraordinary ability are brought to the United States.

□ 1730

As many of you may know, my home State of Georgia is one of the Nation's leading locations for film and television production. Since the State updated its tax laws, this industry has generated approximately $800 million annually in economic development, and it is credited with supporting about 11,000 jobs in Georgia.

In June alone, there were more than 23 movies and TV shows being filmed in the State. And as more studios and production teams move to Georgia, the demand for international talent will continue to rise.

While international audiences have a strong appreciation and demand for American movies, music, and other forms of entertainment, we also want talent from other countries to come to the United States for our enjoyment. In such instances, however, we must ensure that the immigration process effectively balances the needs of the entertainment industry while protecting the rights and interests of American workers.

Congress has long realized that this is a delicate balance, which is why we created a specific role for American labor unions to participate in the O visa petition process for foreign artists and entertainers. Unions help ensure safe working conditions and fair wages for all, regardless of nationality. Under the O visa consultation process, unions provide informed opinions on these significant issues.

The bill before us today makes an important change to current law. It requires the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to provide labor organizations the results of decisions for cases in which they submitted advisory opinions. This new requirement will bring transparency to the O visa process.

In addition, this measure will enable labor unions to better monitor the outcomes of O visa cases and reduce uncertainty about the number of entertainment jobs filled by international artists.

H.R. 3636 will further strengthen international artistic exchange while promoting American workers.

In closing, I want to thank my colleagues on the Judiciary Committee, Representatives MIMI WALTERS and JERROLD NADLER, for their leadership in crafting this bipartisan legislation. H.R. 3636 is a good bill, and I am pleased to support it.

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I urge a ''yes'' vote on the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I will close by thanking everyone for their support of this bill. I encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 3636, the O–VISA Act.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3636, the O–VISA Act. As the lead Democratic cosponsor, I also want to thank the Gentlewoman from California, Mrs. WALTERS, for introducing this legislation, which will bring some needed transparency to the O visa application process.

O visas are reserved for individuals with extraordinary ability in the sciences, arts, education, business, or athletics to perform temporary work in their field here in the United States. For those seeking an O visa specifically to work on a motion picture or television production, the law requires that an individual have ''a demonstrated record of extraordinary achievement,'' which must be ''recognized in the field through extensive documentation.''

Through a unique provision in the law, an applicant for an O visa seeking to work on a film or television production must first obtain an opinion from the relevant labor organization in their field. For example, a director must seek an opinion from the Directors Guild of America, and a set designer must consult with the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees. As experts in their field, these organizations are in the best position to determine an applicant's special qualifications. This process is intended to ensure that only the

most extraordinary and accomplished individuals—those who are so unique that they could not be replaced by an American worker—are granted an O visa.

Unfortunately, in recent years, several unions have expressed deep concerns that a significant number of applicants for whom they have recommended denial have been admitted into the United States nonetheless. In some instances, the unions have documented fraud on the part of the applicant, while in some cases, the government simply reached a different conclusion. But, because the consulting union is never informed by the government whether a particular application was approved or denied, it is impossible to know the full extent of this problem. The O–VISA Act would bring needed transparency to this process by requiring USCIS to provide a copy of any final determination to the consulting union.

This is a narrow, but critically important provision. Although the unions have expended a great deal of resources to discover the outcome of their advisory opinions, they are in the dark about the vast majority of cases. Although they could serve as a partner to USCIS in rooting out fraud and abuse, they lack the information they need to follow up on suspicious cases. I should point out that the unions have assured me that their concerns about fraud do not stem from any applications by the major studios. The problems occur with certain unscrupulous independent companies that abuse the process in a variety of ways.

Of course, there need not be any fraud for USCIS to reach a different conclusion about the merits of a particular applicant. But, if this is occurring in a significant number of cases, it may signify a systemic problem in how the agency is considering applications, or a lack of understanding by the union of how cases should be evaluated. In either case, it is only fair that the unions have sufficient knowledge of how petitions are decided so that they can have a meaningful discussion with USCIS about any concerns they may have.

The O–VISA Act would provide the transparency necessary to undertake this process and I urge my colleagues to support it.

I want to note that since this bill simply requires that USCIS provide a copy of any final decision to the consulting organization, it should not burden the agency or add any delays in processing O visa applications. However, I recognize that many sponsoring employers have expressed concerns over the inefficiency of the current process, and that reforms are needed to streamline the application process.

The language contained in H.R. 3636 has historically been coupled with provisions that also make important changes to the O- and B-visa programs for those seeking entry for motion picture and television productions. These provisions were included in such bills as the Senate's comprehensive immigration reform legislation from last Congress. Specifically, these changes provided the same commonsense portability that exists in other visa categories, removed redundancies in the consultation process, and better aligned these entry programs with others that might involve an honorarium or appearance fee.

I appreciate Chairman GOODLATTE's assurances during the markup on the O–VISA Act that he intends to address these commonsense changes to the O- and B-programs that have historically accompanied the provisions in this bill in the future. And I am pleased that we are advancing this bill today. The O–VISA Act will help ensure the integrity of the O visa program while protecting the jobs of American artists and craftsmen in the film and television industries. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support H.R. 3636, the ''Oversee Visa Integrity with Stakeholder Advisories Act'', also known as the O–VISA Act.

H.R. 3636 is an important bill that supports the need and aim for comprehensive immigration reform and strengthens the role of the labor unions in the O–IB consultation process.

H.R. 3636 would strengthen the role of the labor unions in the O–1B consultation process by amending the ''Immigration and Nationality Act'' to require U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to provide a copy of the O–1B petition decision to the labor union that was consulted as part of the petition process for a foreign artists and performers seeking to work in the United States.

This bill would also require an annual report to Congress from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) enumerating the adjudicative outcomes of O–1B petitions with a focus on the relationship between the USCIS decision and the recommendation provided in the labor union consultation.

Although H.R. 3636 deals specifically with the O–1B visa, the O nonimmigrant classification is commonly sub-classified in the following categories:

O–1A: individuals with an extraordinary ability in the sciences, education, business, or athletics not including the arts, motion pictures or television industry);

O–1B: individuals with an extraordinary ability in the arts or extraordinary achievement in motion picture or television industry; and

O–2: individuals who will accompany an O–1, artist or athlete, to asset in a specific event or performance.

For an O–1A, the O–2's assistance must be an ''integral part'' of the O–1A's activity.

For an O–1B, the O–2's assistance must be ''essential'' to the completion of the O–1B's production.

The O–2 worker has critical skills and experience with the O–1 that cannot be readily performed by a U.S. worker and which are essential to the successful performance of the O–1.

In creating the O–1B visa category, Congress sought a balance between the need for global interchange of creative professionals, and the need to prevent entertainment producers from abusing the immigration laws and the ability of individuals to obtain a visa for extraordinary ability.

In doing so, Congress created the O nonimmigrant visa, pursuant to an amendment to the Immigration Act of 1990 (IMMACT), for individuals who possesses extraordinary ability in the sciences, arts, education, business, or athletics, or who have a demonstrated record of extraordinary achievement in the motion picture or television industry and have been recognized nationally or internationally for those achievements.

The changes under IMMACT led to unintended conflicts between labor and management in the industry.

Labor and management reached a settlement, reflected in current law and regulations that give weight, but not control, to labor union advisory opinions of the abilities and professional prestige of foreign artists and performers sought by industry management.

By requiring that USCIS provide a copy of the 0–1B petition decision to the labor union that was consulted, H.R. 3636 will provide labor unions with important data allowing them to see how their consultations are used by the adjudication agency.

H.R. 3636 will reinforce the labor union's position in the adjudication process and lay the groundwork for further legislative action if the newly provided information suggests that more reform is warranted.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. MIMI WALTERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3636, as amended.

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

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: ''A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to allow labor organizations and management organizations to receive the results of visa petitions about which such organizations have submitted advisory opinions.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

STRATEGY TO OPPOSE PREDATORY ORGAN TRAFFICKING ACT

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3694) to combat trafficking in human organs, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3694

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 ''Strategy To Oppose Predatory Organ Trafficking Act'' or the ''STOP Organ Trafficking Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that approximately 10 percent of all transplanted kidneys worldwide are illegally obtained, often bought from vulnerable impoverished persons or forcibly harvested from prisoners.

(2) In 2004, the World Health Assembly passed a resolution urging its member-states to take measures to protect the poorest as well as vulnerable groups from exploitation by organ traffickers.

(3) On February 13, 2008, the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UNGIFT) hosted the ''Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking'', and subsequently reported that a lack of adequate illicit organ trafficking laws has provided opportunity for the illegal trade to grow.

(4) On March 21, 2011, the Council of the European Union adopted rules supplementing the definition of criminal offenses and the level of sanctions in order to strengthen the prevention of organ trafficking and the protection of those victims.

(5) In 2005, the United States ratified the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women

and Children, a supplement to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which includes the removal of organs as a form of exploitation under the definition of ''trafficking in persons''.

(6) According to a 2013 United Nations report from the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, the economic and social divisions within and among countries is notably reflected in the illicit organ trafficking market, in which the victims are commonly poor, unemployed, and more susceptible to deceit and extortion.

SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the kidnapping or coercion of individuals for the purpose of extracting their organs for profit is in contradiction of the ideals and standards for ethical behavior upon which the United States has based its laws;

(2) the illegal harvesting of organs from children is a violation of the human rights of the child and is a breach of internationally accepted medical ethical standards described in WHO Assembly Resolution 57.18 (May 22, 2004);

(3) the illegal harvesting and trafficking of organs violates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in Article 3 which states that ''Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.'', and in Article 4 which states that ''No one shall be held in slavery or servitude.''; and

(4) establishing efficient voluntary organ donation systems with strong enforcement mechanisms is the most effective way to combat trafficking of persons for the removal of their organs.

SEC. 4. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It shall be the policy of the United States to—

(1) combat the international trafficking of persons for the removal of their organs;

(2) promote the establishment of voluntary organ donation systems with effective enforcement mechanisms in bilateral diplomatic meetings, as well as in international health forums; and

(3) promote the dignity and security of human life in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

SEC. 5. REVOCATION OR DENIAL OF PASSPORTS TO INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ORGAN TRAFFICKERS.

The Act entitled ''An Act to regulate the issue and validity of passports, and for other purposes'', approved July 3, 1926 (22 U.S.C. 211a et seq.), which is commonly known as the ''Passport Act of 1926'', is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 4. AUTHORITY TO DENY OR REVOKE PASSPORT.

''(a) ISSUANCE.—The Secretary of State may refuse to issue a passport to any individual who has been convicted of an offense under section 301 of the National Organ Transplant Act (42 U.S.C. 274e) if such individual used a passport or otherwise crossed an international border in the commission of such an offence.

''(b) REVOCATION.—The Secretary of State may revoke a passport previously issued to any individual described in paragraph (1).''.

SEC. 6. AMENDMENTS TO THE TRAFFICKING VICTIMS PROTECTION ACT OF 2000.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (9)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''or'' at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; or''; and

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

''(C) trafficking of persons for the removal of their organs (as defined in paragraph (13)).'';

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (13) through (15) as paragraphs (14) through (16), respectively; and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (12) the following new paragraph:

''(13) TRAFFICKING OF PERSONS FOR THE REMOVAL OF THEIR ORGANS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'trafficking of persons for the removal of their organs' means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of a person, either living or deceased, for the purpose of removing one or more of the person's organs, by means of—

''(i) coercion;

''(ii) abduction;

''(iii) deception;

''(iv) fraud;

''(v) abuse of power or a position of vulnerability; or

''(vi) transfer of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over a person described in the matter preceding clause (i).

''(B) ORGAN DEFINED.—In subparagraph (A), the term 'organ' has the meaning given the term 'human organ' in section 301(c)(1) of the National Organ Transplant Act (42 U.S.C. 274e(c)(1)).''.

(b) INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE TO MONITOR AND COMBAT TRAFFICKING.—Section 105(d)(3) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7103(d)(3)) is amended by inserting after the first sentence the following new sentence: ''Such procedures shall include collection and organization of data from human rights officers at United States embassies on host country's laws against trafficking of persons for the removal of their organs and any instances of violations of such laws.''.

SEC. 7. REPORTING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter through 2024, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a comprehensive report that includes the following information:

(1) A description of the sources, practices, methods, facilitators, and recipients of trafficking of persons for the removal of their organs during the period covered by each such report.

(2) A description of activities undertaken by the Department of State, either unilaterally or in cooperation with other countries, to address and prevent trafficking of persons for the removal of their organs.

(3) A description of activities undertaken by countries to address and prevent trafficking of persons for the removal of their organs.

(b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The reports required under subsection (a) shall include the collection and organization of data from human rights officers at United States diplomatic and consular posts on host countries' laws against trafficking of persons for the removal of their organs, including enforcement of such laws, or any instances of violations of such laws.

(c) ADDITIONAL MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The reports required under subsection (a) may include—

(1) information provided in meetings with host country officials;

(2) information provided through cooperation with United Nations or World Health Organization agencies;

(3) communications and reports provided by nongovernmental organizations working on the issue of trafficking of persons for the removal of their organs; and

(4) any other reports or information sources the Secretary of State determines to be necessary and appropriate.

SEC. 8. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

(2) ORGAN.—The term ''organ'' has the meaning given the term ''human organ'' in section 301(c)(1) of the National Organ Transplant Act (42 U.S.C. 274e(c)(1)).

(3) TRAFFICKING OF PERSONS FOR THE REMOVAL OF THEIR ORGANS.—The term ''trafficking of persons for the removal of their organs'' means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of a person, either living or deceased, for the purpose of removing one or more of the person's organs, by means of—

(A) coercion;

(B) abduction;

(C) deception;

(D) fraud;

(E) abuse of power or a position of vulnerability; or

(F) transfer of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over a person described in the matter preceding clause (i).

SEC. 9. LIMITATION ON FUNDS.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act or any amendment made by this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material on this bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. TROTT and Mr. DEUTCH for introducing this important bill. The concept here is to combat the horrific crime of human trafficking for organ removal. And, as always, I appreciate the support of the ranking member, Mr. ELIOT ENGEL, in moving this antitrafficking bill forward.

As hard as it is for us to accept this, as shocking as this is, the circumstances are such that rising global demand and a lack of adequate laws in many countries has fueled the growth of a worldwide black market for transplant organs.

The World Health Organization estimates that 10 percent of all transplanted organs worldwide are illegally obtained. That would mean that they were being coerced from vulnerable populations or forcibly harvested from prisoners. Often these prisoners are shot first in order to obtain organs, such as hearts, corneas, or lungs. They

are taken from hostages. They are taken from oppressed minorities. An example would be kidneys or part of a liver.

These abuses are more than just grave human rights violations. They also have worldwide implications for national security and public health. What do we mean when we say implications for national security? Well, criminal organizations and terrorist groups are increasingly engaging in this black market industry that is valued now at a billion dollars.

To give you some of the most extreme examples: ISIS recently issued a fatwa sanctioning forced organ harvesting from captives and, as they call them, from apostates; and traffickers smuggling refugees into Europe have reportedly coerced organ donations, coerced a kidney as payment for travel.

A number of studies have underscored how this shady commerce also creates biosecurity threats to the rest of the world. Recipients of infected tissue or organs may become human carriers of disease. Or another problem is drug-resistant pathogens that contribute to the spread of pandemics and antibiotic resistance.

Now, the U.S. has led the fight against human trafficking, and I would add, with help from the Foreign Affairs Committee, with help from the legislation that we, our members on the committee, have authored.

This bill continues and expands that effort, and it does so by closing the gap in U.S. law that currently fails to recognize the trafficking in persons for the removal of their organs as a form of human trafficking.

Specifically, this bill also makes it the policy of the United States to combat such trafficking, to promote the adoption of effective voluntary organ donation systems in bilateral engagements and multinational health forums that we have with other countries. And it requires an annual report to Congress, an annual report on human trafficking for organ removal, which details activities by our State Department and by other countries to combat this crime.

Finally, the bill allows for the revocation of passports from any individual that is involved in this kind of activity, that is convicted of an organ trafficking offense under the National Organ Transplant Act, as well as permitting the denial of visas to applicants with such convictions.

So I urge all Members to support this important measure.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this measure, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Before I begin, this is the first time I have spoken on the House floor since the horrific attack in Orlando, and I just want to take a brief moment to talk about it. This was a shocking hate crime against the LGBT community, a jarring and disgusting attack on our LGBT brothers and sisters, and on the progress LGBT rights have made in this country. And, of course, this was also a terrorist attack, and we need to look at it in the broader context of how we're working to meet the challenge of violent extremism here and around the world.

Mr. Speaker, since yesterday morning, there has been an outpouring of thoughts and prayers for the victims in Orlando and their loved ones; and, to be sure, moral and spiritual support are a part of how we grieve and heal.

We are all angry about this heinous attack. We are all heartbroken. We are all committed to finding answers. We are all standing together, and we will move forward from this tragedy together.

But, as lawmakers, we are empowered to do more than think and pray. In fact, we are certainly empowered to do more. I certainly have my views on what is necessary on the domestic side to stop this slaughter by gun violence, but I will leave that contentious debate aside for the moment.

What I will say is that, on the Foreign Affairs Committee, Republicans and Democrats have found a great deal of common ground on what sort of measures will help to keep us safe and to confront the threat of violent extremism. What has guided us in the past: the spirit of nonpartisanship and the belief that politics should stop at the water's edge, should continue to inform our work.

Turning to this bill, let me thank the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, ED ROYCE; and I want to thank Mr. TROTT and Mr. DEUTCH for all of their hard work on this measure.

The World Health Organization estimates that 10 percent of all transplanted organs worldwide are illegally obtained. That is an alarming number; but, like so many illegal enterprises, this is a crime that is poorly understood, that seeks out zones of impunity where the light of the law doesn't shine and where information is hard to come by.

So with a handful of estimates and reports, we are left asking: Who are the victims of this crime? How do they become trapped by this illegal trade? What pressures and vulnerabilities made them susceptible? What are governments doing to halt the practice to track down those responsible and to provide services to survivors? Should this challenge be included in our efforts to confront modern slavery, or is this a different sort of problem altogether?

This bill will help us get answers to these questions. It calls for a report on this crime that will allow us to connect the dots. Once we know what we are dealing with, then we can figure out the best way to act and chart a path forward. So I am glad to support it. I thank the chairman and the bill's sponsors again.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. TROTT), who is the author of this bill.

Mr. TROTT. Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by thanking Chairman ROYCE, Ranking Member ENGEL, the committee staff, and Mena Hanna from my office for their work on H.R. 3694. I also want to thank my colleague, Representative DEUTCH, for coauthoring the STOP Organ Trafficking Act with me.

Illegal trafficking of human organs has long been a terrible and heinous crime, but unfortunately our policies and laws have not kept pace with this outrageous practice.

China has been inexplicably targeting the Falun Gong for years, and more recently, ISIS has reportedly been resorting to this brutal practice to finance their nefarious activities and strike fear in the hearts of innocent people.

Late last year, ISIS released a religious edict stating that taking organs from a living captive to save a Muslim's life was permissible, making religious minorities all over the Middle East, like the Chaldeans and the Assyrians, even more vulnerable.

Other helpless groups of people, like refugees, have reportedly been selling their organs on the black market through dealers who then sell the organs to foreign countries in what is quickly becoming an unchecked and lucrative business.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the United States to take a leading role in combatting this heinous crime and standing with the world's most vulnerable. We must ensure that our country is doing everything within our power to destroy any revenue stream that ISIS relies on to further its terrorist activities.

My bill is a start to this lengthy process, and I urge my colleagues to vote in support of this timely legislation.

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

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

□ 1745

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman ROYCE again for bringing this important bill to the floor, and to ELIOT ENGEL for his leadership and Mr. DEUTCH, and especially to Mr. TROTT, the sponsor of H.R. 3694, the Strategy To Oppose Predatory Organ Trafficking Act. This legislation recognizes and seeks to more effectively combat what is a growing manifestation of trafficking in persons for the sole purpose of organ removal, often for great profit for the traffickers.

Mr. TROTT's legislation requires the Department of State to develop a robust strategy to combat this heinous practice. We have long heard rumors and horror stories of migrants held captive in sub-Saharan Africa and the Sinai Peninsula, their organs taken

and their bodies dumped because their families could not afford the ransom.

Twenty years ago, I chaired a human rights hearing in my subcommittee with a Chinese security official who testified that he and his other security agents were executing prisoners—with doctors, of course, there and ambulances—in order to steal their organs for transplant. Since then, this horrific practice has skyrocketed.

Recent evidence from researchers Ethan Gutmann and David Matas shows that organ transplants in China have increased almost exponentially, not decreased. There is a bizarre availability of organs in Chinese military hospitals and China's transplant apparatus that can often issue a tissue match and find an organ transplant within 2 weeks for any foreign tourist with cash.

This initiative by Mr. TROTT will require the State Department to do a more thorough analysis of trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal in China and elsewhere around the world, informing a strategy to stop this crime against humanity.

Any American, Mr. Speaker, traveling to China for an organ transplant in 2016 should now be on notice that they may be participating in human trafficking of a vulnerable person or of a prisoner. Americans must not turn a blind eye to the ambiguous origins of a proffered organ. H.R. 3694 will help ensure that Americans are certain that they are receiving transplants only in countries that prohibit and actively suppress organ harvesting from trafficking victims.

I thank the gentleman for his legislation.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to close.

Mr. Speaker, in recent years, the United States has made tremendous progress shining a light on poorly understood problems around the world and working to find solutions: human trafficking, the advancement of women and girls, the importance of protecting our oceans, and combating climate change. A generation ago, no one considered these foreign policy issues, but today we are prioritizing every single one of them.

That is what we are trying to do now with respect to organ trafficking. This legislation will give us a fuller understanding of this problem so that we can act in the most effective way possible. This is, again, a great bipartisan measure. I thank Mr. TROTT and Mr. DEUTCH and Chairman ROYCE. I am happy to support this measure.

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

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

The scourge of illegal organ trafficking has been pretty well documented, and you heard, here, Congressman DAVID TROTT explain the fatwa that has now been put out by ISIS that not only excuses the effort to go after Yazidis and Christians and others that they call apostates, but all captives are open to losing a kidney or forced organ transplant. The intention here is to make a market in this in the Middle East.

But it does not just occur there, within the boundaries of ISIS' caliphate. This is a crime that reportedly occurs in some 20 countries, in all regions of the world.

So I thank Mr. TROTT and Mr. DEUTCH for introducing this legislation. I also thank Mr. ENGEL, and I want to commend Sarah Blocher of the Committee on Foreign Affairs professional staff for years of excellent work on this issue and her assistance to the authors.

The STOP Organ Trafficking Act addresses a critical challenge to human rights, to our national security, to our public health, and it deserves our unanimous support.

Mr. Speaker, 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. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3694, 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.

UNITED STATES-CARIBBEAN STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT ACT OF 2016

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4939) to increase engagement with the governments of the Caribbean region, the Caribbean diaspora community in the United States, and the private sector and civil society in both the United States and the Caribbean, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4939

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 ''United States–Caribbean Strategic Engagement Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

Congress declares that it is the policy of the United States to increase engagement with the governments of the Caribbean region, the Caribbean diaspora community in the United States, and the private sector and civil society in both the United States and the Caribbean in a concerted effort to—

(1) enhance diplomatic relations between the United States and the Caribbean region;

(2) increase economic cooperation between the United States and the Caribbean region;

(3) support regional economic, political, and security integration efforts in the Caribbean region;

(4) encourage sustainable economic development and increased regional economic diversification and global competitiveness;

(5) reduce levels of crime and violence, curb the trafficking of illicit drugs, strengthen the rule of law, and improve citizen security;

(6) improve energy security by increasing access to diverse, reliable, affordable, and sustainable power;

(7) advance cooperation on democracy and human rights in the Caribbean region and at multilateral fora; and

(8) continue support for public health advances and cooperation on health concerns and threats to the Caribbean region.

SEC. 3. STRATEGY.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a multi-year strategy for United States engagement with the Caribbean region that—

(1) identifies Department of State and USAID efforts, in coordination with other executive branch agencies, to prioritize United States policy towards the Caribbean region;

(2) outlines an approach to broaden Department of State and USAID outreach to the Caribbean diaspora community in the United States to promote their involvement and participation in the economic development and citizen security of the Caribbean region;

(3) outlines an approach to partner with the governments of the Caribbean region to improve citizen security, reduce the trafficking of illicit drugs, strengthen the rule of law, and improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative;

(4) establishes a comprehensive, integrated, multi-year strategy to encourage the efforts of the Caribbean region to implement regional and national strategies that improve energy security by increasing access to diverse, reliable, affordable, and sustainable power, including significant renewable energy resources within the Caribbean region such as biomass, geothermal, hydropower, solar, tidal, waste-to-energy, and wind, and by taking advantage of the ongoing energy revolution in the Unites States;

(5) outlines an approach to improve diplomatic engagement with the governments of the Caribbean region, including with respect to key votes on human rights and democracy at the United Nations and the Organization of American States;

(6) develops an approach to assisting Caribbean countries in the diversification of their economies, the reduction of legal, technical, and administrative barriers that prevent the free flow of foreign direct investment and trade to and from each country and within the Caribbean region, and support for the training and employment of youth and citizens in marginalized communities; and

(7) reflects the input of other executive branch agencies, as appropriate.

SEC. 4. BRIEFINGS.

The Secretary of State shall provide annual briefings to the appropriate congressional committees that review Department of State efforts to implement the strategy for United States engagement with the Caribbean region in accordance with section 3.

SEC. 5. PROGRESS REPORT.

Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and biennially thereafter for the following four years, the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on progress made toward to implementing the strategy for United States engagement with the Caribbean region in accordance with section 3.

SEC. 6. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REPORT ON CARIBBEAN BASIN SECURITY INITIATIVE.

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 that contains the following:

(1) An evaluation of the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) and the extent to which the CBSI has met Department of State and USAID benchmarks.

(2) An accounting of CBSI funding appropriated, obligated, and expended from fiscal year 2010 through fiscal year 2016.

(3) A breakdown of yearly CBSI assistance provided to each CBSI country.

(4) A description of how CBSI is coordinated with other security assistance programs in the Western Hemisphere, particularly the Merida Initiative and the Central America Regional Security Initiative, and the role of the Department of State's Senior Coordinator for the Citizen Security Initiatives in the Western Hemisphere in such coordination.

(5) A description of all United States security assistance provided to the Caribbean region, exclusive of assistance through CBSI.

(6) Recommendations for legislative and executive action to make CBSI more effective and efficient, as appropriate.

SEC. 7. GAO REPORT ON DIPLOMATIC ENGAGEMENT IN THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN.

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 that contains the following:

(1) An evaluation of United States diplomatic outreach from the United States embassy in Barbados to the countries of Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent, and the Grenadines.

(2) A list of visits over the previous five years of personnel at the United States embassy in Barbados to the countries of Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent, and the Grenadines.

(3) A description of how personnel at the United States embassy in Barbados have engaged with government officials and civil society organizations in Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent, and the Grenadines over the previous five years.

(4) A description of how personnel at the United States embassy in Grenada have engaged with government officials and civil society organizations over the previous five years.

SEC. 8. REPORTING COST OFFSET.

Paragraph (4) of section 601(c) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4001(c)) is amended in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''the following:'' and all that follows through ''A workforce plan'' and inserting ''a workforce plan'' and adjusting the margins accordingly.

SEC. 9. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

(2) CARIBBEAN REGION.—The term ''Caribbean region'' means the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative beneficiary countries.

(3) SECURITY ASSISTANCE.—The term ''security assistance'' has the meaning given such term in section 502B(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2304(d)).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material on this bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill. This is the United States-Caribbean Strategic Engagement Act. It is authored by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), the committee's ranking member. As always, I appreciate him working closely with Chairman Emeritus ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN to ensure this legislation's swift passage. These two Members have been particularly committed to developments in our Southern Hemisphere.

For over a decade, Caribbean nations have received subsidized Venezuelan oil in exchange for their support of the authoritarian government of Hugo Chavez and now Nicolas Maduro. However, subsidized Venezuelan oil has done nothing to help the Caribbean address their need for a diversified energy strategy and instead has kept much of the region beholden to the Venezuelan strongmen.

With Venezuela's inflation rate expected to rise to 500 percent this year, fueled partially by the low price of oil, the nations of the Caribbean have seen a marked decrease in oil shipments. Meanwhile, years of authoritarian socialism are coming to a head in Venezuela, as the political and economic crisis there threatens almost certain implosion.

This presents an important responsibility here, a responsibility for the United States to finally develop a comprehensive strategy on how best to engage nations of the Caribbean diplomatically, how to help the region improve energy security, how to reduce violence and drug trafficking, and advance cooperation with regional governments on democracy and human rights in international organizations, particularly in the Organization of American States, as we know it, the OAS.

So this legislation, authored by ELIOT ENGEL, will require the State Department and USAID to develop that comprehensive and clear strategy on how best to engage the Caribbean region, and it also requires the Government Accountability Office to evaluate the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative so that we can be sure we are truly advancing our interests in the region using the best and most efficient approach.

During this time of competing priorities and limited resources, this bill seeks to ensure that our government is not neglecting this key region so close to our shores; and, frankly, it is in our hemisphere, so we should not neglect it while developing a strategy that ensures the effectiveness of our diplomatic engagement with each Caribbean nation.

I once again thank the author, Ranking Member ENGEL, for his leadership and attention to the Western Hemisphere and thank ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN for her commitment as well, specifically to the Caribbean Basin.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time and yield the remainder of my time to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and ask unanimous consent that she be allowed to manage that time.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank Chairman ROYCE and my good friend Mr. ENGEL for their continued leadership, both of these great leaders, their longstanding engagement to greater engagement with the Caribbean and for introducing this bill that we have before us today, H.R. 4939, the United States-Caribbean Strategic Engagement Act.

I am also pleased to be an original cosponsor and the Republican lead of Mr. ENGEL's legislation. I thank Mr. ENGEL. It is fitting that we bring this bill to the floor today, Mr. Speaker, during National Caribbean American Heritage Month.

As a Member from south Florida, I see firsthand the wonderful contributions that Caribbean Americans have made to our local communities. The Caribbean culture has had a great and lasting impact on our country and has helped bolster our society and has enriched our traditions.

But while we celebrate the contributions of the Caribbean American community to our country, we must also dedicate ourselves to doing more to enhance our relations with our neighbors. U.S. foreign policy in recent administrations—be they Republican or Democratic—have not strengthened our partnerships with the Caribbean in the right way. As the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), our chairman, pointed out, our influence and friendship with these nations has waned, allowing the negative influence of the dictatorships in Cuba and Venezuela to take root in the Caribbean.

Deepening our strategic relationship with the Caribbean represents an extraordinary opportunity to expand our economic ties, to cooperate on security issues, and to advance our values, our interests at institutions such as the OAS, the Organization of American States, and the U.N., the United Nations.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, this bill is so important. It pushes the State Department to prioritize our relations

with the Caribbean nations. It requires our State Department to develop a strategy to partner with our friends in the region on all issues, from counternarcotics efforts, to energy security, to everything.

There is great potential for energy in the Caribbean, for example, but we must help nations break from their dependency on Venezuelan energy, especially as the Maduro regime is leading that nation to total chaos. We should help our neighbors take advantage of abundant and cheap natural gas and new, advanced, clean wind and solar technologies. In this way, we can help strengthen the economies of the region from the impact of the Venezuelan collapse—because the collapse is coming, Mr. Speaker—and take realistic steps toward reducing carbon emissions.

This engagement has the benefit of being positive and sound foreign policy, but it is also great for our domestic policy. This bill will broaden our outreach to the Caribbean diaspora community here in the United States, which has been so instrumental in helping to shape and influence our great American story, and they deserve recognition and greater collaboration.

I urge my colleagues to give their strong support for this bill. I thank Ranking Member ENGEL for his leadership, as well as Chairman ROYCE, on this important initiative.

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill, which I was proud to introduce, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank our chairman, ED ROYCE, for bringing forward my legislation to ramp up our country's engagement with our Caribbean neighbors. I also want to thank our former chair, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, who joined me in offering this bill and who knows better than anyone the strategic importance of the Caribbean region.

We spend a great deal of time focusing on challenges and opportunities in faraway places, but it is important that we never lose sight of our interests closer to home. Indeed, we should be working to strengthen our ties with countries in the Caribbean. That is the aim of this bill, which would prioritize U.S.-Caribbean relations for years to come.

This bill would require the Secretary of State, along with the USAID Administrator, to devise a multiyear strategy for Caribbean engagement.

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We want to see how our diplomatic and development efforts are focused on the Caribbean, with particular attention to energy security, the rule of law, efforts to combat drug trafficking, and ways to enhance economic cooperation.

We also want to increase our engagement when it comes to regional issues by improving our diplomatic efforts with respect to key votes at the United Nations and the Organization of American States.

In my view, the best way to put together a new strategy toward the Caribbean is to tap into the large and vibrant Caribbean American community here in the United States. I did that for the 4 years that I was chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

So this bill underscores the importance of consulting with the Caribbean diaspora community, promoting their involvement in economic development, and civilian security in the Caribbean.

Finally, H.R. 4939 commissions two reports from the Government Accountability Office, or GAO—one which evaluates the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative and another which assesses U.S. diplomatic engagement in the eastern Caribbean.

I have long believed that we do a real disservice to our country by having no physical diplomatic presence in five of the countries in the eastern Caribbean: Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

I have long said it makes no sense for us to continue to conduct diplomacy on these islands from our embassy in Barbados. They say you can't conduct diplomacy from a bunker. It is also true that you cannot conduct diplomacy from hundreds of miles away.

I hope to work with the State Department to ensure that we establish a diplomatic presence in the eastern Caribbean as soon as possible. China has it. Venezuela has it. Others have it. We should have it.

It is especially appropriate that we are considering this bill in June, which is National Caribbean American Heritage Month. As the President said in his proclamation: ''The bonds between the United States and the Caribbean remain strong. Both rooted in similar legacies—of trial and triumph, oppression and liberation—our narratives have advanced on a similar path of progress, driven forward by our shared dedication to fostering opportunity and forging a brighter future.''

I couldn't agree more.

I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), a leader on the Caribbean and author of a resolution honoring Caribbean American Heritage Month.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, first, let me take a moment to offer my condolences and prayers to the families and victims of the horrific gun violence against the LGBT community in Orlando. These despicable acts have shattered the lives of so many people. Our response must be not only in words, but also in deeds and in action.

My congressional district has and will continue its outpouring of sympathy and support for the people of Orlando, and we stand ready to assist in whatever way is needed.

Let me now take a moment to thank Chairman ROYCE and Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN. I also thank Congressman ENGEL for yielding and for his tremendous leadership on the Foreign Affairs Committee. I had the honor to serve on the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee of the Foreign Affairs Committee for several years when Mr. ENGEL was chair. We talked early on about the importance of the Caribbean as a region and how we must make it a priority in our foreign policy.

So today I want to thank both sides: our ranking member, Chairman ROYCE, Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, and especially Mr. ENGEL, for not just their words, but also their tremendous leadership, as demonstrated by this important bill. It has taken a while to get to this point, but thank goodness we are doing this in a bipartisan way. So I just want to thank them very much for that.

As a lead cosponsor, of course, I stand in strong support of H.R. 4939. The bill would enhance U.S.-Caribbean relationships by requiring the Secretary of State, in coordination with the administrator of USAID, to submit a multiyear strategy for U.S. engagement with our Caribbean neighbors to Congress.

I just want to, again, thank both sides. I remember when we had to work to really get the Caribbean to be included in all PEPFAR legislation, programs, and funding. So that was a major step in the right direction.

This is a huge step now in moving forward. This bill is very timely. It is a very important bill. As a long-time supporter of the Caribbean and a frequent visitor to the region—actually, my son attended school in Grenada.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. LEE. As I said, my son attended school in Grenada, and I am a frequent visitor to the region. So I am very proud to see us debate this today and, hopefully, pass the bill again on June 13.

Congress unanimously passed H. Con. Res. 71, which Mr. ENGEL and Ms. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN referenced. I authored that, actually, in February 2006, when President Bush was in office. He signed it. Since then, President Obama has issued a proclamation annually recognizing June as Caribbean American Heritage Month.

Caribbean Americans have contributed immensely to the fabric of the United States. So as we celebrate this month, we are reminded also of the relationship between the United States and our Caribbean neighbors. This bill does that and more.

H.R. 4939 strengthens and enhances ties between the U.S. and the Caribbean by promoting energy sustainability, diplomatic relations, and economic cooperation. Caribbean countries, unfortunately, have been neglected in our foreign policy. This bill brings a focus on making the Caribbean region and the West Indies a priority.

So, Mr. Speaker, now is the time for the United States to recommit our strong priorities with our Caribbean neighbors. We must revitalize and enhance our outreach to our Caribbean neighbors now and in the future. This bill does just that. I urge an ''aye'' vote.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE), a very valued member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. CICILLINE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, before I begin my remarks, I, too, extend my prayers and sympathy to the people of Orlando. My constituents, like all Americans, are brokenhearted at this monstrous act of violence visited upon a community gathered together to enjoy friendship and community and to celebrate. This act of cowardice has caused so much pain to the LGBT community in Orlando and to our community all across this country. I know I speak for everyone when I say we stand ready to do everything that we can to help this community heal and to keep our communities safe.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4939, the United States-Caribbean Strategic Engagement Act of 2016.

My home State of Rhode Island is home to many Caribbean Americans, particularly from the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and other countries in the region. It is critical to strengthen our relationship with these countries not just because of the national security interests we share, but also to support the interests of our constituents and their ties to this region.

Geographic proximity has ensured strong linkages between the United States and the Caribbean region. H.R. 4939 will further enhance this relationship. Our interests in the regions are diverse, including economic, political, and security concerns.

Despite its importance to the United States, the Caribbean often gets overlooked as we deal with concerns and threats from other regions of the world. Our Caribbean neighbors are important partners at the United Nations and the Organization of American States. Increasing engagements with the governments and the Caribbean diaspora in the United States, as well as the private sector and civil society in both the United States and the Caribbean, will be beneficial to everyone.

H.R. 4939 will enhance diplomatic relations, increase economic cooperation, support security integration efforts to help reduce violence and drug trafficking, advance cooperation on democracy and human rights in the region and at multilateral fora, and enhance cooperation in combating public health threats.

I want to end by thanking Ranking Member ENGEL, Chairman ROYCE, and subcommittee chair ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, and all the sponsors of this important bill, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

Mr. Speaker, in April of 2009, I had the honor of joining President Obama in Trinidad and Tobago for the Summit of the Americas. That was one of his first trips abroad as President. I was chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee at the time.

At that time, the President said: ''The energy, the dynamism, the diversity of the Caribbean people inspires us all, and are such an important part of what we share in common as a hemisphere.''

Seven years later, those words continue to ring true. In that time, we have made a lot of progress. The Caribbean Basin Security Initiative and the Caribbean Energy Security Initiative have brought us closer to our Caribbean partners on a range of shared concerns. Let me say that Vice President BIDEN deserves a great deal of credit for this progress, but more needs to be done.

For example, this week, Secretary Kerry is in the Dominican Republic for the general assembly meeting of the OAS, the Organization of American States, which has its headquarters right here in Washington, D.C. We are confronting some serious issues at this meeting, including the crisis in Venezuela.

The Caribbean countries represented there will play a major role, and the more we work in partnership with these governments, the better. These may be small countries, but they pack a big punch in what is going on in our neighborhood. This legislation will keep us moving in the right direction when it comes to these partnerships.

I was very honored to introduce the bill, and I am honored that we have strong support on both sides of the aisle. I, again, want to thank Chairman ROYCE and Chairwoman Emeritus ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, both excellent members and real, stalwart support for this committee. This is another example of bipartisanship on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. I am very, very proud of that. So this will keep us moving in the right direction.

I urge a ''yes'' vote.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I thank, once again, Ranking Member ENGEL for his tremendous leadership and all of his efforts to promote stronger relationships with nations within our own hemisphere.

I have the distinct pleasure, as I have said, to represent south Florida in Congress. We have many, many constituents in my district from the Caribbean. Part of what makes south Florida so unique is the contribution of the Caribbean diaspora.

What we have here during Caribbean American Heritage Month is an opportunity to strengthen the U.S.-Caribbean alliance and contribute in a meaningful and positive way to our neighbors.

We have been in a crisis mode, Mr. Speaker, focusing most of our attention on the many areas that, rightfully, demand our attention overseas, but it would be in both of our long-term interests, as well as our near-term interests, to develop mutually beneficial and strategic alliances close to home with the Caribbean nations.

Just think of all the economic opportunities that we can help in working with our neighbors to open up. We have a great opportunity with this bill to help them diversify their economies by tearing down burdensome barriers that are preventing them from taking advantage of direct foreign investment and trade. That can lead to greater growth, more stability for the Caribbean, for the diaspora, and for the United States as a whole.

So I urge my colleagues to support passage of this important bill. I look forward to continuing to work with Mr. ENGEL and Mr. ROYCE to develop even stronger ties to our neighbors in the hemisphere.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4939, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. 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.

EXPRESSING CONCERN REGARDING STATE-SANCTIONED ORGAN HARVESTING IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 343) expressing concern regarding persistent and credible reports of systematic, state-sanctioned organ harvesting from non-consenting prisoners of conscience in the People's Republic of China, including from large numbers of Falun Gong practitioners and members of other religious and ethnic minority groups, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 343

Whereas when performed in accordance with ethical standards, the medical discipline of organ transplantation is one of the great achievements of modern medicine;

Whereas voluntary and informed consent is the precondition for ethical organ donation and international medical organizations state that prisoners, deprived of their freedom, are not in the position to give free consent and that the practice of sourcing organs from prisoners is a violation of ethical guidelines in medicine;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China and Communist Party of China continue to deny reports that many organs are taken without the consent of prisoners yet at the same time prevents independent verification of its transplant system;

Whereas the organ transplantation system in China does not comply with the World Health Organization's requirement of transparency and traceability in organ procurement pathways;

Whereas the United States Department of State Country Report on Human Rights for China for 2014 stated, ''Advocacy groups continued to report instances of organ harvesting from prisoners'';

Whereas Huang Jiefu, director of the China Organ Donation Committee, announced in December 2014 that China would end the practice of organ harvesting from executed prisoners by January 1, 2015, did not directly address organ harvesting from prisoners of conscience;

Whereas Falun Gong, a spiritual practice involving meditative ''qigong'' exercises and centered on the values of truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance, became immensely popular in the 1990s;

Whereas in July 1999, the Chinese Communist Party launched an intensive, nationwide persecution designed to eradicate the spiritual practice of Falun Gong, reflecting the party's long-standing intolerance of large independent civil society groups;

Whereas since 1999, hundreds of thousands of Falun Gong practitioners have been detained extra-legally in reeducation-through-labor camps, detention centers, and prisons, where torture and abuse are routine;

Whereas in many detention facilities and labor camps, Falun Gong prisoners of conscience comprise the majority of the population, and have been said to receive the longest sentences and the worst treatment;

Whereas Freedom House reported in 2015 that Falun Gong practitioners comprise the largest portion of prisoners of conscience in China, and face an elevated risk of dying or being killed in custody;

Whereas in 2006, Canadian researchers David Matas, human rights attorney, and David Kilgour, former Canadian Secretary of State for Asia-Pacific, conducted an independent investigation into allegations of organ harvesting from Falun Gong prisoners in China, and concluded that Falun Gong practitioners being killed for their organs was highly probable;

Whereas Matas and Kilgour have implicated state and party entities in illicit organ harvesting, including domestic security services and military hospitals;

Whereas researcher and journalist Ethan Gutmann published findings that Chinese security agencies began harvesting organs from members of the predominantly Muslim Uyghur ethnic minority group in the 1990s, including from Uyghur political prisoners;

Whereas the United Nations Committee Against Torture and the Special Rapporteur on Torture have expressed concern over the allegations of organ harvesting from Falun Gong prisoners, and have called on the Government of the People's Republic of China to increase accountability and transparency in the organ transplant system and punish those responsible for abuses; and

Whereas the killing of religious or political prisoners for the purpose of selling their organs for transplant is an egregious and intolerable violation of the fundamental right to life: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns the practice of state-sanctioned forced organ harvesting in the People's Republic of China;

(2) calls on the Government of the People's Republic of China and Communist Party of China to immediately end the practice of organ harvesting from all prisoners of conscience;

(3) demands an immediate end to the 17-year persecution of the Falun Gong spiritual practice by the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Communist Party of China, and the immediate release of all Falun Gong practitioners and other prisoners of conscience;

(4) encourages the United States medical community to help raise awareness of unethical organ transplant practices in China;

(5) calls on the People's Republic of China to allow a credible, transparent, and independent investigation into organ transplant abuses; and

(6) calls on the United States Department of State to conduct a more detailed analysis on state-sanctioned organ harvesting from non-consenting prisoners of conscience in the annual Human Rights Report, and report annually to Congress on the implementation of section 232 of the Department of State Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2003 (8 U.S.C. 1182f), barring provision of visas to Chinese and other nationals engaged in coerced organ or bodily tissue transplantation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

□ 1815

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for their leadership, for their support for human rights in China and, indeed, around the globe.

I also want to thank my good friend, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), for joining me in introducing this bipartisan resolution that has garnered over 180 cosponsors. Many may not know this, Mr. Speaker, but Mr. CONNOLLY has been working on these issues ever since he was a staffer for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

I am proud to have introduced H. Res. 343 alongside my friend from Virginia, a resolution that condemns China's ongoing, gruesome practice of harvesting organs from nonconsenting prisoners of conscience and religious and ethnic minorities.

Falun Gong practitioners have long faced an intensive persecution by the Chinese Communist Party and, according to Freedom House, in 2015, comprise the largest portion of prisoners of conscience in China.

I was extremely disappointed to read that the State Department's latest human rights report for China quoted a Chinese official's unsubstantiated claim that any harvesting of organs from prisoners would now be voluntary.

China has been well-known to produce the majority of organs it uses for transplants from executed prisoners, people who are deprived of their freedom, unable to give their voluntary and informed consent to donate their organs. These are the basic preconditions for ethical organ donation, which China rarely, if ever, meets.

The regime of the People's Republic of China does not comply with the requirements of the World Health Organization for transparency and traceability in organ procurement pathways, and the number of voluntary organ donations in China continues to be much lower than the reported number of transplants, let alone the number of unreported ones.

All of this points to unethical practices at the very least, and something much, much more inhumane and gruesome at the very worst, and leads us to conclude that China's claim to have ceased with illegal harvesting is a dubious one.

The Chinese regime's brutal repression and human rights violations are well known, but it is the horrific treatment of the Falun Gong practitioners, Mr. Speaker, that is particularly egregious yet does not receive the attention that it deserves.

Followers of the Falun Gong are among China's most vulnerable to state-sanctioned abuse, which leaves them as likely victims to this ghoulish practice; and if the latest reports of China seeking to conduct full-body transplants are true, then it could put these peaceful individuals in even graver danger.

Last week, The New York Times reported that Chinese doctors are seeking to conduct full-body transplants. But again, with little transparency and the lack of ethical standards, one has to wonder, Mr. Speaker, how will these doctors, how will these scientists, conduct their research and experiments? They will likely look to their prisons and target prisoners of conscience—and Falun Gong practitioners, specifically.

The New York Times reported that China remains an international pariah that has long been dogged by ethical issues, yet its doctors remain undeterred by the horrid practices and plan on moving forward when they are ready.

What will this mean for Falun Gong practitioners and other prisoners of conscience in China, Mr. Speaker? I shudder to think of their fate as a result of these inhumane experiments and macabre practices.

But by passing this resolution, sir, we can send a message to the Chinese regime that we condemn this continued practice of persecution of Falun Gong practitioners, and its sickening and unethical practice must stop, especially harvesting organs from nonconsenting individuals.

We cannot allow these crimes to continue. I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, June 2, 2016.

Hon. ED ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I am writing with respect to H. Res. 343, which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary. As a result of your having consulted with us on provisions in H. Res. 343 that fall within the rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, I agree to discharge our committee from further consideration of this resolution so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

The Judiciary Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H. Res. 343 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation and that our committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this resolution or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H. Res. 343 and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration of this resolution.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, June 8, 2016.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, House Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for consulting with the Committee on Foreign Affairs on House Resolution 343, Expressing concern regarding persistent and credible reports of systematic, state-sanctioned organ harvesting from non-consenting prisoners of conscience in the People's Republic of China, and for agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of that measure.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this measure or similar legislation in the future.

I will seek to place our letters on H. Res. 343 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with your Committee as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this measure, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Again, I thank Chairman ROYCE and Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN, who introduced this very important piece of legislation.

We just finished debate on a bill that would help us get a better handle on just how severe a problem organ trafficking is and to help us figure out what is needed to confront this challenge. This resolution underscores troubling reports about the practice of organ trafficking, specifically in the People's Republic of China.

I have heard directly from some of my constituents about this, and what is particularly unsettling is that this practice allegedly targets prisoners of conscience, including practitioners of Falun Gong and other religious and ethnic minorities.

Nonconsensual organ harvesting under any circumstance represents a gross violation of human rights, but these allegations are particularly egregious: authorities at Chinese prisons targeting prisoners because of their religious beliefs and then making a profit by trafficking these victims' organs. I cannot think of hardly anything that is more disgusting than that. The accounts of these activities are gruesome and shocking, and, again, we need to get to the bottom of this issue to see exactly what is going on.

This measure calls on the Chinese Government to cease the practice of forced organ harvesting and to end the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners and other prisoners of conscience. It also calls on the Chinese Government to allow an investigation into this issue, and it urges the State Department to include an assessment of state-sanctioned, nonconsensual organ harvesting in its annual human rights reports.

So I again thank Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN for her focus on this issue. I am pleased to support this measure.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend and colleague ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN for yielding. I want to thank the chairman emeritus of the full Foreign Affairs Committee for the defense of vulnerable persons in China, especially the Falun Gong, men and women who cannot speak for themselves, who have suffered unspeakable torture—some have survived—and to the families who have lost loved ones in Chinese prison camps, the Laogai, and detention centers that are sprinkled throughout all of China.

This legislation is an important step in bringing accountability and transparency to what may be one of the great crimes of the 21st century: the 17-year effort to eliminate Falun Gong practice from China. I strongly believe that the campaign to eradicate Falun Gong will be seen as one of the great horrors.

The Chinese Government continues to insist that the accounts of religious persecution, forced abortion, arbitrary detention, and organ harvesting from Falun Gong practitioners are mere rumors. They refuse to even discuss these issues in regular diplomatic dialogue and regularly jail and disbar lawyers who try to defend Falun Gong practitioners who expose the abuses that are committed by government employees. Nevertheless, evidence is quickly mounting of the horrific crimes committed against Falun Gong practitioners, including this terrible practice of organ harvesting.

Over the years, Congress has received credible information about this unethical and corrupt organ transplant system that operates in China. The Chinese Government is at least grossly negligent but, more likely, grossly complicit in these crimes because huge amounts of money are made.

We have received credible evidence that the actual number of organ transplants by China's hospitals remain underreported and that, despite the Chinese Government's promises to the contrary, the number of prisoners who are killed and have their organs taken continues to rise.

Shockingly, researchers David Kilgour, David Matas, and Ethan Gutmann conducted detailed investigations and estimated that between 45,000 and 65,000 Falun Gong practitioners were killed for their organs, which then were sold for profit—45,000 to 65,000 victims who had their organs stolen and their lives snuffed out by the Chinese Government officials.

There might be new estimates that are higher. These researchers will unveil their new findings next week at a hearing of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Let me remind Members that the United States Congress isn't the only one that is bringing this terrible human rights abuse up. The U.N. Committee Against Torture and the Special Rapporteur on torture have expressed concern over these allegations, and they have called for accountability and transparency.

The ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN resolution condemns this practice; calls on the government to end it; demands an immediate end to the 17-year persecution of the Falun Gong; encourages the United States medical community to help raise awareness of unethical organ transplant practices in China; calls on the People's Republic of China to allow a credible, transparent, and independent investigation into organ transplant abuses; and then calls on the U.S. Department of State to conduct a more detailed analysis on state-sanctioned organ harvesting from nonconsenting prisoners of conscience in its annual

human rights report. And it also calls on the government, our government, to bar provision of visas, pursuant to current law, to Chinese and other nationals engaged in coerced organ or bodily tissue transplantation.

Again, I want to thank ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. CONNOLLY for their leadership on this.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close once Mr. ENGEL yields back his time.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, a commitment to human rights for people around the world is a fundamental American value and a pillar of our foreign policy. So when we hear reports of horrific abuses, such as state-sanctioned organ harvesting, we have a responsibility to determine the scope of the problem and respond.

I want to thank Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN for her tenacity in bringing this forward. I want to thank Mr. SMITH, who is always there for human rights. I want to thank Chairman ROYCE, again, for allowing this resolution to come forward and, again, for making this a bipartisan concern.

I have heard from colleagues and constituents again and again about grievous violations of human rights that Falun Gong and other prisoners of conscience have endured at the hands of Chinese authorities. We need to send a clear message that this sort of abuse is unacceptable.

So again, I want to thank Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN for bringing our attention to this issue and bringing forward this measure. This is a resolution that everyone should vote for, and I urge a ''yes'' vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in recent years, sadly, the United States has receded from our role as a promoter and defender of human rights internationally. Once a central part of U.S. foreign policy, we have witnessed the protection of human rights fall far down on our priority list as administrations have become too eager to make deals with despots and tyrants in places like Iran, Cuba, and North Korea.

Those who once looked to the United States to be the leader, to stand up and protect those suffering and those who are being denied their most basic and fundamental rights, no longer view us as the voice for the voiceless, willing to stand up for those suffering around the world.

Shame on us, Mr. Speaker, because this failure to promote our ideals and our principles, well, that leads ruthless thugs to believe that they can get away with whatever they want, and, ultimately, it increases the suffering of the people that they exploit.

The United States must once again make our core values and beliefs a central tenet of our foreign policy agenda in order to restore our credibility and to restore the faith that so many have in our ability to help bring about change for those who cannot protect themselves.

□ 1830

Passing this resolution today, Mr. Speaker, sends a clear signal to China that the United States opposes its gross violations of human rights, particularly against the Falun Gong practitioners. They are so peaceful, and they are so full of composure. They pose no threat to China, yet this ruthless dictatorship forces them to commit unspeakable acts. This resolution sends a signal to countless others suffering around the world that the United States will, once again, make the protection of human rights a priority.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join us to support this resolution, support our ideals and values, support human rights, and help the practitioners of Falun Gong.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 343, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 4939, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 5312, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The second electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

UNITED STATES-CARIBBEAN STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT ACT OF 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4939) to increase engagement with the governments of the Caribbean region, the Caribbean diaspora community in the United States, and the private sector and civil society in both the United States and the Caribbean, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 386, nays 6, not voting 42, as follows:

[Roll No. 297]

YEAS—386

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Duncan (SC)
Edwards
Ellison
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marino
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson

Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—6

Amash
Brat
Duncan (TN)
Gohmert
Jones
Massie

NOT VOTING—42

Bishop (UT)
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Carter (TX)
DeLauro
Duffy
Ellmers (NC)
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Flores
Forbes
Garamendi
Goodlatte
Grayson
Griffith
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Herrera Beutler
Hinojosa
Hurt (VA)
Kind
Labrador
Lee
Marchant
Meeks
Meng
Miller (MI)
Price, Tom
Rohrabacher
Rush
Sanchez, Loretta
Simpson
Sinema
Stutzman
Takai
Thornberry
Webster (FL)
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wilson (FL)

□ 1853

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee changed his vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Ms. SPEIER changed her vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

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

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 297, I was unavoidably detained and unable to return to Washington, D.C. in time to cast my vote. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yes.''

MOMENT OF SILENCE IN MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS OF THE TERRORIST ATTACK IN ORLANDO, FLORIDA

The SPEAKER. The Chair would ask all present to rise for the purpose of a moment of silence.

The Chair asks that the House now observe a moment of silence in memory of the victims of the terrorist attack in Orlando.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I am really concerned that we have just today had a moment of silence, and later this week, the 17th——

The SPEAKER. Does the gentleman have a parliamentary inquiry?

Mr. CLYBURN. Yes.

Mr. Speaker, I am particularly interested about three pieces of legislation that have been filed in this body.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman is not stating a parliamentary inquiry.

NETWORKING AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2016

The SPEAKER. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5312) to amend the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 to authorize activities for support of networking and information technology research, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 385, nays 7, not voting 42, as follows:

[Roll No. 298]

YEAS—385

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gosar
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marino
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Pascrell
Paulsen
Pearce
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—7

Amash
Gohmert
Grothman
Harris
Jones
Massie
Pelosi

NOT VOTING—42

Bishop (UT)	Goodlatte	Miller (MI)
Boustany	Gowdy	Payne
Brady (TX)	Grayson	Rohrabacher
Carter (TX)	Griffith	Rush
DeLauro	Grijalva	Sanchez, Loretta
Duffy	Gutiérrez	Simpson
Ellmers (NC)	Herrera Beutler	Sinema
Farenthold	Hinojosa	Stutzman
Farr	Hurt (VA)	Takai
Fattah	Kind	Thornberry
Fincher	Labrador	Weber (TX)
Flores	Marchant	Webster (FL)
Forbes	Meeks	Whitfield
Garamendi	Meng	Wilson (FL)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK) (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1902

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

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 298, I was unavoidably detained and unable to return to Washington, D.C. in time to cast my vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5053, PREVENTING IRS ABUSE AND PROTECTING FREE SPEECH ACT; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5293, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017

Mr. STIVERS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114–621) on the resolution (H. Res. 778) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5053) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prohibit the Secretary of the Treasury from requiring that the identity of contributors to 501(c) organizations be included in annual returns; and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5293) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the additional motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken later.

NSF MAJOR RESEARCH FACILITY REFORM ACT OF 2016

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5049) to provide for improved management and oversight of major multi-user research facilities funded by the National Science Foundation, to ensure transparency and accountability of construction and management costs, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5049

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 ''NSF Major Research Facility Reform Act of 2016''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) DIRECTOR.—The term ''Director'' means the Director of the Foundation.

(2) FOUNDATION.—The term ''Foundation'' means the National Science Foundation established under section 2 of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950 (42 U.S.C. 1861).

(3) MAJOR MULTI-USER RESEARCH FACILITY.—The term ''major multi-user research facility'' means a science and engineering infrastructure construction project that exceeds the lesser of 10 percent of a Directorate's annual budget or $100,000,000 in total project cost that is funded in the major research equipment and facilities construction account, or any successor thereto.

SEC. 3. MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT OF LARGE FACILITIES.

(a) LARGE FACILITIES OFFICE.—The Director shall maintain a Large Facilities Office. The functions of the Large Facilities Office shall be to support the research directorates in the development, implementation, and assessment of major multi-user research facilities, including by—

(1) serving as the Foundation's primary resource for all policy or process issues related to the development and implementation of major multi-user research facilities;

(2) serving as a Foundation-wide resource on project management, including providing expert assistance on nonscientific and nontechnical aspects of project planning, budgeting, implementation, management, and oversight;

(3) coordinating and collaborating with research directorates to share best management practices and lessons learned from prior projects; and

(4) assessing projects during preconstruction and construction phases for cost and schedule risk.

(b) OVERSIGHT OF LARGE FACILITIES.—The Director shall appoint a senior agency official as head of the Large Facilities Office whose responsibility is oversight of the development, construction, and transfer to operations of major multi-user research facilities across the Foundation.

(c) POLICIES FOR LARGE FACILITY COSTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall ensure that the Foundation's polices for developing and maintaining major multi-user research facility construction costs are consistent with the best practices described in the March 2009 Government Accountability Office Report GAO-09-3SP, or any successor report thereto, the Uniform Guidance in 2 C.F.R. part 200, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation as appropriate.

(2) COST PROPOSAL ANALYSIS.—

(A) GENERAL REQUIREMENT.—The Director shall ensure that an external cost proposal analysis is conducted for any major multi-user research facility.

(B) RESOLUTION OF ISSUES FOUND.—The Director, or a senior agency official within the Office of the Director designated by the Director, shall certify in writing that all issues identified during the cost analysis, including any findings of unjustified or questionable cost items, are resolved before the Foundation may execute a construction agreement with respect to the project.

(C) TRANSMITTAL TO CONGRESS.—The Director shall transmit each certification made under subparagraph (B) to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

(3) INCURRED COST AUDITS.—The Director shall ensure that an incurred cost audit is conducted at least biennially on any major multi-user research facility, in accordance with Government Auditing Standards as established in Government Accountability Office Report GAO-12-331G, or any successor report thereto, with the first incurred cost audit to commence no later than 12 months after execution of the construction agreement.

(4) CONTINGENCIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided for in subparagraph (C)(ii), the Foundation shall—

(i) provide oversight for contingency in accordance with Cost Principles Uniform Guidance in 2 C.F.R. part 200.433, or any successor thereto, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation as appropriate, except as provided in this paragraph; and

(ii) not make any award which provides for contributions to a contingency reserve held or managed by the awardee, as defined in 2 C.F.R. part 200.433(c).

(B) UPDATING POLICY MANUAL.—The Foundation shall update its Large Facilities Manual and any other applicable guidance for contingencies on major multi-user research facilities with regard to estimating, monitoring, and accounting for contingency.

(C) FOUNDATION REQUIREMENTS.—The policy updated under subparagraph (B) shall require that the Foundation—

(i) may only include contingency amounts in an award in accordance with Cost Principles Uniform Guidance in 2 C.F.R. part 200.433, or any successor thereto, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation as appropriate; and

(ii) shall retain control over funds budgeted for contingency, but may disburse budgeted contingency funds incrementally to the awardee to ensure project stability and continuity.

(D) AWARDEE REQUIREMENTS.—The policy updated under subparagraph (B) shall require that an awardee shall—

(i) provide verifiable documentation to support any amounts proposed for contingencies; and

(ii) support requests for the release of contingency funds with evidence of a bona fide need and that the amounts allocated to the performance baseline are reasonable and allowable.

(E) CURRENT AWARDEES.—The Foundation shall work with awardees for whom awards with contingency provisions have been made before the date of enactment of this Act—

(i) to determine if any of their use of contingency funds represents out-of-scope changes for which Foundation's prior written approval was not obtained; and

(ii) if out-of-scope changes are found, to identify any financial action that may be appropriate.

(5) MANAGEMENT FEES.—

(A) DEFINITION.—In this paragraph, the term ''management fee'' means a portion of an award made by the Foundation for the purpose of covering ordinary and legitimate business expenses necessary to maintain

operational stability which are not otherwise allowable under Cost Principles Uniform Guidance in 2 C.F.R. part 200, Subpart E, or any successor regulation thereto.

(B) LIMITATION.—The Foundation may provide a management fee under an award only if the awardee provides justification as to the need for such funds. In such cases, the Foundation shall take into account the awardee's overall financial circumstances when determining the amount of the fee if justified.

(C) FINANCIAL INFORMATION.—The Foundation shall require award applicants to provide income and financial information covering a period of no less than 3 prior years (or in the case of an entity established less than 3 years prior to the entity's application date, the period beginning on the date of establishment and ending on the application date), including cash on hand and net asset information, in support of a request for management fees. The Foundation shall also require awardees to report to the Foundation annually any sources of non-Federal funds received in excess of $50,000 during the award period.

(D) EXPENSE REPORTING.—The Foundation shall require awardees to track and report to the Foundation annually all expenses reimbursed or otherwise paid for with management fee funds, in accordance with Federal accounting practices as established in Government Accountability Office Report GAO–12–331G, or any successor report thereto.

(E) AUDITS.—The Inspector General of the Foundation may audit any Foundation award for compliance with this paragraph.

(F) PROHIBITED USES.—An awardee may not use management fees for—

(i) costs allowable under Cost Principles Uniform Guidance in 2 C.F.R. part 200, Subpart E, or any successor regulation thereto;

(ii) alcoholic beverages;

(iii) tickets to concerts, sporting, or other entertainment events;

(iv) vacation or other travel for nonbusiness purposes;

(v) charitable contributions, except for a charitable contribution of direct benefit to the project or activity supported by the management fee;

(vi) social or sporting club memberships;

(vii) meals or entertainment for nonbusiness purposes;

(viii) luxury or personal items;

(ix) lobbying, as described in the Uniform Guidance at 2 C.F.R. 200.450; or

(x) any other purpose the Foundation determines is inappropriate.

(G) REVIEW.—The Foundation shall review management fee usage for each Foundation award on at least an annual basis for compliance with this paragraph and the Foundation's Large Facilities Manual.

(6) REPORT.—Not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall submit to Congress a report describing the Foundation's policies for developing and managing major multi-user research facility construction costs, including a description of any aspects of the policies that diverge from the best practices recommended in Government Accountability Office Report GAO-09-3SP, or any successor report thereto, and the Uniform Guidance in 2 C.F.R. part 200.

(7) NONCOMPLIANCE.—The Director shall ensure that the Foundation shall take the enforcement actions specified in 45 C.F.R. 92.43 for noncompliance with this section.

SEC. 4. WHISTLEBLOWER EDUCATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Foundation shall be subject to section 4712 of title 41, United States Code.

(b) EDUCATION AND TRAINING.—The Foundation shall provide education and training for Foundation managers and staff on the requirements of such section 4712, and provide information on such section to all awardees, contractors, and employees of such awardees and contractors.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 5049, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

I am pleased to sponsor H.R. 5049, the NSF Major Research Facility Reform Act of 2016, to improve the management and oversight of major multi-user research facilities that are funded by the National Science Foundation and to ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent with transparency and accountability.

The NSF funds a variety of large research projects through cooperative agreements, including multi-user research facilities, tools for research and education, and instrumentation networks. Current construction projects underway include the Large Synoptic Survey Telescope, the Daniel Inouye Solar Telescope, and the National Ecological Observatory Network, otherwise known as NEON. These 5- to 10-year construction projects range from $350 million to $500 million in total project cost. The proper stewardship of taxpayer dollars is paramount when executing projects of this magnitude.

The Committee on Science, Space, and Technology held a number of hearings over the last year and a half on these large research projects, including several on the NEON Project, after learning about the mismanagement of appropriated funds. Specifically, the hearings discussed the findings of two financial audits. One of those audits discovered that NEON was allowed to use Federal taxpayer dollars for explicitly unallowable costs, including liquor, lobbying, and a lavish holiday party.

Both audits of the NEON Project were initiated by the NSF inspector general due to concerns about the lack of review of costs by the NSF. In addition, the IG had concerns about the NSF's accounting financial controls of major research facilities prior to entering into cooperative agreements. The IG's work, combined with the oversight of this committee's, resulted in the National Academy of Public Administration's, also known as NAPA, conducting a commissioned review of the NSF's management of cooperative agreements.

The bill I bring to the floor today is a product of many recommendations that were made by the NSF IG, the auditors, NAPA, and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

First, the bill enhances the role of the NSF Large Facilities Office in project management, giving it statutory permanence and ensuring that expert management staff at the NSF work with scientific program staff throughout all phases of project development and construction. It also requires a senior agency official to have responsibility for the oversight of the office.

Second, the bill requires the NSF to commission an external cost proposal analysis for all major multi-user research facilities with a total project cost of over $100 million. This will ensure that proposed construction budgets are reasonable while allowing the NSF and the awardee to address all cost issues before construction begins. This small investment at the beginning of the award will pay off in savings for the life of the construction project.

Third, the bill requires an incurred cost audit at least every 2 years during construction, starting 1 year after the execution of the agreement. These regular audits will help ensure that a project is on track and will detect problems while something can still be done to remedy the problem, not after the project is well on its way to being over budget or is already complete.

Fourth, the bill increases agency control over project contingency funds by requiring the NSF to retain the majority of the funds rather than the awardee. Reflecting the input of many stakeholders, the bill allows the NSF to disburse contingency funds incrementally to the awardee to allow for project continuity and stability. Contingency expenditures must be supported by verifiable cost data, and the awardee must record and report all contingency expenditures to the NSF.

Next, the bill closes loopholes for the use of management fees, codifying regulations that the NSF has recently put into place to ensure taxpayer funds are never abused again. This prohibition includes alcohol, concert tickets, unnecessary travel, and lobbying. The bill also requires awardees to demonstrate a financial need to justify management fees which are included as part of the award.

Finally, the bill has a provision that supports the education of the NSF grant awardees and their employees on the law that protects whistleblowers. It was thanks to a whistleblower auditor that many of the issues with the NEON Project were brought to light.

As a former small business owner and as the former director of a nonprofit, I, wholeheartedly, understand the importance of accountability. The fact that the NSF is mishandling American taxpayer dollars, with little consequence,

is inexcusable. What is even more inexcusable is that the NSF has received warnings about this kind of irresponsible spending over the past 4 years, and it has not taken adequate measures to resolve the matter.

This bill will ensure that the NSF makes the systematic changes necessary to restore confidence in federally funded research projects and that taxpayers can trust us with their money in their knowing that it will be spent in the manner it was intended.

I thank Chairman SMITH for his support in moving this bill forward, and I ask my colleagues to join me in passing these commonsense reforms.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 5049, the NSF Major Research Facility Reform Act of 2016. While I support the passage of this bill in the House today, I do so with some reservations, which I will discuss later in my remarks.

Major research facilities play a central role in helping the NSF meet its mission to promote the progress of science and cultivate the next generation of scientists and innovators. These facilities include telescopes, research ships, engineering test beds, and other cutting-edge research platforms. We recently held a hearing to congratulate the scientists who are working on one such endeavor, the LIGO project, which detected gravity waves.

As the LIGO project demonstrated, these efforts involving major facilities have the potential to generate profound breakthroughs in science and to inspire a whole new generation of our best and brightest to pursue careers in STEM. However, these major facilities also cost a lot of money. Properly managing those large expenses is critical to ensuring the success of the major facilities projects and is, ultimately, critical to the advancement of science.

The intent of this bill is a good one. It is to ensure the proper oversight and accountability for the National Science Foundation's investments in major research facilities.

The National Science Foundation manages about 15 research facilities across its diverse science and engineering portfolio. In any given year, three or four new major facilities are under construction. H.R. 5049 largely addresses the design and construction phase of these facilities, which is the highest-risk phase.

Republican and Democratic members and staff of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology worked together over many weeks to develop and move through the committee a bill that addresses the need for strong oversight and accountability while taking into consideration the legitimate concerns of the agency and stakeholder groups about unintended consequences. I appreciate the work of Mr. LOUDERMILK and Chairman SMITH and the Republican and Democratic staffs in this regard. However, the devil is always in the details, and I hope that discussion will continue on some of the details if this legislation continues to move forward.

The fact is that every other Federal agency is held to governmentwide standards and policies for contracting. In this bill, we are creating a different set of rules with less flexibility for the National Science Foundation even though the Foundation's record, overall, has been a very good one and even though the Foundation has taken many aggressive steps already to rectify deficiencies where they did exist.

As such, I hope that we tread carefully. Given that the impetus for this bill was one project that went awry because of an inexperienced project management team, the last thing we want to do is to enact a law that discourages the most experienced project management professionals from doing business with the NSF, thereby increasing the risk to the taxpayer.

□ 1915

In closing, I want to thank Mr. LOUDERMILK and Chairman SMITH for working with us to improve the legislation; and I hope we continue to work with the agency, the National Science Board, and the expert stakeholders to ensure we achieve our shared goals of both safeguarding taxpayers' money and promoting the progress of science

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the majority leader.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, the Innovation Initiative is about two things: enabling innovation in the private sector, and bringing innovation into government.

It has now been 3 months since we started the Innovation Initiative. In that time, we have met with innovators at the forefront of both our missions. Today in the House, we are focused on harnessing innovation for the public good.

Just moments ago, we passed Representative DARIN LAHOOD's bill to advance networking and information technology research and development; and now we are considering BARRY LOUDERMILK's reform of the National Science Foundation.

Basic research and development investment is important as we strive to remain at the cutting edge of technologies that will offer Americans a happier and healthier life. But when the integrity of such efforts at public institutions is compromised, as happened with the major NSF facility that experienced massive cost overruns last year, it calls into question the entire model. So this bill makes changes to our research facilities to make them operate with transparency and accountability.

When you look across our government, you can see inefficiencies, a lack of accountability, and practices and policies that just don't make sense. That is bad for the workers, it is bad for business, and, most importantly, it is bad for America.

Here in the House, we aren't accepting the status quo. If it doesn't make sense, we are getting rid of it. If it is holding back innovation, we are changing it.

Mr. Speaker, we will surely consider more pieces of innovation initiative in the weeks and months to come. Unleashing the power of innovation, we will ensure American leadership now and into the future.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), the chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Mr. LOUDERMILK is the chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee's Oversight Subcommittee, and I appreciate all the work he has done on this bill.

H.R. 5049, the NSF Major Research Facility Reform Act, is the second bill today that is part of Majority Leader MCCARTHY's Innovation Initiative. We appreciate all of his efforts on this and other innovation bills, which now total 17.

This legislation addresses an issue about which the Science, Space, and Technology Committee has expressed concerns for the last 2 years: the National Science Foundation past management of major research facility projects.

The Science, Space, and Technology Committee seeks to ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent on research in the national interest, not wasted on mismanagement and questionable costs.

This bill achieves that goal. It addresses gaps in project oversight and management through solutions identified by the NSF inspector general, auditors, an outside review panel, and the Science, Space, and Technology Committee's own oversight for a year and a half.

Last year, in the wake of several reports of project waste and mismanagement, NSF Director France A. Cordova agreed to commission a study by the National Academy of Public Administration to take a closer look at how NSF could better manage large-scale research projects. The study's report offered 13 recommendations to improve NSF's management of cooperative agreements.

Although NSF has begun to implement some of the recommendations, there is still a need to implement four key measures addressed in this bill: preconstruction verification of total project cost, incurred cost audits during construction, better control over contingency funds, and proper use of taxpayer-funded management fees.

The bill's approach to these four reforms ensures that no current or future large-scale research project faces the same financial mismanagement that plagued one of NSF's largest projects, the $400 million National Ecological Observatory Network, called NEON. Last September, we learned that the project was likely to be $80 million overbudget and 18 months behind schedule. I recognize that the NSF is taking steps to better manage the cost of NEON, which include firing the management organization; however, it is time to make systemic changes for all current and future major research projects.

The accountability provisions in the bill have been developed with input from the minority, the NSF, and many stakeholders. We incorporated many of their suggestions during the markup of the bill in committee on April 27, and the bill was reported out of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee by voice vote.

Our staff has continued to work with the minority on the report that was filed with the bill to make sure our intentions in the underlying bill are clear. Although I believe the current NSF leadership is committed to improving its management of these construction projects, we need to make sure that the NSF will make the systemic changes necessary in a timely and permanent fashion. This change of how the NSF does business should outlast the current administration.

Many stakeholders have expressed support for the bill since it provides certainty for how the NSF will operate. All agencies as well as their grantees and contractors need to be held accountable for how they spend taxpayers' hard-earned dollars. The basic responsibility of any government agency is to act in the national interest.

H.R. 5049 will reduce waste, fraud, and abuse and make more resources available for quality basic research. This will lead to scientific discoveries, spur technological innovation, create new industries, and provide better jobs for Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of this good government accountability bill.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to know that this is a part of the innovation project. There are a number of good bills in the committee that we could really make a part of that package.

I have no further speakers, and I urge support of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this strong bipartisan measure.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MACARTHUR). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5049, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. LOUDERMILK. 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.

DOTTERER FAMILY CELEBRATES 65 YEARS OF FARMING IN CLINTON COUNTY

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate members of the Dotterer family in Clinton County on the 65th anniversary of the their farm, which they celebrated earlier this month.

The Dotterer farm was founded in 1951, when Paul and Jean Dotterer started with just 15 dairy cows and 147 acres. Their hard work paid off, since today the farm includes approximately 950 dairy cows and about 3,000 acres of land, which provides for a harvest of many different crops. The farm is now in its third generation.

Members of the Dotterer family are proud that the milk from their farm is sold locally. In fact, it can be found on the shelves of grocery stores just miles away from their farm.

As a member of the House Agriculture Committee, I know how important farming is to not only Pennsylvania's economy, but to our Nation. It is wonderful to see family farms that are being passed from generation to generation, feeding their communities, our Nation, and the entire world.

I wish the Dotterer family continued success and prosperity in the future.

ORLANDO TRAGEDY

(Mr. CÁRDENAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, I am beyond heartbroken from the circumstances of Orlando. I mourn with my fellow Americans the 50 lives lost, 53 people maimed and damaged by this preventable tragedy.

32,000 American lives are lost each year from gun violence. Every elected congressional Member has promised America that the safety of the people is what we or she or he will work on.

We as a Congress do nothing to make our country safer. Why? Because you, Mr. Speaker, refuse to consider any legislation tied to gun violence. Why won't you allow a hearing, a committee discussion on the issue of gun violence?

My moment of silence resolution is waiting for your signature. It would require this House of Congress to hold a hearing on the tragedy in Orlando.

It is time to act. The people are waiting on us to do our job.

8-YEAR-OLD VICTIM OF SEX SLAVERY

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it happened right under the entire community's nose: 8-year-old Jen—that is correct, 8 years old—was raped and tortured almost on a daily basis. Jen was not kidnapped by a stranger or abused by a relative. She was sold for sex by a neighbor at the neighbor's house. It was not just Jen who was sold for sex. It was also her younger sister, a male cousin, and a whole group of kids from her hometown of Norristown, Pennsylvania.

She and her fellow victims were coerced into participating and keeping it a secret through an elaborate con of gifts and threats. No one ever went looking for Jen because she was not ever missing. From 3 to 6 p.m., she was forced to have sex with strangers.

The trafficking finally ended when she was about 10 years of age because the neighbor just disappeared.

Mr. Speaker, sex slavery happens. As parents and grandparents, we need to know where our kids are because monsters that hurt victims must be prosecuted, both the sellers and the buyers, even if they are neighbors.

The message is clear: Our children are not for sale. Leave them alone.

And that is just the way it is.

ORLANDO, FLORIDA, TRAGEDY

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise first of all to acknowledge my colleague, Congresswoman CORRINE BROWN, in whose district this heinous, terroristic, hateful act occurred. I acknowledge my hometown of Houston, where, as I stand here today, they are mourning with memorials that will be held today, Tuesday, and Wednesday in solidarity with the people of Orlando, Florida.

I also rise with great pain in joining my colleague, Congresswoman BROWN, to introduce legislation to push and to remind individuals about the violence that is taking place through the weapons of war that we are allowing to be sold on the streets of America.

It is high time for this body to stop standing in memoriam and for a 1-minute speech and to pass the ban on assault weapons and high-caliber bullets that are destroying and killing and destroying and killing. It has been told that there were bodies whose legs were taken off by the bullets. I ask this body to recognize that we can no longer talk, talk, talk. We must do, do, do.

We will fight till our last breath to demand that the Constitution be respected, Mr. Speaker—as I end—the

First Amendment, the right to free speech, and, yes, the Second Amendment, with the restrictions and the recognition that AR–15s are killing Americans.

We must stop it now.

□ 1930

BRINGING TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO STATE EXCHANGES

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to thank the Subcommittee on Health of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce for their recent hearing on my legislation, H.R. 4262, the Transparency and Accountability of Failed Exchanges Act.

ObamaCare just had its sixth anniversary. In those 6 years, we have learned just how disastrous ObamaCare is, exposing its many flaws. One of those being when the President freely gave money away to States to establish State exchanges, he forgot a major piece of the puzzle. The administration failed to provide a solution to recover these funds when these State exchanges failed.

Since then, billions of taxpayer dollars have been spent, and exchanges in multiple States have failed.

Well, what has happened to the money if the exchange failed?

My legislation establishes a two-step plan to recover Federal funds. It conducts an audit to see how and where the money was spent and requires unused funds be returned back to the Treasury for needed deficit reduction.

Again, I thank the committee for their interest in H.R. 4262 and encourage my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation. It is time to bring transparency and accountability to State exchanges.

HORRIFIC EVENTS IN ORLANDO

(Mr. POCAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, as we grapple with the horrific events that took place yesterday morning in Orlando, my thoughts are with the families of the victims and everyone affected during Pride Month.

The targeting of LGBT individuals in this heinous act of violence has reignited many fears and uncertainty in our community. As a country, we must stand together to denounce bigotry and hatred and embrace love and acceptance.

President Barack Obama declared this an act of terror and an act of hate, an action perpetrated with a military-style assault weapon. Unfortunately, this week Congress won't do a thing about any of these issues. In fact, all too often actions and language here in Congress and on the campaign trail actually exacerbate would-be terrorists, and actions even on the floor of the House of Representatives all too often reinforce the hate of some people, including gays and lesbians.

Unfortunately, this body is too chicken to address the epidemic of military-style assault weapons because that would upset the gun manufacturers and gun lobby.

In the end, all we did, yet again, is have another moment of silence rather than a moment of action. That disrespects the lives of the people who were killed not just yesterday, but every day by gun violence. There may be blood in the streets, but if Congress continues to fail to act, we will have blood on our hands.

ALYSSA FERGUSON IS A SPECIAL YOUNG LADY

(Mr. OLSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to give an update to the folks back home about a special young lady, Alyssa Ferguson.

I first talked on this floor about Alyssa when the Fort Bend Star told us her story. It was their third best story for 2015. I also spoke on this floor a second time about Alyssa the first time I met her. She threw out the first pitch, a strike, at a home game for our local pro baseball team, the Skeeters.

Alyssa is special because what she has done when she heard that she had cancer. She used her only wish from the Make-A-Wish Foundation to give a water well to a small village in Africa.

A few weeks ago, Alyssa and 100 kids with cancer enjoyed a Prom Party Palooza at Texas Children's Hospital. Alyssa said: ''Some people don't make it to the real prom. It's great we get a chance to experience that.''

Keep fighting, Alyssa, and when you go to your real prom, there will be a long line waiting to be your date, and I will be at the front of that line.

TRAGEDY AT THE PULSE NIGHTCLUB

(Ms. BROWN of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart. I have had the honor of representing Orlando, Florida, for the last 24 years. Yes, Orlando is one of the number one destinations in the country and it is very sophisticated and very diverse, but it is a family-oriented community. We have a very heavy heart.

Although there are numerous unanswered questions at this time, the fact that this attack took place at a nightclub frequented by members of the LGBT community and that it took place as our Nation celebrates LGBT Pride Month leaves one to believe that this was motivated by deep hate and prejudice.

I spent Sunday night and Monday in Orlando working to ensure that the State and local officials receive the Federal resources they need to make sure that this never happens again.

Mr. Speaker, the community is coming together, but a little girl gave me this picture. This picture, so simple. This picture says ''Orlando Strong.'' Orlando is strong, but, you know, I don't know how much longer we are going to stand and have a moment of silent prayer.

A moment of silent prayer, and then what?

You know, to whom God has given much, much is expected. He expects us to do more than stand and rise for a moment of silent prayer when one person killed over 50 people and sent out over a hundred bullets. It is just unacceptable. People around the world are looking at us, and they think there is something wrong with us.

People in America, what is wrong with you? How much longer, how much longer are we going to rise for a moment of silent prayer?

Prayer without work is in vain.

RECOGNIZING THE JOHN S. JAMES COMPANY

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the John S. James Company in Savannah, Georgia, for receiving an ''E'' award from the United States Department of Commerce.

The ''E'' award is the highest honor the United States Government can give to an American exporter. The prestigious award was created by President Kennedy in 1961 as a way to distinguish companies who achieve excellence in exporting United States goods and products.

This award was presented by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce to the John S. James Company on May 16, 2016, during World Trade Week. Founded in 1941, the John S. James Company has excelled in international freight forwarding, customs brokerage industries, transportation services, and cargo insurance. The company has expanded into six locations across the Southeastern United States and provides shipping services across the globe.

The John S. James Company is a great example of American success in the international market. I am very proud of this company in the First Congressional District of Georgia, and I wish them all the best in their future.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

(Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker and Members, we have had another moment of silence, a moment of silence indicating that somehow we are concerned about what happened in Orlando, Florida. It is not good enough.

How many times have we done this? Whether we are talking about Sandy Hook, where those babies were killed, or we are talking about North Carolina or we are talking about San Bernardino or Aurora, Colorado, we keep getting up with a moment of silence because we don't want to deal with what is really going on.

This Republican leadership is pitiful. It is disgusting that they don't have the guts or the commitment to call it like it is and bring a bill to this floor to get rid of assault weapons. That weapon that killed those 50 people and harmed those other 53 is a weapon that is designed for war. Don't tell me about your hunting concerns. This AR–15 has nothing to do with hunting. This is about killing. And so this leadership is spineless, it is gutless, and it deserves not to have the ability to get up on this floor and talk about responsibility or innovation——

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California.—or any of this other stuff that they are talking about. I want to say over and over again, I don't care if my time is up, you stop me from talking if you will.

The fact of the matter is, we should all be on this. Business as usual? I don't think so. We should have stopped everything this evening, concentrated on how we can get a bill to the floor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. I know you don't want me to talk while you are waiting for your talking points from the leadership.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman is no longer recognized.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California.

* * *

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair is prepared to recognize the gentleman from California.

PROPERTY RIGHTS EXEMPTION FOR FARMS

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, last Friday a Federal court in California made an almost unbelievable ruling that the Army Corps of Engineers could regulate the plowing of fields despite clear exemptions for normal farming activities in the Clean Water Act.

Ruling against a family farm in my district, the court somehow found that the Corps was justified in attacking the farm for, believe it or not, planting wheat on land that had been used to grow wheat for decades. Wow. The nerve of this family, to grow crops on land historically used to grow crops.

Rarely have we seen an administration distort the legislative intent of Congress as it has in this instance. The Army Corps and EPA are ignoring language that exempts ''normal farming, silviculture, and ranching activities such as plowing, seeding, cultivating, minor drainage, harvesting . . . '' and so on—exactly the activity that occurred in this instance. In other words, Congress clearly and unambiguously exempted day-to-day activities, and yet the administration continues working to try to regulate them.

Mr. Speaker, we have enacted language I have sponsored to defund this type of lawless regulation, and yet the administration continues. We must rein in this executive overreach and develop reforms that end this abuse once and for all.

THE DEADLIEST SHOOTING IN AMERICAN HISTORY

(Mrs. LAWRENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, the June 12 mass shooting at a club in Orlando, Florida, was not only the deadliest shooting in American history, it was one of the most heinous hate crimes and acts of terrorism this country has ever seen. Too often hate crimes and acts of terrorism use guns. The epidemic overwhelmingly express the need to strengthen our gun laws.

A stronger background check system will help prevent hate crimes and acts of terrorism to protect Americans from terrorists who want to attack our way of life. We must give the FBI the authority to block sales to suspected terrorists, and we must require background checks for every gun sale in America.

Mr. Speaker, no more silence. Let's stand up as Americans, and in this Congress, and tell the American people, those who are mourning, and those across this country who have experienced this that we in Congress will do the work we were sent here to do, and that is to stand up and take action.

□ 1945

BRIDGING THE DIVIDE: A CALL TO ACTION BY THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS TO ELIMINATE RACIAL HEALTH DISPARITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and add any extraneous materials relevant to the subject matter of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening, along with my colleague, Congressman HAKEEM JEFFRIES of the Eighth Congressional District of New York, for tonight's Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour, Bridging the Divide: A Call to Action By the Congressional Black Caucus to Eliminate Racial Health Disparities.

Mr. Speaker, tonight, the Congressional Black Caucus comes to the House floor to discuss our overarching goal of promoting equality for African Americans across the healthcare spectrum.

Mr. Speaker, it is well known that poverty, socioeconomic status, and health disparities are closely linked and latched together. For example, individuals with low incomes tend to have more restricted access to medical care and face greater financial barriers to affordable health care, oftentimes contributing to health disparities.

Last week, Mr. Speaker, the House Republicans released their Conference's poverty plan called A Better Way. Unfortunately, but not unexpectedly, this Republican antipoverty proposal isn't a better way, Mr. Speaker. It isn't even a new way. Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, it is the wrong way. It uses the same trickle-down, discredited policies that House Republicans have put forth in the past.

The House Republicans' poverty elimination proposal would repeal the Affordable Care Act and undermine affordable, quality health coverage that millions of Americans are now enjoying. It would also cut Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program that we refer to as CHIP, and it would end the Medicare guarantee—programs with proven successes, Mr. Speaker, in reducing health disparities. So this is, in part, why we are here tonight.

We know that health coverage is the first step in securing better healthcare outcomes, and Medicaid and CHIP play a vital role in opening the doorway to the needed health care, especially for our children.

As we address the most pressing challenges in achieving health equity and equality for African Americans, I want hardworking American families to know that they have voices in Congress that aim to protect their safety, invest in their future, and provide affordable health care for all.

With the Affordable Care Act, which every member of the Congressional Black Caucus supported when it passed, we have improved access. We have improved affordability and quality of health care.

So tonight, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank President Obama for moving the needle forward in helping American families and African American families across this great country and Nation to have the financial and health security that comes with health care.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot repeal the ACA. We must continue to improve and strengthen it, and we will still have more work to do.

The Congressional Black Caucus, from its very inception, has long been the voice for bridging the divide on racial healthcare disparities. No, Mr. Speaker; we have been the voice for standing up for American people, and especially individuals who are African American, against all disparities. We will not only come to this floor tonight. We will continue our fight and we will continue to come to this floor.

Tonight, you are going to hear a lot of our members weave together our poverty plan. You are going to have members talk about gun violence. You are going to have members talk about all lives matter. If we don't end the gun violence, then we are not going to have a healthy nation.

Tonight, I want to applaud my good friend and colleague, Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY of the Second District of Illinois, chair of our Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust. I want to commend her for her report, the 2015 Kelly Report on Health Disparities in America, the official congressional analysis of the state of African Americans' health in the United States, and her work on the 40 Under 40 Leaders in Health Awards, leaders under 40 who are physicians and medical professionals. And lastly, let me just thank her for her courage and her leadership for recognizing that all lives matter.

We cannot come to this House floor and talk about poverty programs and health care and education and about finance if we do not bridge the gap with gun violence. I salute her for no longer standing up until we make a difference.

So tonight, we are coming, Mr. Speaker, with a strong call to action for us to keep this wonderful America healthy. You will hear from Congresswoman KELLY momentarily.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD), chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus. He is a chairman who has been a longtime advocate and voice for not only the Congressional Black Caucus, but for his constituents in his congressional district in North Carolina. Tonight, he speaks for us. Tonight, he speaks for the call of action of us to bridge the gap.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. I thank Congresswoman BEATTY for yielding to me this evening.

This is such a sad evening for all of us because of the events in Orlando. I thank her so very much for having the strength to come to the floor tonight to manage the important topic that we are all so concerned about.

I thank Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY for her incredible work chairing the CBC Health Braintrust and all the work she does related to health disparities in this country. I thank all of my colleagues for their tireless work.

Before I begin my remarks, let me just say that I sat on the floor a moment ago and listened to Congresswoman CORRINE BROWN. It was an incredible 1-minute speech she gave. I want to share in her sentiments this evening and align myself with the pain that she and her constituents are facing in Orlando. The mass shootings were absolutely horrific and unthinkable, under any definition. They are just unthinkable.

My prayers go out to the families in Orlando for their pain and for all that they are having to endure because of these mass shootings.

As someone said a few moments ago, a moment of silence is not enough. It is time for this Congress to act. It is time for this body, Mr. Speaker, to have a serious debate about gun violence and to pass legislation that will deprive people the right to own a high-capacity assault weapon and high-caliber bullets and use them to kill innocent people. Now is the time.

136 mass shootings have taken place during the first 164 days of this year. It is a sad statistic that we must address. The United States is 5 percent of the world's population, yet we are 31 percent of the mass shootings in the world. It is time to act.

Let me talk about the topic tonight, very briefly.

The Congressional Black Caucus has been committed to advancing access to affordable health care for all Americans so that we can eliminate racially based health disparities. That has been our mission for many years.

Eliminating health disparities means addressing inequities in environmental, social, and economic conditions in all of our communities. By all measurable statistics, from health outcomes to participation in health professions, African Americans lag so far behind.

For example, more than 40 percent of African Americans have high blood pressure—a rate that is one of the highest in the world. African Americans are more likely to develop hypertension at a younger age and are at higher risk of stroke, heart failure, end-stage renal disease, and death from heart disease.

Stroke, Mr. Speaker, is the third leading cause of death in the United States. African Americans are 50 percent more likely to experience a stroke than White Americans. That is a fact.

According to the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, African American children are twice as likely to have asthma as White children, and Black children are 10 times more likely than White children to die of complications from asthma.

African Americans were, on average, 6 years younger than Whites when they suffered sudden cardiac arrest. Cardiac arrest incidence among African American men was 175 per 100,000; whereas, the incidence for White males was just 84 per 100,000. Cardiac arrest in African American women was 90 per 100,000, as opposed to 40 per 100,000 for Caucasian women.

Another illness which disparately impacts the African American community is that of prostate cancer. In June of last year, I introduced the National Prostate Cancer Plan Act, a bipartisan bill which seeks to establish the National Prostate Cancer Council on Screening, Early Detection and Assessment and Monitoring of Prostate Cancer.

Prostate cancer impacts one in seven American men and is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths among men in the U.S., with nearly 30,000 deaths anticipated just this year. African American men are particularly vulnerable, as they are twice as likely to be diagnosed with prostate cancer and 2.5 times more likely to die from the disease than their White counterparts.

Just last week, House Republicans released their A Better Way agenda to address poverty, but that proposal, like others they have released, will not lift Americans out of poverty. In some cases, these types of proposals can actually push low-income Americans even deeper into poverty, further limiting their access to health care and exacerbating health disparities.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is time for us to continue our efforts to address the health disparities and barriers. That is what the Congressional Black Caucus is advocating the evening. We are going to continue this work until every disparity is removed.

Mrs. BEATTY. I thank Congressman BUTTERFIELD for making us aware of 136 mass shootings in 164 days of this year. Certainly, that is relevant to tonight's topic, because whether it is death by guns or death by healthcare disparities, there are too many deaths.

I think you said it so well when you provided the data and the statistics of African American men and their mortality rates and what is happening to them. And yes, African Americans lag behind, and that is why we stand with you bridging the gap and for this call of action.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) from the Second Congressional District, my colleague, my confidant, and my friend. She is a champion of expanding health care. She is a champion, Mr. Speaker, of making sure that we understand that healthcare disparities must end.

She is the chair of the powerful and most prestigious Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust. She strives to increase healthcare opportunities for all: for our children, for our senior citizens, and for residents of the underserved communities. It is my honor to ask her to provide some information on today's topic.

□ 2000

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues and my classmates, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY), my friend, and the distinguished gentleman from New

York (Mr. JEFFRIES), for leading this important conversation about bridging the divide to eliminate racial health disparities.

But I can't weigh in on that topic until I first address the horrific events of yesterday in Orlando, Florida. Our Nation is horrified and heartbroken by the tragedy in Orlando. We are disgusted by this brutal attack. We will not tolerate terrorism or hate in any form against any group of people because this is just not our way.

These ideas of hate will not endure because there is not strength to them. We will win the battle against terrorism and intolerance.

We will hold leaders accountable who put their NRA score ahead of the need to keep guns out of the hands of terrorists. We will stand with the LGBTQ community and value their lives, their health, and their security from the threat of violence and hate. And we will work to see that all Americans enjoy the very same freedoms and protections.

We have done a lot of moments of silence, but I believe in showing respect through action, not silence, and that is why we are here this evening to discuss what divides us as a country in a health sense.

For 45 years, the Congressional Black Caucus has been out front in Congress in fighting for these freedoms and protections. And when it comes to the matter of health equity, I have worked to champion the health policy concerns of vulnerable communities as my predecessors in the Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust, the Honorable Louis Stokes and Dr. Christensen, have done.

Some of my colleagues here know this, but I want to repeat it for anyone who doesn't. Before he was killed, Martin Luther King, Jr., was quoted as saying: ''Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane.''

I couldn't agree more, and as the chair of the Health Braintrust, I have worked with many of the people in this room to focus on advancing this critical phase of the human rights and civil rights struggle: health equity.

When Benjamin Franklin created the Nation's first public hospital, The Pennsylvania Hospital, he did so in order to establish the promotion of public health as a core American value. He did so to care for our Nation's diseased and sick poor.

Nearly 300 years later, the Affordable Care Act cemented health care as a fundamental right for all Americans. Yet, today, we find ourselves at a crossroads in health care. Health disparities in communities of color continue to be intractable hurdles in the quest to achieve health equity in America.

African Americans are infected with HIV at a rate that is 8 times that of White Americans.

While White women are more likely to have breast cancer, African American women are 40 percent more likely to die from the disease.

African Americans, Latinos, Asians, and Pacific Islanders, as well as Native Americans, are diagnosed with lupus two to three times more frequently than Caucasians.

More than 13 percent of African Americans aged 20 or older have diagnosed diabetes. And people of color are two to four times more likely than Whites to reach end-stage renal disease.

This grim snapshot illustrates that, despite the gains we have made since the days of Ben Franklin and the ACA, there is still much ground to cover in closing the health equity gap.

Last year, I drafted a comprehensive report, The Kelly Report on Health Disparities, an official Congressional analysis of the state of minority health in the U.S. that offers a blueprint for reversing negative health trends in communities of color.

The Kelly Report brought Members of Congress together, medical professionals, and public health thought leaders to examine the root causes and impact of health disparities in America, and provide a comprehensive set of legislative and policy recommendations to address them.

The whole can only ever be as healthy as its parts. For America to achieve true health equity, lawmakers, community leaders, and industry stakeholders must come together and aggressively work to reduce disparities nationwide. We all have a part to play in creating a healthier America.

We must take heed of Dr. King's words: ''Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane.'' And we can and we must fix that.

Again, because of what happened in Orlando, and I want to say it is the mass shooting that we are talking about, and it is tragic, but the night before, one person was shot. And I often liken this to a 747 crash as we talk about that, but we don't talk about the two-seater. And that two-seater, the person that died alone in that club after she sung Friday night has a brother, a mother, a father, and their pain is just as harsh. So let's not forget that young lady that lost her life. And she did not lose her life to someone that was Muslim or someone that believed in ISIS. She lost her life to an American young man, a Caucasian.

Mrs. BEATTY. I thank the gentlewoman from Illinois, (Ms. KELLY). And how appropriate for tonight for the gentlewoman to remind us, as I ask her to constantly do, about why we must, to put it in her words, come together. We must do something.

Madam Speaker, tonight we say to you and to our Republican colleagues: Come together and do something.

I say to the gentlewoman, Congresswoman KELLY: Let today serve as a turning point in our Nation's ongoing struggle to stamp out hate of all forms. We must mourn those who lost their family members, but we must do more than mourn. We must have action. If we are going to have a hope for a better America, hate has no place in this great Nation.

So I thank the gentlewoman, and I will continue to remind others that we know firsthand what it does to our community.

But, Madam Speaker, we stand here tonight speaking to all communities. But here is what we know. The NAACP has shared with us that African American children and teens accounted for 45 percent of all child and teen gun deaths in 2008 and 2009, but were only 15 percent of the total child population.

The FBI says that approximately 47 percent of victims of the 165,000 homicides from 2000 to 2010, including over 111,000 gun-related homicides, were Black.

The Children's Defense Fund, Madam Speaker, says that in 2010, Black males between the ages of 15 and 19 were nearly 30 times more likely to die in a gun homicide than White males of the same age, and more than three times more likely to die in a gun homicide than Hispanic males of the same age.

So, Madam Speaker, tonight you will hear us repeatedly make a call for action. You will hear us repeatedly quote great leaders. And I think it is worth quoting again what Congresswoman KELLY said, in the words of Dr. Martin Luther King: ''Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane'' of all inequalities, of all injustices.

As we speak of great leaders, it is, indeed, my honor and my privilege to ask my colleague, the gentleman from the 10th Congressional District of New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), a man who has made a name for himself, a man who understands firsthand as a father of triplets, as a spouse, as a ranking member on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, a man who has been at the forefront in his community, a man who served before coming here as an elected official, but, more importantly, a person who understands health disparities and the call for action—it gives me great honor to yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) to share some wisdom with us tonight.

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I first want to start by thanking Congresswoman BEATTY for that very kind and generous introduction. We, in our class, are very proud of our colleagues, and we support each other in times of need.

I just would like to also congratulate and acknowledge Congressman HAKEEM JEFFRIES, the gentleman from New York, who is also host of this Special Order. I appreciate the opportunity to discuss an issue that is very personal to me.

Before I begin, I just want to say that my heart goes out to the families and friends of the victims of the horrible

tragedy in Orlando, and I can only imagine what they are going through.

The other thing that is illuminating to me is that, as we came here and stood up for a moment of silence, after that moment of silence, I believe Members were given a 1-minute opportunity to speak on any topic that they would like to on the floor, as is customary, and not one person from the other side of the aisle mentioned what happened in Orlando.

So not only was it a moment of silence for the leadership in this House, but it appears that it is going to be a moment that remains silent or a topic that remains silent from the other side of the aisle.

Madam Speaker, eliminating racial-based health disparities depends on our ability to advance access to affordable health care for all. Even in the 21st century, health disparities are stark, especially in the African American communities, where life expectancies are lower and infant mortality rates are higher than among Whites.

Today, despite improvement in overall health in the United States, African Americans and other minority populations lag behind in numerous health areas, including access to quality care, timelines of care, and health outcomes.

For years, the Congressional Black Caucus has called on Republicans to join us and other House Democrats in developing a plan to eliminate racial health disparities, a plan that addresses the causes of health disparities, such as inequities in environmental, social, and economic conditions in our communities.

Instead, we get from them proposals like their so-called A Better Way poverty proposal, a stale, repackaging of failed policies presented under the guise of concern about Americans trapped in poverty.

Cutting job training programs, food assistance, and Head Start will push low-income Americans further into poverty, making it even more difficult for them to access the affordable and quality health care needed to secure their well-being and the well-being of their families. We need to, instead, use the government as a source of good.

Every American deserves to live in a safe and healthy environment. Yet, low-income and minority communities are much more exposed to high levels of pollution, resulting in serious health problems such as asthma, heart problems, and cancer.

This is a very real problem across America, a very real problem in my district. Thirteen million people, including 3.5 million children, are concentrated in the vicinity of transportation facilities and are exposed to unhealthy levels of air pollution.

□ 2015

My district is home to the Port Newark-Elizabeth Marine Terminal, part of the Port of New York and New Jersey, the third largest port in the country. According to the EPA, 25 percent of children in Newark suffer from asthma—three times the State average.

What we need are additional Federal actions to reduce harmful air pollution from ports and congested components of the national freight transportation system. The issue is critical to the low-income and minority community who suffer the disproportionately adverse health effects of these environmental hazards.

Now, since I am on the topic of environmental justice, I just want to remind everyone that the Republicans continue to block any action to help the thousands of children facing lifelong damage from drinking poisoned water in Flint, including a vote to block the Families of Flint Act emergency supplemental. Their radical refusal to address this health issue will have tragic consequences for American families, and, I think it is representative of their overall inadequate approach to health disparities in minority communities.

The way to eliminate racial health disparities is neither to downplay them nor to cut programs that will assist the most vulnerable. It is to address the environmental, social, and economic conditions that exacerbate those disparities. It is to expand access to quality health care that could eliminate or reduce the onset of many of these chronic illnesses and disproportionate health outcomes. It is to maintain and strengthen our investments in healthcare access and resources for disadvantaged populations.

In closing, Madam Speaker, I also want to stress that health education must also be a focus in any efforts to eliminate racial-based health disparities. African Americans and other communities are disproportionately affected by poor provider-patient communication and health literacy issues. Consequently, they often do not have access to information that enables them to make the appropriate health decisions.

We have a responsibility to work with our healthcare institutions and community health centers to make it easier for people to find, understand, and use the information and services.

As co-chair of the Congressional Men's Health Caucus, I have hosted and participated in a number of outreach events in my district to engage directly with constituents about the importance of making positive health decisions and staying proactive about their health and well-being. So I encourage everyone watching at home to get the information you need to make smart health decisions, to get the security you and your family deserve, and to get the health care that we all need.

Mrs. BEATTY. I thank Congressman PAYNE so much for giving us such compelling information and data and reminding us that the time is now for us to enact those programs that work, and the time is now for us to understand what is at risk. Also, let me thank the gentleman for his role on the Congressional Men's Health Caucus.

At this time, I yield to the gentlewoman from the State of Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE). The gentlewoman from the 18th Congressional District of Texas is someone who I am always amazed when she comes to the mic, someone who is well researched, and someone who delivers an oratorical message that makes us take pause and pay attention.

Tonight, I would like to say that Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE is a movement. Earlier, I heard her use that word in talk about how we, Madam Speaker, must be the movement against violence, that we must be leading that movement against these disparities in health care.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, there is no doubt how much I appreciate the Congressional Black Caucus and Congresswoman BEATTY and Congressman JEFFRIES for always being timely in allowing us to give a message to our colleagues. We hope maybe the American people will hear us, but we accept that this body is the body to which and to whom we speak. So I am thankful for that.

I want to pay tribute, overall, to the Congressional Black Caucus because we are actually here speaking of health disparities, because it was the caucus that triggered this debate through the years that we have been trying to get universal access to health care and was the moving force in the 2009, 2008, and 2010 passage, ultimately, of the Affordable Care Act, where the work that we did, joining Congresswoman Donna Christian-Christiansen, at that time, and FRANK PALLONE on the Congressional Health Caucus, but on the CBC we had the health disparities task to ensure that the language in the Affordable Care Act addressed the issue of health disparities.

There was a large section on that that built on some of the work that some of us had already done creating the Office of Minority Health that I had worked on in years past. So it was the lightning bolt of the caucus, and then working with the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus and then the Congressional Hispanic Caucus that we raised the issue that no one was talking about.

I remember debating on the floor of the House on the issues of dealing with senior citizen African American men and how they access health care, how do women access health care, and how do women impacted by diabetes access health care. These are some of the diseases that have a proclivity to the African American population.

We were finding out that we even had an issue where medical professionals didn't know how to ask the questions. How do you address someone who needs to be diagnosed for prostate cancer or may be diagnosed for prostate cancer and is an African American male, a senior citizen? My father ultimately died from cancer that metastasized from the prostate to the lungs and the brain, so we knew we had a serious issue.

So today, I want to mention four points, but I am going to focus on the last one, obesity—a question of access to health care and physical fitness.

Many times we live in areas where there is no access to a pool or a tennis court. Mental health—if you lived your life in a segregated America, if you were called ''Boy'' and ''Girl,'' it is a different mental health situation than maybe others may have faced. If you live in a situation of poverty, of a single household, maybe—this is not across the board—these issues will be impacted. If you lived around gun violence, if you saw your 15-year-old friend being shot dead in the street, there is a question of mental health that we need access to that care for us to be able to reach out or maybe counselors to be able to provide for children.

HIV/AIDS is something that we have lived through. I remember going to funerals of friends in the 1980s and into the 1990s, particularly with HIV/AIDS. So we have worked in the Congressional Black Caucus to massively talk about testing.

Let me get to this point that I want to dwell just for a moment on, and that is gun violence. I was here on the floor earlier with my head held down and my heart heavy as my district, today, had a memorial. They had one yesterday. We will have one tomorrow and have one on Wednesday. I mourn with Congresswoman CORINNE BROWN of Florida.

We are offering legislation dealing with the assault weapons and to complement legislation already passed or already in place. But it is important to note that this is a health issue, because the Centers for Disease Control can assess and study every health issue that faces America today, but they are legislatively, by law, prohibited by my friends on other side of the aisle, by Republicans, disallowed every year to give them permission to study gun violence.

Gun violence is killing our children and killing our families. In Orlando, it killed Latinos who happened to be the attendees at the Pulse Club. The LGBTQ community was the dominant community, and a hateful terroristic act using AR–15s and Glock guns killed them.

The incident was the deadliest mass shooting. The next deadliest incidents in recent history were April 16, 2007, Virginia Tech, 32 killed, 17 injured; December 14, 2012, Sandy Hook, 26 killed, 1 injured; October 16, 1991, Killeen, Texas, 23 killed, 27 injured. According to Everytown index of mass shootings where four or more people are shot and killed, the incident was the ninth mass shooting in the United States in 2016, and the 150th mass shooting in United States since January 1, 2009.

The mass shooting with guns impacts both the mental health, the sanctity, and the minority community. It is shameful that we are not allowed to engage in the kind of research that a Harvard professor talked about, and that is the assessing of violence and the assessing of violence with guns.

The materials I have before me make it very clear that most of these violent acts are done with guns—done with guns. San Bernardino, Chattanooga, Charleston, Garland, Oak Creek, and Fort Hood were all done with guns.

So I stand here today to challenge this issue of health disparities to say that the heavy brunt of killings, singular killings, are impacted by poverty, lack of access to health care, the proliferation of guns in our inner city communities, and the failure of the United States Congress to put real gun safety legislation, closing the loophole, the Jim Clyburn rule that says that, if you don't get the review and approval by ATF, you do not get the gun. You have to wait until you get the approval from ATF, which may be trying to determine whether this person with multiple problems, mental health or background issues, doesn't need to get a gun and then ultimately go kill their spouse, their children, their neighbors, their family members or strangers.

So it is my belief today that this health disparities debate is crucial, and we should come away from here recognizing that obesity, the issues of mental health and HIV/AIDS can be, with great investment, researched for cures, or cancer that proliferates in our community, triple negative breast cancer, legislation that I have put forward and have gotten passed about that impact. But it is the gun violence that we are doing absolutely nothing about. The disparities and the impact on minority communities is atrocious.

I want to close simply by saying the word or the acronym LGBTQ community. I want to say it over and over again, because I think it is shameful that, in our debate, in our recognition of the tragedy of Orlando, that we don't acknowledge the horrific hate crime and the hatefulness against that community. As I stand here, that community is diverse, and there are African Americans who are LGBTQ.

So I would ask that, as we move forward this week, we will be reminded of this hatefulness and we will have a cure. We will be reminded of this violence, and we will have a cure. That cure, first of all, will be to restrain the use of assault weapons and these weapons of war-type bullets that men and women in the United States military say have no business on the streets of America.

I believe, Congresswoman, that health disparities are an important wall and division to overcome. I thank the gentlewoman for having this Special Order to ensure that we will confront these issues and try to save lives.

Racial disparities refer to the variation in rates of disease occurrence and disabilities between socioeconomic and/or geographically defined population groups.

I want to focus on four areas of racial disparities in health that impact African Americans that we can do something about: 1. Obesity; 2. Mental Health; 3. HIV/AIDS; and 4. Gun Violence.

African Americans, based on 2015 Census data, comprise 13.2 percent of the U.S. population, or about 42 million people.

Socioeconomic status, in turn, is linked to mental health: People who are impoverished, homeless, incarcerated or have substance abuse problems are at higher risk for poor mental health.

As the founder and chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I am especially concerned about the childhood obesity epidemic among African-American youth.

More than 40 percent of African American teenagers are overweight, and nearly 25 percent are obese.

The percentage of children aged 6–11 years in the United States who were obese increased from 7 percent in 1980 to nearly 18 percent in 2012.

African American youth are consuming less nutritious foods such as fruits and vegetables and are not getting enough physical exercise.

This combination has led to an epidemic of obesity, which directly contributes to numerous deadly or life-threatening diseases or conditions, including the following: Hypertension; Dyslipidemia (High Cholesterol or High Triglyceride Levels); Type 2 Diabetes; Coronary Heart Disease; Stroke; Gallbladder Disease; Osteoarthritis; Asthma, bronchitis, sleep apnea, and other respiratory problems; Cancer (Breast, Colon, and Endometrial).

When ethnicity and income are considered, the picture is even more troubling.

African American youngsters from low-income families have a higher risk for obesity than those from higher-income families.

Efforts such as the Let's Move! Campaign by the First Lady are pivotal to ensuring that communities are able to provide healthy snacks and food and encourage healthier decisions.

Since the mid-1970s, the prevalence of overweight and obesity has increased sharply for both adults and children.

Non-Hispanic blacks have the highest age-adjusted rates of obesity at 47.8 percent.

According to the CDC, 37.6 percent of men and 56.9 percent of women twenty years and over are obese.

Every year, more than 40 million Americans struggle with mental illness.

African American men are as likely as anyone else to have mental illness, but they are less likely to get help.

Racism continues to have an impact on the mental health of African Americans.

Negative stereotypes and attitudes of rejection have decreased, but continue to occur with measurable, adverse consequences.

Historical and contemporary instances of negative treatment have led to a mistrust of authorities, many of whom are not seen as having the best interests of African Americans in mind.

According to the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health:

Adult blacks are 20 percent more likely to report serious psychological distress than adult whites.

Adult blacks living below poverty are two to three times more likely to report serious psychological distress than those living above poverty.

Adult blacks are more likely to have feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and worthlessness than are adult whites.

How African Americans view mental health over generations is a major barrier to accessing mental health services and treatment.

In 1996, MHA commissioned a national survey on clinical depression.

The survey explored the barriers preventing Americans seeking treatment and gauged overall knowledge of and attitudes toward depression.

This survey revealed that:

63 percent of African Americans believe that depression is a personal weakness.

This is significantly higher than the overall survey average of 54 percent.

Only 31 percent of African Americans believed that depression was a ''health problem.''

African Americans were more likely to believe that depression was ''normal'' than the overall survey average.

56 percent believed that depression was a normal part of aging.

45 percent believed it was normal for a mother to feel depressed for at least two weeks after giving birth.

40 percent believed it was normal for a husband or wife to feel depressed for more than a year after the death of a spouse.

Many of these problems persist to this day. As Doctor William Lawson of Howard University (and MHA's District of Columbia affiliate) pointed out in an NPR interview in 2012, ''Many African-Americans have a lot of negative feelings about, or not even aware of mental health services.

The ''Mental Health: Culture, Race and Ethnicity Supplement'' to the 1999 U.S. Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health, states the following:

African-American physicians are five times more likely than white physicians to treat African-American patients.

African-American patients who see African-American physicians rate their physicians' styles of interaction as more participatory.

African Americans seeking help for a mental health problem would have trouble finding African American mental health professionals: In 1998, only 2 percent of psychiatrists, 2 percent of psychologists and 4 percent of social workers said they were African Americans.

The public mental health safety net of hospitals, community health centers, and local health departments are vital to many African Americans, especially to those in high-need populations.

African Americans of all ages are underrepresented in outpatient treatment but over-represented in inpatient treatment.

Few African-American children receive treatment in privately funded psychiatric hospitals, but many receive treatment in publicly funded residential treatment centers for emotionally disturbed youth.

In 2012, there were an estimated 356,268 inmates with severe mental illnesses in U.S. prisons and jails.

There were only 35,000 mentally ill individuals in state psychiatric hospitals.

The report, ''The Treatment of Persons With Mental Illness in Prisons and Jails,'' jails ''in 44 of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, a prison or jail in that state holds more individuals with serious mental illness than the largest remaining state psychiatric hospital.'' the report said.

African Americans today are overrepresented in our jails and prisons.

People of color account for 60 percent of the prison population.

The Stanford Law School Three Strikes Project's report stated that, ''over the past 15 years, the number of mentally ill people in prison in California has almost doubled.''

In California, 45 percent of state prison inmates have been treated for severe mental illness within the past year.

African Americans also account for 14 percent of regular drug users, but for 37 percent of drug arrests.

Illicit drug use is frequently associated with self-medication among people with mental illnesses.

In January 2014, the Texas Observer reported that, of the 9,000 inmates in Harris County Jail more than 25 percent take medication for mental illness, which means that the jail treats more psychiatric patients than all 10 of Texas' state-run public mental hospitals combined.

The passage of the Affordable Care Act created access to health care for those who purchase health insurance and for the poor living in states that are participating in the Medicaid component of the ACA.

Disparities can occur, if physicians do not refer patients with signs of mental illness for proper treatment or if referred patients do not seek out treatment.

Disparities in access to care and treatment for mental illnesses have also persisted over time.

As noted by the Office of Minority Health:

Only 8.7 percent of adult blacks, versus 16 percent of adult whites, received treatment for mental health concerns in 2007–2008.

Only 6.2 percent of adult blacks, versus 13.9 percent of adult whites, received medications for mental health concerns during 2008.

While 68.7 percent of adult whites with a major depressive episode in 2009 received treatment, only 53.2 percent of adult blacks did.

The Affordable Care Act will have an impact on this gap by 2016.

Depression and other mental illness can be deadly if left untreated.

Suicide is the third leading cause of death among African Americans 15 to 24 years old.

Untreated mental illness can also make African American men more vulnerable to substance abuse, homelessness, incarceration, and homicide.

African Americas are the racial/ethnic group most affected by HIV in the United States.

According to the CDC, 44 percent (19,540) of estimated new HIV Diagnoses in the United States were among African Americans, who comprise 12 percent of the US population.

HIV/AIDs are now the leading cause of death among African Americans ages 25 to 44—ahead of heart disease, accidents, cancer, and homicide.

At the end of 2012, an estimated 496,500 African Americans were living with HIV, representing 41 percent of all Americans living with the Virus.

Of African Americans living with HIV, around 14 percent do not know they are infected.

African Americans accounted for an estimated 44 percent of all new HIV infections among adults and adolescents (aged 13 years or older) in 2010, despite representing only 12 percent of the U.S. population.

HIV is a sexually transmitted disease or STD; it is also spread through intravenous drug use.

HIV infections spread through sharing of needles has declined with needle programs, while the STD rates of infection among African Americans has increased at rate higher than any other ethnic group.

Have their HIV status checked—not once but annually.

Know the HIV status of sexual partner.

If HIV positive: Know how to get on antiviral medication, 2 small pills taken each day, and stay on them.

Where to go for information if you or your partner is HIV positive.

In 2010, men accounted for 70 percent (14,700) of the estimated 20,900 new HIV infections among all adult and adolescent African Americans.

The estimated rate of new HIV infections for African American men (103.6/100,000 population) was 7 times that of white men, twice that of Latino men, and nearly 3 times that of African American women.

In 2010, African American gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men represented an estimated 72 percent (10,600) of new infections among all African American men and 36 percent of an estimated 29,800 new HIV infections among all gay and bisexual men.

Of those gay and bisexual men, 39 percent (4,321) were young men aged 13 to 24.

According to the CDC, the numbers of new HIV diagnoses among African American women fell 42 percent between 2005 to 2014, but it is still high compared to women of other races/ethnicities.

Most new HIV infections among African American women (87 percent; 5,300) are attributed to heterosexual contact.

In 2012, there were 72,010 Texans living with HIV/AIDS.

Texas has the 10th highest number of HIV diagnoses in 2013 and ranks 18th for deaths from HIV.

Currently 14 percent of the people living with HIV are undiagnosed and only 30 percent of the people with HIV are virally suppressed, which means that 70 percent of the people who are ill are not on medication that can help limit their ability to infect others.

HIV is an unnecessarily disproportionate burden on the African American and Latino community.

There is a wall of misinformation about the illness and an uncomfortable silence regarding the need to speak about the illness not only to the young, but also the older persons.

When treatments were first developed in the 1990s they had lots of side effects that made patients very ill.

Few talk about the advances in HIV treatment that now involve taking 2 small pills a day with the result leaving patients feeling healthy and able to engage in life's normal activities.

The virus count for those who take their medication is so low that it often does not register in tests.

This does not mean that people are cured, but it does mean that there is no reason not to get tested so that you know if you are in need of treatment.

Anyone can become infected—so it is up to all of us to educate our families, neighbors, co-workers and friends about getting tested.

There are some insurance company practices that have a detrimental impact on the ability of people with HIV to enroll in qualified health insurance plans.

In states like Texas that are not fully participating in the Affordable Care Act's Medicaid

expansion this is especially problematic for HIV patients who are poor.

Some states allow insurance carriers to post misleading or intentionally vague formularies on market place websites or excluding essential HIV medications from drug formularies and impressing high cost sharing.

Out of pocket medication cost each month should be capped.

Mrs. BEATTY. Madam Speaker, I thank Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE for reminding us that we should be done with guns like the assault weapons. I thank the gentlewoman for reminding us of the impact that health disparities have on our communities in this Nation.

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Madam Speaker, I have two documents that will be entered into the RECORD.

The first document is from Congresswoman EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON. I would like to state for the RECORD that she was the first nurse to serve in this United States Congress. And the second is a portion of the Special Feature on Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities: 30 Years After the Heckler Report.

SPECIAL FEATURE ON RACIAL AND ETHNIC HEALTH DISPARITIES: 30 YEARS AFTER THE HECKLER REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The 1985 Report of the Secretary's Task Force on Black and Minority Health, released by then Secretary of Health and Human Services Margaret Heckler, documented significant disparities in the burden of illness and mortality experienced by blacks and other minority groups in the U.S. population compared with whites (41). The report laid out an ambitious agenda, including improving minority access to high-quality health care, expanding health promotion and health education outreach activities, increasing the number of minority health care providers, and enhancing federal and state data collection activities to better report on minority health issues. In the 30 years since the Heckler Report, national efforts to improve minority health through outreach, programming, and monitoring have included the formation of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Minority Health in 1986 (42); the annual National Healthcare Quality and Disparities Reports first issued in 2003 (43); the adoption of disparities elimination as an overarching goal of Healthy People 2010 (44); and most recently, an HHS Action Plan to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities—a comprehensive federal commitment to reduce and eventually eliminate disparities in health and health care (45).

Race is a social construct influenced by a complex set of factors (46,47). Because of the complexity and difficulty in conceptualizing and defining race, as well as the increasing representation of racial and ethnic subgroups in the United States, racial classification and data collection systems continue to evolve and expand. In 1977, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) required that all federal data collection efforts collect data on a minimum of four race groups (American Indian or Alaskan Native, black, Asian or Pacific Islander, and white) and did not allow the reporting of more than one race (48). In 1997, in response to growing interest in more detailed reporting on race and ethnicity, OMB mandated data collection for a minimum of five race groups, splitting Asian or Pacific Islander into two categories (Asian, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander) (49). In addition, the 1997 standards allowed respondents to report more than one race. A minimum of two categories for data collection on ethnicity, ''Hispanic or Latino'' and ''Not Hispanic or Latino,'' were also required under the 1997 OMB standards. Consequently, whereas the Heckler Report primarily documented black-white differences in health and mortality due to data limitations, this Special Feature is able to report on more detailed racial and ethnic groups. For example, Figures 19–21 display trends in infant mortality and low-risk cesarean section deliveries, and the current data on preterm births for five Hispanic-origin groups.

At the time of the Heckler Report, 22.3% of the population were considered racial or ethnic minorities (Table 1). Current Census (2014) estimates identify 37.9% of the population as racial or ethnic minorities (50). In 2014, Hispanic persons, who may be of any race, comprised 17.4% of the U.S. population. Non-Hispanic multiple race persons were 2.0% of the population. For the single race groups, non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native persons were 0.7%, non-Hispanic Asian persons were 5.3%, non-Hispanic black persons were 12.4%, non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander persons were 0.2%, and non-Hispanic white persons were 62.1% of the U.S. population in 2014 (50).

Understanding the demographic and socioeconomic composition of U.S. racial and ethnic groups is important because these characteristics are associated with health risk factors, disease prevalence, and access to care, which in turn drive health care utilization and expenditures. Non-Hispanic white persons are, on average, older than those in other racial and ethnic groups, with a median age of 43.1 years, and Hispanic individuals are the youngest, with a median age of 28.5 years in 2014 (50). About one-quarter of black only persons (26.2%) and Hispanic persons (23.6%) lived in poverty compared with 10.1% of non-Hispanic white only persons and 12.0% of Asian only persons in 2014 (51). Non-Hispanic black only children and Hispanic children were particularly likely to live in poverty (37.3% and 31.9%, respectively, in 2014) (52). However, Hispanic individuals are often found to have quite favorable health and mortality patterns in comparison with non-Hispanic white persons and particularly with non-Hispanic black persons, despite having a disadvantaged socioeconomic profile—a pattern termed the epidemiologic paradox (53).

HHS defines a racial or ethnic health disparity as ''a particular type of health difference that is closely linked with social, economic, and/or environmental disadvantage. Health disparities adversely affect groups of people who have systematically experienced greater obstacles to health based on their racial or ethnic group'' (54). There are many different ways to measure racial and ethnic differences in health and mortality, which can lead to different conclusions (55–58). This Special Feature on Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities (Special Feature) uses the maximal rate difference, one of three overall measures used in Healthy People 2020 to measure differences among groups of people (see Technical Notes). The maximal rate difference is an overall measure of health disparities calculated as the absolute difference between the highest and lowest group rates in the population for a given characteristic (59). The identification of groups that experience the highest and lowest rates in this Special Feature was based on observed rates and was not tested for a statistically significant difference against other rates. Ties in highest or lowest rates were resolved by examining decimal places. With respect to changes in health disparities over time, tracking the maximal rate difference over time enables one to determine whether the absolute difference between the highest and lowest group rates is increasing, decreasing, or stable.

The Special Feature charts that follow provide detailed comparisons of key measures of mortality, natality, health conditions, health behaviors, and health care access and utilization, by race, race and ethnicity, or by detailed Hispanic origin, depending on data availability. A majority of the 10 graphs in this year's Special Feature present trends in health from 1999–2014. Results indicate that trends in health were generally positive for the overall population and several graphs illustrate success in narrowing gaps in health by racial and ethnic group. Differences in life expectancy, infant mortality, cigarette smoking among women, influenza vaccinations among those aged 65 and over, and health insurance coverage narrowed among the racial and ethnic groups. For example, the absolute difference in infant mortality rates between infants born to non-Hispanic black mothers (highest rate) and infants born to non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander mothers (lowest rate) narrowed between 1999–2014. Differences by racial and ethnic group in the prevalence of high blood pressure and smoking among adult men remained stable throughout the study period, with non-Hispanic black adults more likely to have high blood pressure than adults in other racial and ethnic groups throughout the period, and non-Hispanic black and non-Hispanic white males more likely to be current smokers than Hispanic and non-Hispanic Asian men. For low-risk cesarean sections, influenza vaccinations among adults aged 18–64, and unmet dental care needs, the gap widened among the racial and ethnic groups between 1999–2014.

Despite improvements over time in many of the health measures presented in this Special Feature, disparities by race and ethnicity were found in the most recent year for all 10 measures, indicating that although progress has been made in the 30 years since the Heckler Report, elimination of disparities in health and access to health care has yet to be achieved.

LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH

In 2014, life expectancy was longer for Hispanic men and women than for non-Hispanic white or non-Hispanic black men and women.

Life expectancy is a measure often used to gauge the overall health of a population. Life expectancy at birth represents the average number of years that a group of infants would live if the group were to experience the age-specific death rates present in the year of birth. Differences in life expectancy among various demographic subpopulations, including racial and ethnic groups, may reflect subpopulation differences in a range of factors such as socioeconomic status, access to medical care, and the prevalence of specific risk factors in a particular subpopulation (60,61).

During 1980–2014, life expectancy at birth in the United States increased from 70.0 to 76.4 years for males and from 77.4 to 81.2 years for females (Table 15, and data table for Figure 18). During this period, life expectancy at birth for males and females was longest for white persons and shortest for black persons. For both males and females, racial differences in life expectancy at birth narrowed, but persisted during 1980–2014. Life expectancy at birth was 6.9 years longer for white males than for black males in 1980, and this difference narrowed to 4.2 years in 2014.

In 1980, life expectancy at birth was 5.6 years longer for white females than for black females, and this difference narrowed to 3.0 years in 2014.

In 2014, Hispanic males and females had the longest life expectancy at birth, and non-Hispanic black males and females had the shortest. In 2014, life expectancy at birth was 7.2 years longer for Hispanic males than for non-Hispanic black males and 5.9 years longer for Hispanic females than for non-Hispanic black females.

INFANT MORTALITY

During 1999–2013, infant mortality rates were highest among infants born to non-Hispanic black women (11.11 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in 2013).

Infant mortality, the death of a baby before his or her first birthday, is an important indicator of the health and wellbeing of a country. It not only measures the risk of infant death but it is used as an indicator of maternal health, community health status, and availability of quality health services and medical technology (62,63).

The infant mortality rate in the United States decreased from 7.04 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in 1999 to 6.75 in 2007, and then decreased at a faster rate to 5.96 in 2013. Trends in infant mortality rates during 1999–2013 varied among the five racial and ethnic groups. During 1999–2013, infants born to non-Hispanic black mothers experienced the highest rates of infant mortality (11.11 in 2013) and infants born to non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander mothers experienced the lowest rates (3.90 in 2013). The difference between the highest and lowest infant mortality rates among the five racial and ethnic groups was stable from 1999 to 2006 and then narrowed from 2006 to 2013. The difference between the highest (non-Hispanic black) and lowest (non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander) infant mortality rates was 9.41 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1999, compared with 7.21 in 2013.

For infants born to Hispanic mothers, the infant mortality rate remained stable during 1999–2008 (5.71 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in 1999) and then decreased to 5.00 in 2013. During 1999–2013, the infant mortality rate for Hispanic infants varied by the mother's Hispanic-origin group. Throughout this period, infants born to Puerto Rican mothers experienced the highest mortality rates. In all years except 2009, infants born to Cuban mothers and those born to Central and South American mothers experienced the lowest mortality rates at alternate times throughout 1999–2013. The difference between the highest (Puerto Rican) and lowest (Cuban) infant mortality rates among Hispanic-origin groups narrowed from 3.71 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1999 to 2.88 in 2013. During 1999–2013, the difference in infant mortality rates was narrower for mothers in the Hispanic-origin groups than for mothers in the five racial and ethnic groups.

PRETERM BIRTHS

In 2014, non-Hispanic black mothers had the highest percentage of preterm births of the five racial and ethnic groups, and Puerto Rican mothers had the highest percentage of preterm births of the five Hispanic-origin groups.

An infant's gestational age is an important predictor of his or her survival and subsequent health (64–70). Preterm birth prior to 37 weeks gestation affects infant mortality rates and racial and ethnic disparities in infant mortality (Figure 19) (71). The degree of prematurity matters—infants born prior to 32 weeks gestation are at greatest risk of death during infancy, with the risk of infant death decreasing as gestational age increases (72).

In 2014, 7.7% of singleton births occurred before 37 weeks of gestation; 5.7% at 34–36 weeks; 0.8% at 32–33 weeks gestation; and 1.2% before 32 weeks (data table for Figure 20). In 2014, among the five racial and ethnic groups, non-Hispanic black women had the highest percentage of singleton births before 37 weeks (11.1%) and non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander women had the lowest percentage (6.8%). Non-Hispanic black women also had the highest percentage of singleton preterm births at each preterm gestational age. The difference between the highest (non-Hispanic black) and lowest (non-Hispanic Asian or Pacific Islander) percentages of singleton preterm births among the five racial and ethnic groups was 4.3 percentage points (before 37 weeks), 2.0 percentage points (34–36 weeks), 0.6 percentage points (32–33 weeks), and 1.7 percentage points (before 32 weeks).

Among Hispanic-origin groups in 2014, Puerto Rican mothers had the highest percentage of singleton births before 37 weeks (9.1%) and Cuban mothers had the lowest percentage (7.2%). The difference between the highest (Puerto Rican) and lowest (Cuban) percentages of singleton preterm births among the Hispanic-origin groups was 1.9 percentage points (before 37 weeks) and 1.3 percentage points (34–36 weeks). Central and South American mothers had the lowest percentage of singleton births before 34 weeks. For preterm births before 34 weeks, the difference between the highest (Puerto Rican) and lowest (Central and South American) percentages was 0.2 percentage points (32–33 weeks) and 0.6 percentage points (before 32 weeks).

LOW-RISK BIRTHS DELIVERED BY CESAREAN SECTION

During 1999–2014 non-Hispanic black mothers experienced the highest percentage of low-risk cesarean deliveries among the five racial and ethnic groups (29.9% in 2014); Cuban mothers experienced the highest percentage of low-risk cesarean deliveries among the five Hispanic-origin groups (41.49–6 in 2014).

Cesarean deliveries comprise approximately one-third of all births in the United States (32.2% in 2014) and can place mothers and infants at increased risk for poor health outcomes (74). Over the past decade, professional medical groups have attempted to reduce low-risk cesarean deliveries defined as cesarean deliveries among full term (37 or more completed weeks of gestation), singleton, vertex (head first) births to women giving birth for the first time (75,76).

The percentage of low-risk births that were delivered by cesarean section increased from 19.5% to 26.6% during 1999–2005, stabilized during 2005–2009, and then decreased to 26.0% in 2014 (data table for Figure 21). Throughout the period 1999–2014, non-Hispanic black mothers experienced the highest percentage of low-risk cesarean deliveries (29.9% in 2014) among the five racial and ethnic groups, while non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native mothers experienced the lowest percentage (21.5% in 2014). The difference between the highest (non-Hispanic black) and lowest (non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native) percentages widened from 4.8 percentage points in 1999 to 8.4 percentage points in 2014.

Among Hispanic mothers, the percentage of low-risk births that were delivered by cesarean section increased from 18.7% to 24.6% during 1999–2004, increased at a slower rate from 2004–2009, and then remained stable during 2009–2014 (data table for Figure 21). Throughout the period 1999–2014 Cuban mothers experienced the highest percentage of low-risk cesarean deliveries (41.4% in 2014), while Mexican mothers experienced the lowest percentage (24.1% in 2014). Among Hispanic-origin groups, the difference between the highest and lowest percentages of low-risk cesarean deliveries was stable during 1999–2002, widened sharply during 2002–2006, and then narrowed during 2006–2014. The difference between the highest (Cuban) and lowest (Mexican) percentages was 11.7 percentage points in 1999, 21.5 percentage points in 2006, and 17.3 percentage points in 2014.

CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS WITH OBESITY

In 2011–2014 for children and adolescents aged 2–19 years, Hispanic children and adolescents had the highest prevalence of obesity and non-Hispanic Asian children had the lowest prevalence.

Childhood obesity is a serious public health challenge in the United States and many other industrialized nations in the world (Figure 8) (19,77,78). Excess body weight in children is associated with excess morbidity in childhood and excess body weight in adulthood (13,14). Obesity among children and adolescents is defined as a body mass index at or above the sex- and age-specific 95th percentile of the CDC growth charts (15). Between 1999–2000 and 2013–2014, the percentage of children and adolescents aged 2–19 with obesity increased from 13.9% to 17.2% (79). However, among youth aged 2–19, the prevalence of obesity did not change from 2003–2004 through 2013–2014 (79).

In 2011–2014 for children and adolescents aged 2–19, the percentage with obesity was highest for Hispanic children and adolescents and lowest for non-Hispanic Asian children and adolescents. For those aged 2–19, the difference between the highest (Hispanic) and lowest (non-Hispanic Asian) percentages was 13.3 percentage points.

For children aged 2–5, the percentage with obesity was highest for Hispanic children and lowest for non-Hispanic white children. (The estimate for non-Hispanic Asian children aged 2–5 was not stable and is not shown.) The difference between the highest (Hispanic) and lowest (non-Hispanic white) percentages was 10.4 percentage points for children aged 2–5. For children aged 6–11, the percentage with obesity was highest for Hispanic children and lowest for non-Hispanic Asian children. For children aged 6–11, the difference between the highest (Hispanic) and lowest (non-Hispanic Asian) percentages was 15.2 percentage points.

In 2011–2014 for adolescents aged 12–19, the percentage with obesity was highest for Hispanic adolescents and lowest for non-Hispanic Asian adolescents. The difference between the highest (Hispanic) and lowest (non-Hispanic Asian) percentages was 13.4 percentage points for adolescents aged 12–19 years.

HYPERTENSION

In 2011–2014, non-Hispanic black men and women were the most likely to have hypertension compared with adults in the other racial and ethnic groups.

Hypertension is an important risk factor for cardiovascular disease, stroke, kidney failure, and other health conditions (80,81). In 2011–2014, 84.1% of adults with hypertension were aware of their status, and 76.1% were taking medication to lower their blood pressure (82). Despite improvement in increasing the awareness, treatment, and control of hypertension, diagnosis and treatment of hypertension among minority groups remains a challenge (83).

Hypertension is defined as reporting taking antihypertensive medication and/or having a measured systolic blood pressure of at least 140 mm Hg or a measured diastolic blood pressure of at least 90 mm Hg. The age-adjusted percentage of adults aged 20 and over with hypertension was stable during 1999–2014 (30.8% in 2013–2014) (data table for Figure 23). During 1999–2014, non-Hispanic black adults had the highest percentage with

hypertension among the three racial and ethnic groups (42.7%, age-adjusted in 2013–2014), while with the exception of 1999–2000, adults of Mexican origin had the lowest percentage with hypertension (28.8%, age-adjusted in 2013–2014). The difference between the highest and lowest age-adjusted percentages of adults with hypertension among the three racial and ethnic groups was stable during 1999–2014; in 2013–2014, the difference between the highest (non-Hispanic black) and lowest (Mexican-origin) percentages was 13.9 percentage points.

In 2011–2014, the age-adjusted percentage of adult men and women with hypertension was similar (31.0% and 29.7%, respectively, data table for Figure 23). The difference between the highest (non-Hispanic black) and lowest (Hispanic) age-adjusted percentages of men with hypertension among the four racial and ethnic groups was 14.7 percentage points; for women, the difference between the highest (non-Hispanic black) and lowest (non-Hispanic Asian) was 19.0 percentage points in 2011–2014.

CURRENT CIGARETTE SMOKING

During 1999–2014, differences in cigarette smoking between racial and ethnic groups were larger for women than for men.

Smoking causes more than 480,000 deaths each year, accounting for about one in five deaths in the United States (84). Smokers are more likely to develop heart disease, stroke, and cancer. Smoking also increases the risk for diabetes, cataracts, rheumatoid arthritis, and stillbirth (85).

During 1999–2014, the age-adjusted percentage of adults aged 18 and over who were current cigarette smokers decreased from 25.2% to 19.0% for men and from 21.6% to 15.1% for women (data table for Figure 24). Within each of the four racial and ethnic groups, men were more likely to be current cigarette smokers than women.

In 2014 for men, the age-adjusted percentage of current cigarette smokers was highest for non-Hispanic black men (22.0%) and lowest for Hispanic men (13.8%). The difference between the highest and lowest age-adjusted percentages of current cigarette smokers among the four racial and ethnic groups remained stable during 1999–2014 because levels for men in all racial and ethnic groups declined similarly during this period. The difference between the highest (non-Hispanic black) and lowest (Hispanic) percentages for men was 8.2 percentage points in 2014.

For women, non-Hispanic white women consistently had the highest age-adjusted percentage of current cigarette smokers among the four racial and ethnic groups throughout 1999–2014 (18.3% in 2014), while non-Hispanic Asian women had the lowest age-adjusted percentage (5.1% in 2014). For women, the difference between the highest (non-Hispanic white) and lowest (non-Hispanic Asian) percentages narrowed from 17.5 percentage points in 1999 to 13.2 in 2014. During 1999–2014, racial and ethnic differences in cigarette smoking prevalence were larger for women than for men.

INFLUENZA VACCINATION

During 1999–2014, influenza vaccination was highest for those aged 65 and over and lowest for those aged 18–64, for all racial and ethnic groups.

Influenza is a serious illness that can lead to hospitalization and sometimes death. Influenza vaccination is especially important for people who are at risk of getting seriously ill from influenza, including those with chronic conditions, older adults, and young children.

The percentage of adults aged 18–64 who received an influenza vaccination in the past 12 months remained stable during 1999–2006 and then increased to 35.8% in 2014 (data table for Figure 25). This pattern was present for all racial and ethnic groups. Decreases in influenza vaccination coverage in 2005 were related to a vaccine shortage (86). For those aged 18–64, no racial and ethnic group was consistently the most likely to receive influenza vaccination during 1999–2014. In 2014, non-Hispanic Asian adults had the highest percentage for influenza vaccination receipt (41.3%) and Hispanic adults had the lowest percentage (27.9%). For adults aged 18–64, the difference between the highest and lowest percentages of adults receiving an influenza vaccination among the four racial and ethnic groups widened from 6.9 percentage points in 1999 (non-Hispanic white compared with Hispanic) to 13.4 in 2014 (non-Hispanic Asian compared with Hispanic).

For adults aged 65 and over, the percentage who received an influenza vaccination in the past 12 months increased from 65.7% to 70.1% during 1999–2014. During this period, trends in influenza vaccination coverage varied by racial and ethnic group, and no racial and ethnic group was consistently the most or least likely to receive influenza vaccination. In 2014, non-Hispanic Asian adults had the highest percentage for receipt of influenza vaccination (72.7%) and non-Hispanic black adults had the lowest (57.4%). For adults age 65 and over, the difference between the highest (non-Hispanic Asian) and lowest (non-Hispanic black) percentages of older adults receiving an influenza vaccination among the four racial and ethnic groups was stable during 1999–2003 and then narrowed to 15.3 percentage points in 2014.

HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

During 1999 through the first 6 months of 2015 among adults aged 18–64, lack of health insurance coverage was highest among Hispanic adults.

Health insurance is a major determinant of access to health care. Children are less likely to be uninsured than adults aged 18–64 because they are more likely to qualify for public coverage, primarily Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) (see data table for Figure 26 for estimates for children) (26,87). Passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2010 (38) authorized states to expand Medicaid eligibility (88) and to establish the health insurance marketplace in 2014.

For adults aged 18–64, the percentage without coverage increased from 17.9% to 20.5% during 1999–2013, and then decreased to 12.7% in the first 6 months of 2015 (36). During this period, the trend for lack of coverage varied by racial and ethnic group.

During 1999–June 2015, Hispanic adults aged 18–64 had the highest percentage without coverage (27.2% in the first 6 months of 2015), and non-Hispanic white adults aged 18–64 had the lowest, except in the first 6 months of 2015, when non-Hispanic Asian adults had the lowest percentage without coverage.

The difference between the highest and lowest percentages of adults aged 18–64 without health insurance among the four racial and ethnic groups narrowed from 1999–June 2015. This difference was 24.9 percentage points in 1999 (Hispanic adults compared with non-Hispanic white adults) and 19.9 percentage points in the first 6 months of 2015 (Hispanic adults compared with non-Hispanic Asian adults).

DIFFICULTY ACCESSING NEEDED DENTAL CARE DUE TO COST

During 1999–2014 among adults aged 18–64, nonreceipt of needed dental care due to cost was lowest among non-Hispanic Asian adults.

Oral health is integral to general health and wellbeing, and forgoing needed dental health care can have serious health effects (89). In general, fewer adults have dental coverage than medical coverage, and dental coverage tends to be less comprehensive (90–92). In 2012, 44% of dental expenditures among adults aged 18–64 were paid out of pocket, a higher out-of-pocket percentage than for any other type of personal health care expenditure (93).

The percentage of adults aged 18–64 who did not receive needed dental care in the past 12 months due to cost increased from 9.3% to 17.3% during 1999–2010, and then decreased to 12.6% in 2014 (data table for Figure 27).

During 1999–2014, non-Hispanic Asian adults aged 18–64 had the lowest percentage of not receiving needed dental care due to cost (6.3% in 2014) among the four racial and ethnic groups. No racial and ethnic group consistently had the highest percentage of not receiving needed dental care due to cost during 1999–2014. The difference between the highest and lowest percentages of adults not receiving needed dental care due to cost among the four racial and ethnic groups widened during 1999–2010, and then remained stable from 2010–2014 for those aged 18–64. This difference was 5.9 percentage points in 1999 (non-Hispanic black compared with non-Hispanic Asian) and 9.4 percentage points in 2014 (Hispanic compared with non-Hispanic Asian).

Mrs. BEATTY. Madam Speaker, we have heard a lot tonight. We have heard the call to action by Members. We have heard the relationship to poverty in health disparities, to the socioeconomic conditions of African Americans to health disparities. We have heard the relationship to death by guns to health disparities. We have heard the data and the statistics about the mortality rates from diseases like cardiovascular disease, the leading killer for women and African American women and men. We have heard about the effect of untreated diabetes and how that affects African Americans.

The list goes on and on, Madam Speaker. I could tell you whether it is obesity, whether it is stroke—and certainly as a stroke survivor, I understand firsthand the value and the importance of quality, affordable health care—that there are some Federal programs that actually work and bridge the gap. I could say wonderful things about the United States Health and Human Services Office of Minority Affairs that provides data and research and services for us.

But before I ask my colleague, Madam Speaker, to say a few words, I ran across something that was said, in my opinion, by one of the most powerful individuals that will go down in current history. And 20 years from now, Madam Speaker, if I were standing here talking about his legacy, health care would be one of them. Let me conclude my part with these brief words that he quoted on April 1 of this year:

''Our Nation was built on an enduring belief that we are all created equal—regardless of the color of our skin or the station into which we were born. From the ambitions we hold for ourselves to the way we take care of our health, this founding premise serves as the guidepost of our national life.''

Yet, to this day, Madam Speaker, minorities continue to experience the

healthcare gaps that leave their communities our communities.

I will add this to his ending that, Madam Speaker, tonight, the Congressional Black Caucus asks that we recommit to taking action to overcome these disparities. And that person who will leave a great legacy for these words is no other than our President of these United States, President Barack Obama.

And now as we begin to close our hour, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES). I could not think of a better colleague, a better coanchor, to come and share with us our call to action.

My colleague and classmate, Congressman JEFFRIES, is a scholar, someone who sits back, listens, and then comes with resolve. He is someone who is no stranger to this process of telling it like it is. He is someone who has spent a lot of time and years with his experience to speak for the individuals of his district. But tonight, Madam Speaker, I asked him to speak for the Congressional Black Caucus. I asked him to close us out on our call for action as we talk about the health disparities in our African American communities.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Madam Speaker, I thank my good friend, the distinguished gentlewoman from Ohio, and our phenomenal anchor for this CBC Special Order hour today and throughout the second session of the 114th Congress. It has been an honor and a privilege to work closely with her. She has done such a phenomenal job, not just on behalf of the people she represents in the great city of Columbus, Ohio, but all throughout the Nation in her various roles, and certainly in her leadership in the Congressional Black Caucus.

It is with a heavy heart that I stand on the floor of the House of Representatives today and, with great sadness, acknowledge the pain and the suffering and extend my condolences to those who have suffered this great tragedy in Orlando, Florida, the worst mass shooting in the history of the United States of America.

It is a complicated shooting. We understand that it most likely is an act of terror, a hate crime of unspeakable proportions. There are indications that the shooter may have some degree of mental illness and a history of domestic abuse. The shooter appeared to have been, in some measure, on the FBI's radar.

But you can add all those things up and there is still something that is missing that we here in Congress have the capacity to deal with, and that is the fact that one individual was able to purchase a weapon of mass destruction—which should be reserved for war, not the hunting of human beings in this great democratic Republic—and inflict death on 49 individuals and maim in ways that are inhumane to more than 50 others.

Martin Luther King, Jr., once said: ''In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.''

During the 114th Congress, there have been more than 100 mass shootings. We often come to the floor of the House of Representatives and the Speaker or one of his designees stands at the rostrum and asks us, as Members of the House, to stand in a moment of silence. And then we go on with business as usual, having done nothing about the tremendous gun violence problem that we have in America.

The rest of the world is looking around and saying: What are they doing in the United States of America? Five percent of the world's population, 50 percent of the world's guns. It is estimated that there are more than 300 million guns circulating throughout this great land. The FBI and local law enforcement can't tell you where the overwhelming majority of them are because of legislative silence and malpractice.

This is an issue, of course, that has great impact on the African American community. Homicides are the leading cause of death through guns of younger African American men. So we in the CBC view it as a public health crisis certainly for our community. I think it is one that all Americans should view as a health crisis for the entire country.

But the thing that is also troubling—and we will have time to deal with this tragedy—is hopefully we will be able to take some commonsense steps in the right direction, including making sure that individuals who are on the terrorist watch list can't purchase weapons of mass destruction. How complicated is that to do?

But the thing that is striking for many of us in the African American community is that, when you look at some of the leading causes of death—heart disease being number one, and then, of course, diabetes and childhood obesity being problematic, certain forms of cancer, HIV/AIDS infection—many of these illnesses, these ailments that plague the neighborhoods that I represent in central Brooklyn, in Bedford-Stuyvesant, in East New York, in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, in Canarsie, and in the west end of Coney Island, are preventable, preventable by better exercise, preventable by dealing with some of the environmental racism that many low-income communities of color have been subjected to, resulting in incredibly high rates of asthma and other forms of respiratory illness, preventable by better diet.

Senator BOOKER recently said to many of us—and this has stuck with me—that more African Americans in the United States of America die as a result of drive-throughs, not drive-bys. That is because the diet, the access to healthy food, is limited. The food deserts within which many African Americans, particularly at the lowest socioeconomic level, are forced to reside in are scandalous.

So we in the Congressional Black Caucus believe that we have to deal with these issues in a more meaningful, comprehensive fashion.

I am thankful that back at home in the west end of Coney Island, Coney Island Cathedral, one of the most important religious institutions in Brooklyn, is actively engaged in a public health campaign to deal with diabetes and heart disease and many of the other ailments that result from a poor diet that exists, a lack of access to healthy food in the Black community. It is a campaign that we want to take across the Nation.

We are thankful for the work that has been done by the Congressional Black Caucus and by President Obama through his leadership of the Affordable Care Act. We now know that over 20 million previously uninsured Americans now have access to quality, affordable health care—disproportionately African American.

That is a positive step in the right direction. But instead of trying to dismantle this monumental step forward, as House Republicans have attempted to do more than 60 times over the last few years, they have a clinical obsession with a law that has been declared constitutional—not once, but twice—by the United States Supreme Court.

Let's figure out ways to come together as a nation, despite our racial, religious, and ethnic differences, to deal with the disparities that exist in the African American community and beyond. And let us come together as a Congress and as a nation to deal with the scourge of hate, in its most recent form, directed at the LGBT community down in Orlando in such a horrific and invidious fashion.

We are better than this. We can do much better here in the United States Congress. The Congressional Black Caucus is here to lead the way on issues, worked in partnership hand in hand with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, if they are just willing to meet us some of the way, to deal with the issues of health disparities in the African American community and deal with the scourge of gun violence that takes our young boys and girls in shocking numbers and also impacts people all across the country.

I thank the distinguished gentlewoman for her leadership and for once again yielding to me and anchoring this Special Order in such a phenomenal way.

Mrs. BEATTY. Madam Speaker, I thank Congressman JEFFRIES.

Madam Speaker, as we close out tonight, I can't think of a better way to take my last 30 seconds than to speak to you and to speak to America and to ask that we take these last seconds in silence as a call to action to prevent the guns being on the street, as a call to action to reduce the health disparities. But in honor of the families in Orlando, we give them our commitment that we stand with them and that I stand with all of my friends and constituents and supporters who belong to the LGBT community.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in honor of the special order hour titled "Bridging the Divide: A Call to Action by the Congressional Black Caucus to Eliminate Racial Health Disparities." I would like to thank my colleagues Congressman HAKEEM JEFFRIES and Congresswoman JOYCE BEATTY for hosting this timely special order.

Historically, racial and ethnic minorities are likely to have the highest uninsured rates and are less likely to receive preventive and quality health care. While the Affordable Care Act has helped minorities afford health insurance and access quality care, there is still a need to eliminate existing disparities. For example, the Department of Health and Human Services is currently working to expand access, end racial and ethnic discrimination, perform outreach to underserved communities, improve workforce diversity, and expand data collection and reporting.

While this is an ambitious plan, it is one that is extremely necessary. Unfortunately, coverage, access, and outreach may not be the only keys to eliminating disparities. Demographic characteristics contribute heavily to racial and ethnic health status. For example, research shows that privately insured African American and Hispanic adults fare worse than privately insured white adults along measures to access and use of care. Unfortunately, African Americans and Hispanics are less likely to have a regular provider than their white counterparts. The same research also showed that privately insured African Americans and Hispanics had less confidence in their ability to pay for medical costs.

Since social determinants like economic stability, education, and environment play such a large role in how we each view and access health care, many of the changes necessary to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities require a much larger plan than just a focus on health-related programs. Reducing disparities in health truly entails addressing racial and ethnic social determinants such as availability of safe housing, affordable food, access to education, job opportunities, community-based resources, public safety, public transportation, and more.

Our society must make many changes before we can truly eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities because that also means eliminating disparities in many other sectors. I thank Congressman JEFFRIES and Congresswoman BEATTY for hosting this poignant special order.

□ 2045

TIBET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. MCSALLY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to revise and extend my remarks and to enter additional materials into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, this week, Washington, D.C., is blessed by the presence of His Holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, who is visiting the city from June 12 through June 16 for several events and meetings. This visit provides us not only the opportunity to listen to the Dalai Lama speak about the modern world and confronting conflict, but also to take a look at the crisis that faces Tibet and the Tibetan people and ask why the United States is not doing more to protect the rights and to support the autonomy of the Tibetan people.

As we seek to comprehend the senseless violence of yesterday's massacre of at least 49 people in Orlando, Florida, and the wounding of more than 50 others—most members of the LGBT community and many of Hispanic descent, all just enjoying their lives on a Saturday night—I can think of no better source of words of wisdom, tolerance, and peace than of His Holiness, the Dalai Lama.

Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD an opinion piece by the Dalai Lama, entitled: ''The Dalai Lama: Why I'm hopeful about the world's future.''

[From the Washington Post, June 13, 2016]

THE DALAI LAMA: WHY I'M HOPEFUL ABOUT THE WORLD'S FUTURE

(By the Dalai Lama)

The 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, is the spiritual leader of Tibet. Since 1959, he has lived in exile in Dharamsala in northern India.

Almost six decades have passed since I left my homeland, Tibet, and became a refugee. Thanks to the kindness of the government and people of India, we Tibetans found a second home where we could live in dignity and freedom, able to keep our language, culture and Buddhist traditions alive.

My generation has witnessed so much violence—some historians estimate that more than 200 million people were killed in conflicts in the 20th century.

Today, there is no end in sight to the horrific violence in the Middle East, which in the case of Syria has led to the greatest refugee crisis in a generation. Appalling terrorist attacks—as we were sadly reminded this weekend—have created deep-seated fear. While it would be easy to feel a sense of hopelessness and despair, it is all the more necessary in the early years of the 21st century to be realistic and optimistic.

There are many reasons for us to be hopeful. Recognition of universal human rights, including the right to self-determination, has expanded beyond anything imagined a century ago. There is growing international consensus in support of gender equality and respect for women. Particularly among the younger generation, there is a widespread rejection of war as a means of solving problems. Across the world, many are doing valuable work to prevent terrorism, recognizing the depths of misunderstanding and the divisive idea of ''us'' and ''them'' that is so dangerous. Significant reductions in the world's arsenal of nuclear weapons mean that setting a timetable for further reductions and ultimately the elimination of nuclear weapons—a sentiment President Obama recently reiterated in Hiroshima, Japan—no longer seem a mere dream.

The notion of absolute victory for one side and defeat of another is thoroughly outdated; in some situations, following conflict, suffering arises from a state that cannot be described as either war or peace. Violence inevitably incurs further violence. Indeed, history has shown that nonviolent resistance ushers in more durable and peaceful democracies and is more successful in removing authoritarian regimes than violent struggle.

It is not enough simply to pray. There are solutions to many of the problems we face; new mechanisms for dialogue need to be created, along with systems of education to inculcate moral values. These must be grounded in the perspective that we all belong to one human family and that together we can take action to address global challenges.

It is encouraging that we have seen many ordinary people across the world displaying great compassion toward the plight of refugees, from those who have rescued them from the sea, to those who have taken them in and provided friendship and support. As a refugee myself, I feel a strong empathy for their situation and when we see their anguish, we should do all we can to help them. I can also understand the fears of people in host countries, who may feel overwhelmed. The combination of circumstances draws attention to the vital importance of collective action toward restoring genuine peace to the lands these refugees are fleeing.

Tibetan refugees have firsthand experience of living through such circumstances and, although we have not yet been able to return to our homeland, we are grateful for the humanitarian support we have received through the decades from friends, including the people of the United States.

A further source for hope is the genuine cooperation among the world's nations toward a common goal evident in the Paris accord on climate change. When global warming threatens the health of this planet that is our only home, it is only by considering the larger global interest that local and national interests will be met.

I have a personal connection to this issue because Tibet is the world's highest plateau and is an epicenter of global climate change, warming nearly three times as fast as the rest of the world. It is the largest repository of water outside the two poles and the source of the Earth's most extensive river system, critical to the world's 10 most densely populated nations.

To find solutions to the environmental crisis and violent conflicts that confront us in the 21st century, we need to seek new answers. Even though I am a Buddhist monk, I believe that these solutions lie beyond religion in the promotion of a concept I call secular ethics. This is an approach to educating ourselves based on scientific findings, common experience and common sense—a more universal approach to the promotion of our shared human values.

Over more than three decades, my discussions with scientists, educators and social workers from across the globe have revealed common concerns. As a result we have developed a system that incorporates an education of the heart, but one that is based on study of the workings of the mind and emotions through scholarship and scientific research rather than religious practice. Since we need moral principles—compassion, respect for others, kindness, taking responsibility—in every field of human activity, we are working to help schools and colleges create opportunities for young people to develop greater self-awareness, to learn how to manage destructive emotions and cultivate social skills. Such training is being incorporated into the curriculum of many schools in North America and Europe—I am involved with work at Emory University on a new curriculum on secular ethics that is being introduced in several schools in India and the United States.

It is our collective responsibility to ensure that the 21st century does not repeat the pain and bloodshed of the past. Because human nature is basically compassionate, I believe it is possible that decades from now we will see an era of peace—but we must work together as global citizens of a shared planet.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, by way of welcoming the Dalai Lama, I would like to say a few words about him and his leadership.

The Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Tibet, describes himself as a simple Buddhist monk. He was recognized as the reincarnation of the previous 13th Dalai Lama when he was only 2 years old, and he was only 6 when he began his monastic studies.

But years before he finished his education, when he was still a teenager, he was called upon to assume full political power after China's invasion of Tibet in 1950. When in 1954 he went to Beijing for peace talks with Mao Zedong and other Chinese leaders, he was not yet 20. Five years later, with the brutal suppression of the Tibetan national uprising in Lhasa by Chinese troops, the Dalai Lama was forced to escape into exile. Since 1959, he has been living in northern India. That is more than 60 years of exile.

I have had the opportunity to meet the Dalai Lama on a number of occasions. He is a warm, generous, compassionate man with a great sense of humor. He is also a man of peace. He has consistently advocated for policies of nonviolence even in the face of extreme aggression. In 1989, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his nonviolent struggle for the liberation of Tibet. He has received over 150 awards, honorary doctorates, and prizes in recognition of his message of peace, nonviolence, interreligious understanding, universal responsibility, and compassion. His is a voice for tolerance.

Unfortunately, as we all know, Tibet has not been liberated. In the late 1990s, under the Dalai Lama's leadership, the Tibetan people formally put aside the goal of independence. Since then, they have been fighting, peacefully, for their autonomy within China; but that struggle is not going very well today. Part of the reason it is not going very well is that the international community seems to be more interested in not offending China than in vigorously supporting the human rights of the Tibetan people. It seems to me that my own government has fallen into that trap.

I am looking forward to the Dalai Lama's visit this week, and I know that the leadership of the House and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will welcome him with the greatest appreciation; but it is easy to praise the Dalai Lama, to meet with him, and to benefit from his teachings, yet not lift a finger to help the people of Tibet. The Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people deserve better.

Madam Speaker, last November I had the honor of joining Democratic Leader NANCY PELOSI and my colleagues JOYCE BEATTY, TED LIEU, ALAN LOWENTHAL, BETTY MCCOLLUM, and TIM WALZ on a historic congressional delegation to Tibet, Beijing, and Hong Kong.

I have long raised concerns about China's human rights record in Tibet. As the first congressional delegation to enter Tibet since the 2008 unrest, our trip was an important opportunity to raise the voices of the Tibetan people, and we did just that. Everywhere we went, in every meeting we had, we talked about Tibet. We talked about the Dalai Lama and his strong bipartisan support in Congress. We talked about the importance of respect for people's cultures and religions, and we talked about the need to strengthen and protect all of the human rights of the Tibetan people.

During the delegation visit, we felt we had a good exchange with Chinese officials and, especially, with university students both in Tibet and in Beijing. We saw our trip—and especially the delegation's visit to Tibet—as an important gesture by the Chinese Government; but it was also clear to us that our visit was only a first step and that much more needed to be done. Since our return, we have been looking for ways to build on our visit and to advance the reforms needed for meaningful change.

Here are some of the things we identified that need to happen specifically with regard to Tibet:

The United States needs to open a consulate in Lhasa, Tibet;

More Members of Congress, more journalists, more members of parliament from other nations, and more people in general, including members of the Tibetan community here in the United States, need to be allowed to travel freely to Tibet;

Tibetans in China need to be able to travel freely as well;

The dialogue between Beijing and the Dalai Lama to resolve longstanding issues of Tibetan autonomy, religious practice, culture, language, and heritage needs to be renewed.

I came away from our visit believing even more strongly that the Dalai Lama is part of the solution to resolving Tibetan grievances.

Too often during our trip, we heard from some Chinese officials—not all, but some—expressions and characterizations of Tibet and the Dalai Lama that showed that some people's minds and imaginations are stuck in the past, in old prejudices. This concerned me greatly. The issue is not the past. The issue is the future of Tibet and its people.

Renewing dialogue must be genuine and productive, and it cannot be just another guise for wasting time or going through the motions. We need to see a dialogue based on good faith and on the mutual need to resolve outstanding issues in a way that is acceptable to all parties.

Undertaking such an initiative would be a positive reflection on the capacity of Chinese authorities to engage in constructive dialogue, and it would increase confidence the world over that the government is committed to reconciliation and ending abuses in Tibet.

The Chinese Government has invested a great deal in Tibet, and that was very clear to us, but that investment must not come at the price of an entire culture. You cannot confine a people's culture and heritage—their very sense of identity—to a museum or to a market of handicrafts.

The human rights of the Tibetan people must be strengthened and protected, and I returned from the delegation visit with a renewed commitment to continue to work with my colleagues in Congress, with Leader PELOSI, to push for the reforms that are needed to achieve this, and this is the reason we are here today.

Madam Speaker, I yield to our distinguished Democratic leader, who led this historic visit to Tibet, Leader PELOSI.

Ms. PELOSI. I thank the gentleman for yielding and for calling this Special Order this evening.

Special it is, indeed, as we welcome His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, to Washington, D.C. Tomorrow, in a bipartisan way, House and Senate Democrats and Republicans will join in welcoming His Holiness. He is among one of the things we all agree on—his greatness and the honor he brings us with his visit.

Madam Speaker, I completely associate myself with every word of Mr. MCGOVERN's comments. He talked about our visit to Lhasa, to Tibet, and to other places in China. We called him Mr. MCGOVERN's spiritual leader of our visit. As the co-chair of the Lantos Human Rights Commission of the House of Representatives, he truly believes, as His Holiness says and as I heard him say today, that we are all God's children, and that is how we have to treat each other.

In listening to our colleagues of the previous Special Order, who were members of the Congressional Black Caucus, who discussed various issues of justice—social justice, health justice, and the rest—and who talked about Orlando, it focuses on how special His Holiness' visit is. In coming the day after the terrible massacre of many in the LGBT community, it is really something that should be a comfort to all of us. His Holiness' message of peace, of compassion, of respect for every person is a message of hope that is needed today, tomorrow, and the next day, which are the days His Holiness will be here, but it is needed as we go forward as well. He is a truly great man. When I awoke this morning so sad about what happened yesterday, I was full of hope about hearing what His Holiness would have to say about our responsibilities to each other.

Our colleague mentioned our November CODEL. It was something that many of us had been hoping to do for many years. We had been trying for 25 years to get a visa to visit Tibet, and

the President of China gave us that opportunity. We went there to see, to learn, to observe, and to make judgments. We did not go there to burn bridges; we went there to build bridges. As Congressman MCGOVERN said, we saw some areas in which we could work together, and we came back with some resolve, hopefully, to get other bridge building done.

I have seen His Holiness on many occasions. When he first came to Congress, I was brand new in Congress. He came under the auspices of Mr. Lantos, for whom the Human Rights Commission is named, and he brought us together in a group to listen to His Holiness' plan of action. It included respect for the environment and autonomy for Tibet but not independence. That was over 25 years ago that he had been talking about autonomy. While sometimes the Chinese Government doesn't accept that characterization, it is why many of us support His Holiness. As I mentioned earlier, he has friends on both sides of the aisle on both sides of the Capitol and also down Pennsylvania Avenue.

I remember with great pride when we presented His Holiness with a Congressional Gold Medal—again, with great bipartisan support. President Bush came. Not only that—and a bigger honor yet—Mrs. Laura Bush came as well. What an honor for His Holiness and what an honor for our country that our President showed that respect.

On that day when we talked about it, we had so many good things to say about His Holiness. One of the things was his unstinting support for peace as a positive example of how to make the world a better place—peace in the world, peace in our country, peace in our communities, peace in our families, peace in ourselves. That inner peace is what he has been preaching.

On this trip, we can see His Holiness as he embodies the wisdom and the courage to maintain what he calls a peaceful mind in a modern world, and we look forward to hearing what he has to say about that. In addition to saying we are all God's children and of the respect we need to have for each other and of the compassion that he advocates, His Holiness says that great changes start with individuals.

I will tell this story, which, I think, some may find amusing.

His Holiness is a gentle man. While he has big challenges and while he is the leader and the champion in the advocacy—I wouldn't use the word ''fight'' as he doesn't like words like that—for respecting the culture, the language, and the religion of the Tibetan people and the autonomy for them as a people, he does so in a very gentle way.

I met him here in the Capitol for the first time, and I saw him in Rio at the time of the Earth Summit in 1992, where he spoke as a religious leader. We also acknowledged that he was the first winner of the Nobel Prize—it was part of his proclamation and why he won—for his contribution in protecting the environment. It was the first environmental consideration in a Nobel Prize. How beautiful that was. I have seen him here many times, in California, in New York—you name it—and in Dharamsala, which is where he lives in India. Anyway, we were taking a delegation there to visit—a bipartisan, large delegation to visit him there.

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And we saw some of the people right after the crackdown in Tibet—coincidentally, we had our trip planned for a long time, but it happened to occur right after that crackdown. So many people were coming in from Tibet telling us what they saw there. It was pretty brutal, the reports that they gave us, and it was so sad.

So later in the day, when we had lunch with the couple hundred lamas from all over India, that part of India, many of them Tibetan Buddhist lamas, I explained what I had seen that morning and how transformative it was to see people get firsthand knowledge of the humanity of man and that we had to do something about it.

We had our Members there. One was going to help with this, and one was going to help with that. You know, there were all these things that we were going to do to help these people.

And then I said what I always said: if freedom-loving people do not speak out against oppression in Tibet because of our commercial interests with China, then we surrender all moral authority to speak on behalf of human rights anywhere in the world. Tibet remains a challenge to the conscience of the world, and we must respond to that.

When I was finished, His Holiness spoke to the lamas there, and he said to the lamas: Now, let us all pray so that we could rid Nancy of her negative attitudes.

Well, I thought I was making the fight, but I am not going to be holier than His Holiness. A gentle approach is what he thinks is best and respectful. I take some level of pride in telling our Chinese friends—and they are our friends. He is your friend, too, in terms of damping down any, shall we say, exuberance when we learn what we consider to be grave injustices and human rights violations.

In honor of His Holiness' 80th birthday last summer—Richard Gere is the chairman of the International Campaign for Tibet and has really been a champion for His Holiness and the Tibetan people—Richard Gere and I wrote a Wall Street Journal op-ed, and in it we said there is no better way to honor the Dalai Lama than by standing with him and the Tibetan people vowing to keep their cause alive. It is a beautiful culture, indeed.

To hear His Holiness, as I did today, speak in Tibetan, which I didn't understand except through translation, and have him explain that the Tibetan language is a beautiful language in specifics, in terms of explaining Buddhism and matters of faith and philosophy because of its intricacies. It enhances your appreciation and understanding of Buddhism to hear it in the words of the Tibetan language, and translated from Tibetan in terms of the intricacies of the language that you would need to translate it into English or another language.

So this language is important to the faith of Buddhism. It is important to the culture. It is important to the families. It is important, again, to the education of the children. And the attempts on the part of the Chinese to resettle Han Chinese, dilute the population of Tibetans in Tibet, is something that would be just really wrong, just plain and simple wrong. Again, it is a challenge to the conscience.

This morning, His Holiness spoke at the United States Institute of Peace, and he said real change comes through action. He said: You all ask me for my blessing, and people say nice things, but real change comes through action.

If I understood it correctly in the translation, he said that karma is not necessarily just about fate. It is about acting, action, taking action. So we all need to take action in what we believe in.

Again, every opportunity I get—and I thank the distinguished gentleman, the conscience of our codel and chair of the Tom Lantos Commission on Human Rights. Every opportunity I get, and this is one of them that I treasure on the floor of the House, to say what an honor it is to even be in the same room, the same place with His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, a revered figure throughout the world.

The Dalai Lama's name is synonymous with everything that is good, and that is what we emphasized to our Chinese host. We had to move, as Mr. MCGOVERN said, beyond their outmoded thinking into another place.

In terms of His Holiness, tomorrow when he comes to the Capitol, I will look forward to thanking him for his tremendous, inspiring leadership. ''Inspiration'' is such an inadequate word when it comes to what he is. We thank him for sharing the strength of his determination in pursuit of peace.

He was speaking about it today in terms of something that might take some years. We may not see it, some of us—you might, Mr. MCGOVERN; I might not—a time when the world was completely at peace.

When he laughs, it is something very special. We hear the joyousness that transcends despair. In his words, we receive a message of hope and humanity when he is with us. In his presence, we feel inspired to make a difference, to make a difference in ourselves and in our world.

I talked earlier about President Bush coming to the Congressional Gold Medal ceremony, and I know that the President will be receiving His Holiness this week. Presidents have done that over time, which is a source of great pride for us in our country and in

the relationship between His Holiness and our President. But it goes a long way back.

I will just close by saying, when His Holiness was a very little boy and he became the Dalai Lama, he received a gift from the President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt; and he loved it because it was a watch, and the watch had the phases of the Moon.

Actually, my Apple watch has the phases of the Sun.

The watch had the phases of the Moon, and how prescient President Franklin Roosevelt was to send this little boy this watch, who would become so interested in science and thinking and the brain and faith and what the connection was among all of those factors.

But again, the relationship between an American President and His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, goes back to when he was a little boy, and it persists into his eighties now. That is something that, again, brings luster to us in our country that we have such a beautiful relationship with such a spiritual figure in the world.

So I look forward to welcoming him here tomorrow. Again, as I said to him today: You could not have come at a better time when we are so in mourning about what happened in Orlando to our LGBT loved ones, to their families, to the community in Orlando. We are grateful to the response of our first responders there and our law enforcement officials and local officials there.

Again, it is the spirituality that we need to recover and draw strength to go forward to make sure that we minimize any such actions that hopefully they never happen again. How wonderful that His Holiness is here to bring us that comfort.

With that, I am pleased and with great gratitude to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for being such a champion of human rights throughout the world. He and Mr. PITTS, his Republican counterpart, as co-chairs of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, do a great service to our Congress and to our country. They honor our values, the respect for the dignity and worth of every person, recognizing that we are all God's children. We all have a spark of divinity in us, and they always are speaking truth to power. I thank them for their commitment and for their courage, and to you, Mr. MCGOVERN, for calling this Special Order today.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I thank the distinguished leader for being here, and I appreciate her leadership on this issue and her leadership on human rights issues.

One of the things that compels us to be here today is our continued concern about the human rights situation for the Tibetan people. And whether it is the latest annual report from the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom or whether it is the U.S. State Department's most recent human rights report, or almost any other report, quite frankly, by any major world respected human rights organization, we see that the conditions for the Tibetan people really are quite dire.

The Human Rights Watch report, entitled, ''Relentless'' talks about the detention and prosecution of Tibetans from 2013 to 2015 under China's ''stability maintenance'' campaign. The report is based on 479 cases of Tibetans detained or tried for political expression or criticism of government policy.

Human Rights Watch only included cases on which its staff was able to obtain credible information. One important source was the terrific database on political prisoners in China that was maintained by the Congressional Executive Commission on China. Without going into a lot of details, let me just highlight a couple of takeaways.

Tibetans are now being detained for activities that used to be considered minor offences or not politically sensitive. Many of those detained and prosecuted come from parts of society not previously known for dissent: local community leaders, environmental activists, and villagers involved in social and cultural activities, as well as local writers and singers. I can go on and on and on.

I include into the RECORD the Human Rights Watch report, entitled, ''Relentless,'' Madam Speaker.

RELENTLESS: DETENTION AND PROSECUTION OF TIBETANS UNDER CHINA'S ''STABILITY MAINTENANCE'' CAMPAIGN

SUMMARY

We have followed the law in striking out and relentlessly pounding at illegal organizations and key figures, and resolutely followed the law in striking at the illegal organizations and key figures who follow the 14th Dalai Lama clique in carrying out separatist, infiltration, and sabotage activities, knocking out the hidden dangers and soil for undermining Tibet's stability, and effectively safeguarding the state's utmost interests [and] society's overall interests.—Statement by Chen Quanguo, Tibet Autonomous Region Party Secretary, December 2013

This report documents the Chinese government's detention, prosecution, and conviction of Tibetans for largely peaceful activities from 2013 to 2015. Our research shows diminishing tolerance by authorities for forms of expression and assembly protected under international law. This has been marked by an increase in state control over daily life, increasing criminalization of nonviolent forms of protest, and at times disproportionate responses to local protests. These measures, part of a policy known as weiwen or ''stability maintenance,'' have led authorities to expand the range of activities and issues targeted for repression in Tibetan areas, particularly in the countryside.

The analysis presented here is based on our assessment of 479 cases for which we were able to obtain credible information. All cases are of Tibetans detained or tried from 2013 to 2015 for political expression or criticism of government policy—''political offenses.''

Our cases paint a detailed picture not available elsewhere. Stringent limitations on access to Tibet and on information flows out of Tibet mean we cannot conclude definitively that our cases are representative of the unknown overall number of political detentions of Tibetans during this period. But they are indicative of the profound impact stability maintenance'' policies have had in those areas, and of shifts in the types of protest and protester Chinese authorities are targeting there.

Information on the cases comes from the Chinese government, exile organizations, and foreign media. Of the 479 detainees, 153 were reported to have been sent for trial, convicted, and sentenced to imprisonment. The average sentence they received was 5.7 years in prison. As explained in the methodology section below, the actual number of Tibetans detained and prosecuted during this period for political offenses was likely significantly higher.

Many detentions documented here were for activities that the Chinese authorities previously considered to be minor offenses or not politically sensitive. Many of those detained came from segments of society not previously associated with dissent. In addition, many of the detentions took place in rural areas where political activity had not previously been reported. From 2008 to 2012, the Tibetan parts of Sichuan province had posted the highest numbers of protests and detentions on the Tibetan plateau, but in 2013 the epicenter of detentions shifted to the central and western areas of the Tibetan plateau, called the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) since 1965, which until 1950 had been under the government of the Dalai Lama.

Our research found that many of those detained and prosecuted were local community leaders, environmental activists, and villagers involved in social and cultural activities, as well as local writers and singers. In the previous three decades, the authorities had rarely accused people from these sectors of Tibetan society of involvement in political unrest. Buddhist monks and nuns, who constituted over 90 percent of political detainees in Tibet in the 1980s, represent less than 40 percent of the 479 cases documented here.

Almost all the protests and detentions identified in this report occurred in small towns or rural townships and villages rather than in cities, where most protests and detentions in prior years were reported to have taken place. This suggests that dissent has increased in rural Tibetan areas, where nearly 80 percent of Tibetans live.

Our data also shows an overall decline in the total number of Tibetans detained for political offenses between 2013 and 2015, though this may be an artifact of the limitations on information, detailed in the methodology section below. Notably, however, the totals for these three years are significantly higher than for the 10 years before 2008 when stability maintenance policies were expanded following major protests centered in Lhasa (Ch.: Lasa), the capital of the TAR.

The changing nature of unrest and politicized detention in Tibet correlates with new phases in the stability maintenance campaign in the TAR and other Tibetan areas. Since 2011, authorities have intensified social control and surveillance at the grassroots level, particularly in the rural areas of the TAR. This has included the transfer of some 21,000 officials to villages and monasteries in the TAR, where they are tasked with implementing new management, security, and propaganda operations, and, more recently, the deployment of nearly 10,000 police in Tibetan villages in Qinghai. This has led to a surge in the creation of local Communist Party organizations, government offices, police posts, security patrols, and political organizations in Tibetan villages and towns, particularly in the TAR.

The implementation of these measures appears to explain many of the new patterns of detention, prosecution, and sentencing documented in this report. It was only after the

rural phase of the stability maintenance policy in the TAR was implemented from late 2011 that the number of protests and resulting detentions and convictions increased dramatically in that region.

These detentions, occurring primarily in rural areas, indicate that the stability maintenance policy in the TAR has entered a third phase. The first phase entailed paramilitary operations in the immediate wake of the 2008 protests in Lhasa, when the authorities detained several thousand people suspected of involvement in those protests or associated rioting. The second phase, which began in late 2011 and is ongoing, involved the transfer of officials to run security and propaganda operations in villages, as described above. The third phase, which dates to early 2013, has involved increasing use of the surveillance and security mechanisms established during the second phase in rural villages of the TAR to single out activities deemed to be precursors of unrest. This has meant that formerly anodyne activities have become the focus of state attention and punishment, including social activities by villagers that had not previously been put under sustained scrutiny by the security forces.

In the eastern Tibetan areas—comprising parts of Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu, and Yunnan provinces—politicized detentions also appear to correlate with stability maintenance measures. But in these areas, the government's measures have been aimed primarily at stopping self-immolations by Tibetans protesting Chinese rule, most of which have taken place in the eastern areas. Beginning in December 2012 the authorities there conducted an intensified drive to end self-immolations among Tibetans that resulted in a sharp increase in detentions and prosecutions of Tibetans for alleged connections to self-immolations, often with tenuous legal basis.

The government's introduction of grassroots stability maintenance mechanisms in the TAR and of measures against self-immolation in the eastern areas, including in many previously quiet rural areas, has resulted in certain Tibetan localities becoming sites of repeated protests and detentions, producing what could be called protest ''cluster sites,'' previously unseen in Tibetan areas. These localities saw greater numbers of politicized detentions, recurrent cycles of protest and detention, higher average sentencing rates compared to other areas, and longer sentences for relatively minor offenses.

During 2013–2015, lay and religious leaders of rural communities often received unusually heavy sentences for expressions of dissent, especially if they were from a protest cluster site. Having a sensitive image or text on one's cellphone or computer could also lead to a long prison sentence, especially though not only if it had been sent to other people. Among those who received the longest sentences were people who tried to assist victims of self-immolations, leaders of protests against mining or government construction projects, and organizers of village opposition to unpopular decisions by local officials. Such activities, most of which were not explicitly political and did not directly challenge the legitimacy of the state, received markedly longer sentences than people shouting slogans or distributing leaflets in support of Tibetan independence.

The incidents described in this report indicate that outbursts of unrest and waves of politicized detentions occurred in specific localities at certain times rather than being evenly dispersed across the Tibetan areas. But the range of locations and the different social levels of protesters involved suggest that political, environmental, and cultural discontent is widespread among Tibetans in many parts of the plateau.

Deaths and ill-health of detainees also continued to be a serious problem in the period covered by this study. Fourteen of those detained, 2.9 percent of the total, were reported to have died in custody or shortly after release, allegedly as a result of mistreatment.

The cases also involve the detention of children, including a 14 and a 15-year-old, both monks, and at least one 11-year-old child detained after his father self-immolated.

The detentions, prosecutions, and convictions documented here reflect the impact of intensive new efforts by officials in Tibetan areas to prevent any repeat of the Tibet-wide protests that occurred in the spring of 2008. Yet the new policies have led to apparently unprecedented cycles of discontent in certain rural areas, and an overall increase in the types of activities that are treated as criminal challenges to the authority of the Communist Party or the Chinese state. The failure of the central government and local authorities to end these abusive policies and roll back intrusive security and surveillance measures raises the prospect of an intensified cycle of repression and resistance in a region already enduring extraordinary restrictions on basic human rights.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To the Government of China

Unconditionally release from custody all persons detained without charge or convicted for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression and belief, or for other conduct protected by international human rights law.

Allow independent observers—including journalists, human rights monitors, and United Nations special procedures—unimpeded access to all areas covered by the ''stability maintenance'' campaign to verify the extent of human rights violations stemming from the campaign's implementation.

Ensure that all persons taken into custody have immediate access to lawyers and family members. Those taken into custody should be released unless promptly brought before a court and charged with an offense.

End the collective punishment of community members for the actions, criminal or not, of local leaders or other members of their community.

Conduct credible, transparent, and impartial investigations into all incidents from 2013 to 2015 that resulted in alleged extrajudicial killings, or alleged torture or other ill-treatment in custody. Make the findings of those investigations public and fairly prosecute anyone responsible for such abuses.

Conduct credible, transparent, and impartial investigations into arbitrary detentions and deaths stemming from the March 2008 protests in Lhasa and across Tibetan areas.

End interference by officials, party representatives, and the security forces in monasteries and other religious institutions.

To the United Nations

The UN secretary-general should urge China to honor the offer it made before the Human Rights Council in March 2009 to invite the UN high commissioner for human rights ''at a time mutually convenient to both sides.''

The UN high commissioner for human rights should specifically request to visit the Tibetan Autonomous Region and Tibetan Autonomous Areas in Qinghai and Sichuan provinces.

The UN high commissioner for human rights, as well as the special rapporteurs and working groups on torture, enforced disappearances, and independence of judges and lawyers, should reiterate their requests to visit the region to assess the human rights situation.

To Concerned Governments

Urge the Chinese government to implement the following measures in Tibetan areas: provide information on all persons detained in connection with protests; end arbitrary detention and torture and other ill-treatment in detention; impartially investigate the use of excessive or lethal force by the security forces; and discipline or prosecute as appropriate members of the security forces implicated in serious abuses.

Extend full and active support to the international investigation into the Tibetan protests led by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Urge the Chinese government to review the official policies and practices in Tibetan areas that have contributed to unrest.

Speak out, when cooperating with China on law enforcement or counterterrorism efforts, against the use of trumped-up public order and terrorism allegations to persecute or curtail the human rights of ethnic groups.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, this Congress has weighed in many times and in many ways on United States policy concerning Tibet. One of the most significant things we did was to approve the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002, which is supposed to guide U.S. Government policy. It encourages dialogue between the Chinese Government and representatives of the Dalai Lama, and it created the post of Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues within the Department of State.

Last July, in recognition of His Holiness, the Dalai Lama's 80th birthday, the House approved H. Res. 337, which cited the Tibetan Policy Act. In that resolution, Congress strongly encouraged the Government of the People's Republic of China and His Holiness to hold substantive dialogue, without preconditions, in order to address Tibetan grievances and secure a negotiated agreement for the Tibetan people.

We also called for the establishment of a U.S. consulate in Lhasa.

We urged the immediate and unconditional release of Tibetan political prisoners, including the 11th Panchen Lama, and Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, a Tibetan monk who tragically and unnecessarily died in Chinese custody shortly after.

We called on the United States Government to underscore that any government's interference in the Tibetan reincarnation process is a violation of the internationally recognized right to religious freedom.

We called upon the Government of China to allow U.S. officials and journalists and other citizens unrestricted access to Tibetan areas of China, as we allow Chinese officials and citizens access to the United States' territory.

We asked that the United States and international governments, organizations, and civil society renew and reinforce initiatives to promote the preservation of the distinct religious, cultural, linguistic, and national identity of the Tibetan people.

We urged the United States to use its voice and vote to encourage development organizations and agencies to design and implement development

projects that fully comply with the Tibet Project principles. These principles are meant to ensure that the needs of the Tibetan people guide all development in Tibetan areas; that their projects respect Tibetan culture, traditions, knowledge, and wisdom; and that the development initiatives neither provide incentives for nor facilitate the migration and settlement of non-Tibetans into Tibet, nor the transfer of ownership of Tibetan land or natural resources to non-Tibetans.

All of these recommendations for what the United States Government should be doing are just as valid today as they were last year because very little progress has been made in the last year. I say ''very little'' because we have acknowledged the important gesture China made in allowing last fall's codel to travel to Tibet, but that is about all that has happened, and the Dalai Lama is about to be a year older.

If we are not going to get moving on those longstanding recommendations, let me suggest some other things we could try. We could start a campaign to get China to allow the Dalai Lama to return to Tibet. Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights says that everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state and, two, everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country. It is time to let the Dalai Lama return to his country.

This House could pass a bill that I introduced, the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act, basically saying that, if the Chinese Government restricts U.S. officials and U.S. citizens access to Tibet, then we should consider limiting the access of Chinese officials when they visit the United States.

We could make sure that the U.S. Government invites the Dalai Lama to every event on every occasion where his decades of knowledge, experience, and reflections would be helpful for addressing the world's problems. The Dalai Lama is a world spiritual and philosophical leader who should be contributing to global debates on countering violent extremism and on fostering peace in war-torn countries. These are just a couple of topics on which I am convinced we could all benefit from his wisdom.

We could insist that Tibet be part of our climate change discussions with China. Climate change is one of the few topics on which the U.S. and China have found common ground. It is a critically important topic for Tibet, given its fragile environment and its critically important reserves of freshwater. Tibet is warming three times as fast as the rest of the world, but it is absent from the global climate change debate.

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The Chinese leadership has acknowledged at the highest levels the scale of the environmental crisis it faces. Conserving the Tibetan Plateau is surely a shared interest, and it can only be achieved with the full participation of the Tibetan people.

It is time to rally around some of these ideas or to find others. It is time to do something different on Tibet. It is time for us to think differently and to think out of the box on ways that we can advance dialogue with China, not in a confrontational way, but in ways to get China to understand the importance of recognizing the human rights of the Tibetan people and recognizing the importance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and allowing him to return to his homeland.

Madam Speaker, many of my colleagues wanted to be here today to speak on this. I include the statements of the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. CAPUANO) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) in the RECORD.

Last week the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. POCAN), and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) submitted their statements to the RECORD.

In closing, again, I would urge all of my colleagues to join with the leader and myself in welcoming His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Washington, D.C., to the United States, wishing him good health and praying that reconciliation between the Tibetan people and the Chinese Government happens very, very soon.

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

Mr. WALZ. Madam Speaker, I believe that the U.S. must remain committed to defending human rights and personal freedoms both within the U.S. and abroad. As our country continues to advance U.S.-China relations, we must never forget the people of Tibet. Restrictions on human rights and religious freedom in Tibet have been a growing concern to many. As a member of the Congressional Executive Committee on China, I share this concern. While Chinese investments have undoubtedly helped to modernize Tibet, these investments must not come at the expense of the rich cultural, linguistic, and religious heritage of the Tibetan people. We must continue to support the protection of traditional Tibetan culture.

As you may know, I had the opportunity to be one of the first groups of Americans to travel to China and teach Chinese high school students in 1989. During that trip, I also traveled to Tibet in 1990 and, most recently, I have returned as a member of the Congressional Delegation visiting China and Tibet. The boosted economic growth, higher household incomes, and constructed railway projects have facilitated the rapid modernization of the Tibet Autonomous Region. However, we need to continue to have constructive dialogues with China to ensure the preservation of traditional Tibetan culture and Tibet's fragile ecology.

The Congressional Delegation trip to Tibet provided an opportunity to have a healthy dialogue, and I want to thank our Chinese friends for engaging with us in a discussion over the most sensitive issues concerning Tibet. As a southern Minnesotan, I understand the importance of spurring economic growth while simultaneously protecting natural wonders and culture. With this in mind, I believe that Tibetans must receive the necessary rights that will allow them to protect their culture, language, religion, and environment.

The U.S. was founded on the ideas of universal freedom, and I believe that we must continue to urge the Chinese government to provide less regulated religious freedom to the Tibetans. I strongly believe that a critical step to achieving religious freedom in Tibet is including the Dalai Lama in future dialogues. I have had the pleasure of meeting His Holiness on three occasions, and I share his desire to preserve Tibetan culture and resolve other issues concerning Tibet. Lastly, I encourage the Chinese government to agree to establish a U.S. Consulate in the Tibetan city of Lhasa because I believe diplomacy and talking through our concerns and partnerships under the lens of transparency can only strengthen the relationship between our two countries.

I will continue to support attempts to have productive dialogues with the Chinese government concerning the future of Tibet. Improvements in the quality of life, access to clean water, and access to health care services in Tibet must also include efforts to preserve the Tibetan way of life.

Mr. CAPUANO. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. He has come to Washington to be present when the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) awards its Democracy Service Medal posthumously to another heroic spiritual leader, Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, who died in captivity in China in July of last year. The NED will also honor the Central Tibetan Administration, based in Dharamshala, India, for its commitment to freedom and democracy. It is fitting, too, as Prime Minister Nahrendra Modi concludes his visit, to recognize the generosity India has shown to exiles seeking political and religious liberty within its borders.

With His Holiness and with all Tibetans, we grieve for all they have endured since the Chinese invasion, the sorrows of those who live in exile and the sufferings of those who remain. I am outraged that oppression and murder continue unabated. With His Holiness and with Tenzin Delek Rinpoche's cousin Geshe Nyima, representing his bereaved family, we mourn the shameful persecution and tragic death of a man committed to nonviolence. I urge the House to approve H. Res 584, urging President Obama to seek an independent investigation of his death and to call publicly for an end to the repressive policies of the People's Republic of China in Tibet. It has been in committee for many months.

Elie Wiesel, like His Holiness awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, exhorts us: There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest. Indeed, we do protest, and further we should never cease to hold oppressors accountable. The people of Tibet, inspired by the Dalai Lama, continue to cherish their culture and traditions. I wish them all his faith and courage, today, tomorrow and every day until Tibet is free.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. GRIFFITH (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today on account of family obligations.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 1762. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in The Dalles, Oregon, as the ''Loren R. Kaufman VA Clinic''.

H.R. 2212. An act to take certain Federal lands located in Lassen County, California, into trust for the benefit of the Susanville Indian Rancheria, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2576. An act to modernize the Toxic Substances Control Act, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, June 14, 2016, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

5666. Under clause 2 of rule XIV, a letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-411, ''School Attendance Clarification Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814), was taken from the Speaker's table, referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. SMITH of Texas: Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. H.R. 5049. A bill to provide for improved management and oversight of major multi-user research facilities funded by the National Science Foundation, to ensure transparency and accountability of construction and management costs, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–619). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SMITH of Texas: Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. H.R. 5312. A bill to amend the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 to authorize activities for support of networking and information technology research, and for other purposes; (Rept. 114–620). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. STIVERS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 778. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5053) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prohibit the secretary of the Treasury from requiring that the identity of contributors to 501(c) organizations be included in annual returns; and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5293) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes; (Rept. 114–621). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. BUCHANAN (for himself, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. REED, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. DOLD, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, and Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California):

H.R. 5456. A bill to amend parts B and E of title IV of the Social Security Act to invest in funding prevention and family services to help keep children safe and supported at home, to ensure that children in foster care are placed in the least restrictive, most family-like, and appropriate settings, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia (for himself, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. WALKER, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. BUCK, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. KATKO, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. ROSKAM, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. WOODALL, Mr. BRAT, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. MESSER, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BARR, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. ROUZER, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. BLUM, Mr. LONG, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. MACARTHUR, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. POLIQUIN, and Mr. ISSA):

H.R. 5457. A bill to redesignate Gravelly Point Park, located along the George Washington Memorial Parkway in Arlington County, Virginia, as the Nancy Reagan Memorial Park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. STEWART:

H.R. 5458. A bill to provide for coordination between the TRICARE program and eligibility for making contributions to a health savings account, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DONOVAN (for himself, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. RATCLIFFE, and Mr. PAYNE):

H.R. 5459. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to enhance preparedness and response capabilities for cyber attacks, bolster the dissemination of homeland security information related to cyber threats, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. PAYNE (for himself and Mr. DONOVAN):

H.R. 5460. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish a review process to review applications for certain grants to purchase equipment or systems that do not meet or exceed any applicable national voluntary consensus standards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. POLIQUIN (for himself and Mr. HILL):

H.R. 5461. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees on the estimated total assets under direct or indirect control by certain senior Iranian leaders and other figures, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LOEBSACK (for himself, Mr. TONKO, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, and Mr. ENGEL):

H.R. 5462. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide for a State Medicaid option to enhance administrative matching funds to support statewide behavioral health access program activities for children under 21 years of age, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida:

H.R. 5463. A bill to support programs for mosquito-borne and other vector-borne disease surveillance and control; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. POLIQUIN:

H.R. 5464. A bill to provide that certain project works on the St. Croix River, Maine, are not required to be licensed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. VEASEY (for himself, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. VELA, Mr. HINOJOSA, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. DOGGETT, and Mr. HONDA):

H. Res. 777. A resolution recognizing Mayte Lara Ibarra, and Larissa Martinez for their bravery and leadership in addressing anti-immigrant sentiments voiced by United States politicians; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. JONES (for himself, Mr. MASSIE, and Mr. LYNCH):

H. Res. 779. A resolution enforcing the Constitution's separation of powers and the congressional prerogative of disclosure under the speech or debate clause by directing the Chairman and ranking minority member of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives to publish in the Congressional Record the 28-page chapter which was redacted from the December 2002 Final Report of the Joint Inquiry into Intelligence Community Activities Before and After the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, 2001; to the Committee on Rules.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself, Ms. BASS, Mr. ROYCE, and Mr. ENGEL):

H. Res. 780. A resolution urging respect for the constitution of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the democratic transition of power in 2016; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. BUCHANAN:

H.R. 5456.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, to ''provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States.''

By Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia:

H.R. 5457.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2, which states:

''The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States . . .''

By Mr. STEWART:

H.R. 5458.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1.

By Mr. DONOVAN:

H.R. 5459.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. PAYNE:

H.R. 5460.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. POLIQUIN:

H.R. 5461.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution. ''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian Tribes;''

By Mr. LOEBSACK:

H.R. 5462.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause I of the Constitution which grants Congress the power to provide for the general Welfare of the United States.

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida:

H.R. 5463.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. POLIQUIN:

H.R. 5464.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 grants Congress the power to ''regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several states.''

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 402: Mr. ALLEN.

H.R. 465: Mr. ROHRABACHER.

H.R. 592: Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 605: Mr. TIPTON.

H.R. 608: Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 670: Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 835: Mr. JOLLY.

H.R. 923: Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. WITTMAN, and Mr. POMPEO.

H.R. 1076: Mr. BEYER and Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 1095: Ms. TSONGAS.

H.R. 1116: Mr. LONG.

H.R. 1209: Mr. SCHRADER.

H.R. 1211: Ms. DEGETTE.

H.R. 1221: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1706: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 1726: Mr. BEYER.

H.R. 1771: Mr. GUTHRIE.

H.R. 1904: Mr. LOWENTHAL and Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 1905: Mr. LOWENTHAL and Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 2058: Mr. PETERSON and Mr. MARINO.

H.R. 2189: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H.R. 2216: Ms. SPEIER.

H.R. 2257: Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 2461: Ms. NORTON and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.

H.R. 2483: Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 2633: Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 2641: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 2646: Mr. MOOLENAAR and Ms. GRANGER.

H.R. 2680: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 2737: Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. HANNA, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. RUSH, Mr. MOOLENAAR, and Mr. CUMMINGS.

H.R. 2739: Mr. FLORES, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. BUCSHON, and Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2759: Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 2817: Mr. DONOVAN.

H.R. 2846: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.

H.R. 2903: Mr. MICA, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. ROTHFUS, and Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

H.R. 2948: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.

H.R. 2963: Mr. COURTNEY and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 3094: Mr. GOSAR.

H.R. 3119: Mr. REICHERT and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 3229: Ms. ESTY.

H.R. 3235: Ms. GRAHAM and Ms. DEGETTE.

H.R. 3535: Mr. FATTAH.

H.R. 3546: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.

H.R. 3844: Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 3870: Mr. POLIQUIN and Mr. CURBELO of Florida.

H.R. 4013: Mr. HASTINGS and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 4059: Mr. COLE.

H.R. 4087: Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California.

H.R. 4137: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.

H.R. 4223: Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 4247: Mr. NUNES and Mr. COLE.

H.R. 4262: Mr. BUCSHON.

H.R. 4352: Mr. HECK of Washington.

H.R. 4365: Ms. GRAHAM.

H.R. 4381: Mr. BLUM, Mr. NUNES, and Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 4488: Mrs. DINGELL.

H.R. 4499: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas and Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 4514: Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. KING of Iowa, and Mr. VEASEY.

H.R. 4567: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 4574: Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 4582: Mr. LAMALFA and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 4592: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia and Mr. MCDERMOTT.

H.R. 4625: Ms. GRAHAM, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HIGGINS, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 4646: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.

H.R. 4653: Mr. SCHRADER.

H.R. 4695: Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. MATSUI, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 4715: Mr. LAMBORN.

H.R. 4730: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia and Mr. ROSS.

H.R. 4764: Mr. DONOVAN.

H.R. 4770: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 4773: Mr. FINCHER.

H.R. 4798: Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 4816: Mr. ADERHOLT.

H.R. 4818: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 4819: Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 4828: Mr. BILIRAKIS and Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 4869: Mrs. WAGNER.

H.R. 4893: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.

H.R. 4927: Ms. KAPTUR.

H.R. 4939: Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 5008: Mr. NOLAN and Ms. TSONGAS.

H.R. 5012: Mr. AGUILAR.

H.R. 5025: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. ISRAEL, and Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 5061: Mr. DOLD.

H.R. 5073: Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 5143: Mr. MCHENRY.

H.R. 5166: Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. PITTS, Mr. DELANEY, and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 5171: Mrs. NOEM, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, and Mr. NUNES.

H.R. 5187: Mr. BLUM, Mr. KNIGHT, and Mr. NUNES.

H.R. 5190: Mr. KNIGHT.

H.R. 5207: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.

H.R. 5230: Mr. BENISHEK.

H.R. 5249: Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 5258: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.

H.R. 5263: Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 5275: Mr. GOSAR.

H.R. 5287: Ms. PINGREE.

H.R. 5292: Ms. DELBENE, Ms. NORTON, Ms. GRAHAM, Mr. ROSS, Mr. JONES, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. ESHOO, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. ASHFORD, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, and Mr. MEADOWS.

H.R. 5313: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 5346: Mr. DONOVAN.

H.R. 5392: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. COLE, Mr. DOLD, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. KATKO, Mr. POLIQUIN, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. SHIMKUS, and Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.

H.R. 5395: Ms. GRANGER.

H.R. 5396: Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 5405: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. BUTTERFIELD.

H.R. 5411: Ms. DEGETTE.

H.R. 5421: Mr. HULTGREN.

H.R. 5429: Mr. NEUGEBAUER.

H.R. 5443: Mr. KENNEDY and Ms. CASTOR of Florida.

H. Con. Res. 114: Mr. ROSS.

H. Res. 14: Mr. ASHFORD.

H. Res. 210: Mr. DONOVAN.

H. Res. 220: Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.

H. Res. 343: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. YOHO, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.

H. Res. 494: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida and Mr. ROSS.

H. Res. 549: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. FOSTER, and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H. Res. 613: Mr. ISSA.

H. Res. 625: Mr. YODER.

H. Res. 650: Mr. CICILLINE.

H. Res. 694: Mr. PAYNE, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. TONKO, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H. Res. 750: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, and Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H. Res. 769: Mr. WELCH, Ms. NORTON, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr.

DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. HIGGINS, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. POLIS, Miss RICE of New York, and Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

68. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the Council of the District of Columbia, relative to Council Resolution 21-292, entitled ''Sense of the Council in Support of a 'Statehood or Else' Signature Campaign Resolution of 2015''; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.